Sudan University of Science and Technology
College of Graduate Studies
College of Languages

Investigating Difficulties Encountered by EFL Students in Writing

(A case study of 1ˢᵗ year students, College of Languages SUST)

تقصى الصعوبات التى تواجه دارسى اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية فى الكتابة

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of M.A Degree in English Language (Applied Linguistics)

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DEDICATION

To the souls of my grandparents, to my beloved parents, to brothers and sisters, and to my wife and children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating some difficulties encountered by EFL first year students in writing, College of Languages of Sudan University of Science and Technology. A special attention has been given to the use of grammar, punctuation and the cohesion devices in written texts and the role of these units in coining well coherent sentences. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. To measure the writing ability of students the researcher distributed a test for 30 students to check their ability of using correct grammatical items in different type of sentences, investigating the punctuation errors made by students in writing and the role of cohesive devices in coherent text. In addition to a questionnaire submitted to 20 English language teachers in Khartoum State. After applying the descriptive analytical method the researcher has come up with some findings; that first year student are very poor in using grammatical items in writing with percentage (53.3%). They are also unable to utilize the punctuation marks satisfactory and correctly with percentage (86.7%).The students were not able to use referential devices to create cohesion with percentage (66.7 %). The questionnaire also has come to result that students themselves, University teachers, and University syllabus are behind that weakness. Therefore the researcher recommends some further exposure by students to intensive grammar and writing skills course. Suggestions for further studies are also there.

ABSTRACT (Arabic Version)

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى تقصى بعض الصعوبات فى الكتابة التى تواجه دارسى اللغة الانجليزية لغة أجنبية لطلاب السنة الاولى بكلية اللغات بجامعة السودان للعلوم والتكنلوجيا. تم التركيز فى هذه الدراسة على قياس مقدرة الطلاب الكتابية فى استخدام قواعد اللغة الانجليزية، اضافة لاستخدام علامات الترقيم والروابط اللغوية فى الكتابة ودور هذه الادوات فى صياغة نص متماسك لغوياً ومنطقياً . استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لعدد 30 طالب لمعرفة مدى قدرتهم على استخدام قواعد اللغة الصحيحة فى الجمل المختلفة، ايضاً تقصى الاخطاء الصادرة من الطلاب فى استخدام علامات الترقيم ودور الروابط اللغوية فى كتابة نص متماسك لغوياً ومنطقياً . اضافة لاستبيان لعدد 20 معلماَ بولاية الخرطوم. توصل الباحث بعد تطبيق المنهج التحليلى الوصفى الى بعض النتائج وهي: ضعف طلاب السنة الاولى جامعة السودان فى استخدام قواعد اللغة الانجليزية بنسبة 53.3% ، ضعف كبير فى استخدام علامات الترقيم بنسبة بلغت 86.7% ايضاً عدم القدرة على استخدام الروابط اللغوية المتعارف عليها بنسبة 66.7%. خلص استبيان الاساتذة الى ان الطلاب والاساتذة والمنهج مجتمعين هم نتاج الضعف المتمثل فى رداءة الكتابة. عليه فقد أوصى الباحث بأن يخضع الطلاب لدورات مكثفة فى النحو ومهارات الكتابة فى اللغة الانجليزبة. وهناك بعض المقترحات لدراسات مستقبلية تم تضمينها.

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

Writing is fundamental to students' academic survival at university educational level , yet at the same time, it is the most difficult skill to master since it requires both discipline knowledge (knowledge of subject matter) and linguistic knowledge (knowledge of appropriate language use).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study investigates the difficulties faced by the university students in using grammar, punctuation marks, and cohesive devices in writing.

1.2 Questions of the Study

1- To what extent can a misuse of grammar and punctuation affect students' writing?

2- To what extent can a misuse of cohesive devices affect the students' writing?

3-To what extent are English language teachers and local syllabus designers are behind the students' weakness in using grammar and cohesive devices in writing?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

In considering the problem of the study, the hypotheses can be stated as follows:

1- EFL students misuse of grammatical and punctuation features can affect students' writing.

2- EFL student's misuse of cohesive devices can affect students' writing.

3- English Language teachers, local syllabus designers, and students' weakness are behind difficulties faced the students in using grammatical items and cohesive devices in writing.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1- To find out whether EFL students misuse grammar and punctuation can affect their writing.
2- To find out whether EFL students misuse cohesive devices can affect their writing.
3- To find out the source of difficulties facing EFL students in their academic writing in order to find some solutions.

1.5 Significance of the Study

University students face a lot of difficulties concerning the use of grammar and punctuation marks as well as cohesive devices. These difficulties affect the quality of their writing. Hence, this research derives its significance from its topic which seeks to overcome these difficulties and try to find some solutions enable students to write well structured, organized, and coherent texts.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

The research methodology in this study is a descriptive-analytical; collecting data from a test answered by the students, In addition to questionnaire filled by English language teachers in Khartoum State .Data will be processed statistically and discussed to reach meaningful findings.

1.7 Limits of the Study

1.7.1 Temporal: 2018- 2019 Academic year.

1.7.2 Locational :   First-year students in English Language department- college of languages at Sudan University of Science and Technology. English Language teachers in Khartoum State.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of two parts:

Part one, reviews of literature relevant to the research topic such as the concept of writing, types of writing, stages of writing, etc. While part two discusses some previous and relevant studies related to the research topic.

2.1 The Various Definition of Writing

Cimcoz , (1999,p3) stated that traditionally writing considered to be one most un favorite fields of study far many students if not all, feel hatred towards writing .

Writing has been described by as the combination of letters that pertain to the sound that people produce in speech. On the other hand, writing has been regarded more than forming graphic symbols, i.e. thoughts are translated in to language with which people can communicate.

Writing is a very complex aspect which involves both physical and mental consideration on the part of the writer.

2.2 Types of Writing

Hedge (1988, 96) classified writing in to six categories

1. Personal writing is writing for one self, and includes various kinds of aide-memories, as well as diaries and journals. These writing activities would normally be carried out in the first language, but there may be good motivational reasons for using them in second language classroom.

2. Study writing is also for one self and may never be shown to others. Students make notes while reading, taking notes in lectures, and make summaries for exam revision.

3. Public writing is writing as a number of the general public to organizations or institutions so that there are certain conventions to keep to in the writing. It includes such activities as writing letters of enquiry, complaining, letters to the editor, form filing, and applications.

4. Creative writing can include poems, stories, rhymes, drama, all types of writing which again are mainly for oneself, but which may be shared with others.

5. Social writing is a category which includes all the writing that establishes and maintains social relationships with family and friends; that is , personal letters , invitations note with congratulations , condolences , telegrams , and telephone messages .

6. Institutional writing relates to professional roles and is needed by business executives, teachers, engineers, and students in these and other fields.

   According to Hedge's classification of writing , people write so as to express their ideas and thoughts , to study , to interact with each other , to give instructions and to satisfy their needs and demands

2.3 Stages of Writing

Before people start writing first they think of what they want to write to generate ideas and thoughts then they select words, phrases, and sentences that will correctly and tactfully express and convey their ideas and thoughts. Therefore, writing is considered as a complex process, because it consists of a number of stages and activities .

Hedge (1988:20) describes writing as consisting of three major activities of group of activities.

2.3.1 Pre-writing

Before putting pen to paper the skilled writer in real life consider two important questions

a. What is the purpose of this piece of writing?

    This first question is to do with function. For example, is it report which is the writer hopes will be persuasive and stimulate action? is it an explanation of how something works which has to be careful detailed and clear? Is it a letter of invitation to some friend or letter applying for job? The purpose of writing will influence the choice of organization and choice of language.

b. Who will read the text? This question is to do with audience. The reader may be an individual one the writer knows well, or group of colleagues, an institution, an examiner, or tutor. Thinking about the eventual reader(s) help the writer what to say and how to present it in the most appropriate style –formed , friendly serious , or tentative . The answer to these two questions provide the writer with a sense of purpose and sense of audience , in other words , writing context which significantly influences the first stage of composition process , that of exploring content and planning outlines .

2.3.2 Writing and Rewriting

The second phase of activity is the writing itself and with good writers this consists of making a first draft. But writing the first draft is often interrupted as the writer stops to read over and review, to get idea of how the text is developing, to revise plans, and bring in new ideas or rearrange those already expressed. There is a good deal of recycling in the process from planning to drafting, reviewing preplanning,

revising, etc. Good writer tend to concentrate on getting the content right first and leave details like correcting spelling, punctuation, and grammar until later. Reviewing involves assessing what has already been written and deciding on points like these.

➢ Is the writer sharing his / her impression clearly enough with the reader?

➢ Are there any points in the writing where the reader has to make a jump, because the writer has committed a line of argument or he has forgotten to explain something?

➢ Does the vocabulary need to be made stronger at any point?

➢ Are there some sentences which do not say much or which are too repetitive and can be missed out?

➢ Can the writer rearrange any sets of sentences to make the writing clearer or more interesting?

➢ Does the writer need to arrange any paragraph s?

➢ Are the links between sections clear? Do they guide the reader through the writing?

In summary, the drafting process focuses primarily on what the writer wants to say, while redrafting progressively focuses on how to say it more effectively.

2.3.3 Editing

The post-writing stage consists of reading through and trying to apply a reader's perspective in order to assess how clearly readers might follow the ideas.

The editing process makes the final readjustments and checks accuracy so that the text is maximally accessible to the reader. Some poorer writers tend not to engage in editing but assume that their writing is clear to others because, it is clear to

them. Alternatively poor writers may concentrate throughout the whole writing process on accuracy in grammar, punctuation, etc, without considering whether or not the overall structure is clear. They continually move from drafting to editing without any in between stages of rethinking and reorganization.

2.4 Paragraph Definition

When people write, they divide their writings into sections or units. This division of writing always happens according to ideas because writers prefer to discuss each idea or part of the topic in a separate unit. This unit is called a paragraph which is a group of related sentences that support single idea. A paragraph can be known or identified by its contents and visual representation.

Paragraphs are the building blocks of papers. Many students defined paragraphs in terms of links: A paragraphs is a group of at least five sentences; a paragraph is half a page long, etc. In reality, though, the unity and coherence of ideas among sentences is what constitutes a paragraph. A paragraph is defined as a group of sentences or single sentence that forms a unit. Links and appearance do not determine whether a section in a paper is a paragraph. For instance, in some styles of writing, particularly journalistic styles, a paragraph can be just one sentence long. Ultimately, a paragraph is a sentence or group of sentences that support one main idea.

2.5 The Essentials of a Paragraph

According to Teresa (1993:2) the following are the essentials of a paragraph

➢ Topic sentences: a paragraph has main idea expressed in atopic sentence. This sentence may appear at the beginning or the middle, or at the end of a paragraph. This main idea sentence (also called the topic sentence) serves several purposes

1- It introduces the main idea of the paragraph.

2- It limits the topic of the paragraph.

3- It often suggests how the paragraph will be developed.

Supporting sentences: a paragraph has main supporting ideas, all relating to the topic sentence.

Details the supporting ideas may be further supported by facts, details, and statistics.

Logical ideas: in a paragraph must be presented in logical order, chronological, or time, order is especially important showing the process (how something is done) but all ideas are presented in some logical order.

Logical connectors: to indicate these connecting words also called "transition" words. These not only help the flow of ideas, but also indicate the relationship between ideas.

Concluding sentence: a paragraph may has concluding sentence. This sentence may restate the main idea in a different way.

Unity and coherence: when a paragraph includes a sequence of sentences that are all related to the topic sentence, it is unified. A paragraph that has continuous line of thoughts that passes from sentence to sentence in coherent.

2.6 How to Write a Whole Composition

The following is a general structure to follow for many kinds of writing. Adapt it to specialized assignments as appropriate.

I. Introduction

The introduction is intended to draw the reader into the body of material to follow. It should begin with a general statement or question, sometimes called the "thesis statement" or "thesis question," followed by a quick narrowing down to the main

theme to be developed in the body. Set the stage quickly, give appropriate background, and then move right into a transition sentence that will set up the reader for the body.

II. Body (Argument)

The body of a written piece is where you elaborate, defend, and expand the thesis introduced in the introduction. The body should support your main contention with supporting evidence and possible objections. A good body presents both sides of a case, pro and con. As you make your case, save your best argument for last. When presenting contrary views, be sure to set forth the strongest arguments so you can avoid being charged with erecting a "straw man." The body includes three components:

Elaboration**:** Spell out the details by defining, or by clarifying and adding relevant, pertinent information.

Illustration**:** Paint a verbal picture that helps make or clarify your point (s). Well illustrated pieces are easier to read and follow than abstract ones.

Argumentation**:** Give the reasons, justifications, and rationales for the position or view you have taken in the introduction. Draw inferences for the reader and explain the significance or assertions or claims being made. When moving from one sub-point or argument to another, use connecting or transitional words and phrases that enable your reader to easily follow the flow of your thinking. The following is a partial list of logical connectors that you can use:

exceptions – but, alas, however, etc.

illustrations – for instance, for example, etc.

conclusions – thus, so, therefore, consequently, etc.

comparisons – similarly, by contrast, etc.

qualifications – yet, still, etc.

additions – moreover, furthermore, etc.

Martin and Rose (2003)

III. Conclusion

Make your final appeal to the reader, a finishing, all-encompassing statement that wraps up your presentation in a powerful or even dramatic fashion. Normally a single paragraph, brief and concise, will suffice. The purpose of the conclusion is to leave the reader with an idea or thought that captures the essence of the body while provoking further reflection and consideration.

2.7 An Essay

An essay does the same things paragraph does. It starts with point and the rest of it provides specific details to support and develop that point. Since an essay much larger than one paragraph it allows a writer to develop a topic in more details.

2.7.1 Main Difference – Essay vs Composition

Many students think that the two words Essay and Composition mean the same and can be used interchangeably. While it is true that essay is an essay a type of composition, not all compositions are essays. Let us first look at the meaning of composition. A composition can refer to any creative work, be it a short story, poem, essay, research paper or a piece of music. Therefore, the **main difference** between essay and composition is that **essay is a type of composition whereas composition refers to any creative work**.

Discourse focuses on how people use language in real life situations to do things like argumentation and persuasion using logical persuasive abilities that reflect the knowledge of the world around them which is shared by their discourse communities .The use of term discourse to mean language above the level of the

sentence or the clause probably originated with the linguist Zellig Harris. Who back in the 1950s, wanted to take the study of linguistics to a new level. Before this , linguists had come a long way in understanding how morphemes are put together to form word and how words are put together to form sentences what Harris wanted to do was to understand how sentences are put together to form texts and realize texture ; a feature that distinguish a text from a random collection of sentences . One important component in written discourse is cohesion. Cohesion is the formal link between sentences and clauses and a vital component in making written text more coherent for the reader. (Tabodda, 2004)

2.8 Grammatical Knowledge

Grammar is the study of rules governing the use of language, thus, each language can be said to have its own distinct grammar. Grammar is part of the general study of language called linguistics.

The ability to communicate is not the same thing as the ability to use proper grammar, knowing proper grammar merely allows you to express ideas in ways that are acceptable to a certain class of people or to control the nuances of grammar to convey things subtly. But communication skills can be quite good even if one's grammar is not perfect, communicative competence means someone has the ability to make himself or herself understood, despite distinct shortcomings in grammar.

Grammar is an important essence because it contributes to good structure of sentences and it can help in how we well communicate .One who has a good writing is an effective communicator because he/ she will usually be able to catch on to the social rules which help us our communication. If one has poor grammar, he/ she will not be able to communicate effectively, some grammar errors are acceptable during communication but some are not, make any sense, the other

speaker may 'reply with what are you trying to tell me or what are you trying to say.

2.8.1 Importance of Grammar and Sentence Combination in Improving Writing

According to Beverly Ann Chin, Grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know the grammar system of that language that is, the rules of making meaning. Students who are native speakers of English already know English grammar. They recognize the sounds of English words, the meanings of those words, and the different ways of putting words together to make meaningful sentences.

However, while students may be effective speakers of English, they need guidance to become effective writers. They need to learn how to transfer their knowledge of grammatical concepts from oral language to written language.

Effective grammar instruction begins with what students already know about grammar, and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. By connecting their knowledge of oral language to written language, teachers can demystify abstract grammatical terminology so that students can write—and read—with greater competence and confidence.

Because writing is a complex and challenging activity for many students, teachers should focus on the grammatical concepts that are essential for the clear communication of meaning.

Hillocks (1986) states that "sentence combining practice provides writers with systematic knowledge of syntactic possibilities, the access to which allows them to

sort through alternatives in their heads as well as on paper and to choose those which are most apt" (150). Research also shows that sentence combining is more effective than freewriting in enhancing the quality of student writing (Hillocks, 1986).

Hillocks and Smith (1991) show that systematic practice in sentence combining can increase students' knowledge of syntactic structures as well as improve the quality of their sentences, particularly when stylistic effects are discussed as well. Sentence-combining exercises can be either written or oral, structured or unstructured. Structured sentence-combining exercises give students more guidance in ways to create the new sentences; unstructured sentence-combining exercises allow for more variation, but they still require students to create logical, meaningful sentences. Hillocks (1986) reports that in many studies, sentence-combining exercises produce significant increases in students' sentence-writing maturity.

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2.8.2 Problems Caused by Using Incorrect Grammar

Grammar is the study of words and how they can be used to form sentences. It can include the inflections,, syntax ,and word formation of the language, as well as the pronunciation ,meaning, and the linguistic theory of the particular word. Unclear communication is the biggest issue caused by incorrect grammar when writing and speaking. Consider the following sentences: "I don't want nothing from you". "I don't want anything from you".

While the first sentence uses two negatives to create positive construction, the second example uses one negative and one positive to create negative construction. If you are trying to state that you want a book, a new shirt, or some other item, the

first sentence is correct. However, if you are trying to tell a friend that you already have everything you need, the second sentence is correct.

In addition to creating communication, misunderstanding incorrect grammar also makes a poor first impression .If you are a jobseeker with grammatical errors in your resume, a company recruiter may see you less intelligent than a candidate who has a similar skills but was also to proofread properly. If you own a business and have a grammatical errors in your marketing materials, potential customers may see these mistakes as an indication that your company is sloppy or simple unreliable.

2.8.3 Common Problems in Learning Grammar

There are many problems that students face in learning grammar and the following are the most common ones

Word Order in English, word order is more important than it is in many other languages. Very often EFL students produce sentences that sound strange to the native's ear because the order of the words in the sentences is wrong. The basic pattern for English statements is: subject-verb-object(s)-place- time. Sentences do not have to have all of these parts, but if all of the parts do occur, they most likely will occur in this order. If a sentence has both a place and time, one of these is frequently moved to the front of the sentence.

A change in basic sentence order can make an English sentence nonsensical or make it mean something completely different. For example, if part of the verb is moved so it conies before the subject, we have a question. (e.g. "John will be home at eight" becomes "will John be home at eight?") If you switch the time phrase with the place word you get an understandable sentence that no native speaker

would ever say, "John will be at eight home." Word order is also important in English with phrases smaller that a sentence.

1. Present Tense

The present tense in most languages refers to actions that are taking place in the present. In English, this is not really true. We use present tense to refer to actions that are habitual, repeated, or always true. (e.g., the sun rises in the East; I get up every day at 6:00 a.m.; we celebrate Thanks giving in November). English uses preset progressive (present continuous) to express actions that are taking place in the present (e.g., I'm reading a teacher training manual; I'm teaching an ESL class; I'm preparing to do my homework.

2. Past Tense

Past tense indicates experiences and events that are over and done in the past, one problem is that people tend to use present tense to tell about personal experience in the past. If we are writing about an experience that occurred in the past, we should use the past tense. Using present is correct when they talk, but writing is some more formal, so that we need to follow the rules and keep the verb tenses consistent. A second common problem is when students use "would + verb" to describe an event that happened in the past. This is correct in speech but it is not correct in writing.

3. Two-Word Verbs

Some actions in English are expressed by phrases that consist of a verb and a preposition or adverb. The action is not expressed by the verb alone. For example, "get" means 'to obtain, to acquire, to receive, etc.' while "get over" means 'to recover from an illness,' and "get up" means 'to arise from a reclining position.' There are hundreds of such phrases in English. These are problems for EFL students because they are often not listed in the dictionary in a separate form and

their meaning is hard to find. A good textbook will probably teach many of these two-word verbs, but if yours does not. Some of them must have their two parts together in a sentence while others may have their parts separated by other things in the sentence.

Examples:

The teacher always calls on students who are prepared She asked me to call her up after dinner. The two-word verbs that cannot have their parts separated are called "inseparable" and file others are called "separable" . Look at the examples below.

 Examples:

"They wanted to look over the car". "They wanted to look the car over". "They wanted to look it over. But not: Students wanted to look over it.

4. The Verb Do

In English, we use the verbs" do, did, does, done, etc.") in at least four different ways:

1. As a verb like other verbs: Jennifer did the dishes

2. As a sign of emphasis: I did comb my hair.

3. as a verb that can be placed in front of the subject to form a question or to which cannot be attached to form a negative statement: Do they want more bread? Mr. Jones doesn't know if the clock is correct.

4. as a substitute to save repetition of another verb or verb phrase: My sister needs a new coat and I do too. They didn't finish their tests, but I did. Iraqi students will probably have difficulty with all of the uses of "do" except the first example.

5. Prepositions

English prepositions are a problem because different languages use different prepositions to express the same idea. It will help your students if you do not teach too many prepositions at one time. Also, it will help if you are sure to put the prepositions in context (in a situation where the use is natural).

6. Nouns

In English, as in many other languages, nouns are classified as countable and non-countable. If something is countable, it can have a plural form. If it is non-countable, it cannot have a plural form and the singular form is used to refer to any quantity. Some of the things that we consider non-countable in English are: abstractions, ideas, ideals, emotions, gasses, fluids, materials with particles too small to be conveniently counted, and fields of study. Many languages have the same concept of count and non-count but they do not always put items in the same category as we do in English. For example, in English, "homework" and "housework" are generally non-countable. (We do not say "housework".)

 In other languages, these nouns are countable and they do have plural forms. Students have to learn which nouns are which in English because it affects other grammar principles as well (e.g. whether to use "a little or a few" before the noun.

7. Punctuation

According to Ronald Carter, Michael McCarthy, Geraldine Mark and Anne O'Kiff, the most common punctuation marks in English are: capital letters and full stops, question marks, commas, colons and semi-colons, exclamation marks and quotation marks.

In speaking, we use pauses and the pitch of the voice to make what we say clear. Punctuation plays a similar role in writing, making it easier to read.

Punctuation consists of both rules and conventions. There are rules of punctuation that have to be followed; but there are also punctuation conventions that give writers greater choice.

- **Capital letters (B, D) and full stops (.)**

We use capital letters to mark the beginning of a sentence and we use full stops to mark the end of a sentence:

We went to France last summer. We were really surprised that it was so easy to travel on the motorways..

We also use capital letters at the beginning of proper nouns. Proper nouns include personal names (including titles before names), nationalities and languages, days of the week and months of the year, public holidays as well as geographical places:

Dr David James is the consultant at Leeds City Hospital.

We use capital letters for the titles of books, magazines and newspapers, plays and music:

'Oliver' is a musical based on the novel 'Oliver Twist' by Charles Dickens..

In addition to closing sentences, we also use full stops in initials for personal names:

G. W. Dwyer

David A. Johnston, Accountant

Full stops are also used after abbreviations, although this practice is becoming less common:

Arr. (arrival)	*etc. (etcetera)*
Dr. (doctor)	*Prof. (professor)*

- Question marks (?) and exclamation marks (!)

We use question marks to make clear that what is said is a question. When we use a question mark, we do not use a full stop:

Why do they make so many mistakes?

A: *So you're Harry's cousin?*

B: *Yes. That's right.*

We use exclamation marks to indicate an exclamative clause or expression in informal writing. When we want to emphasise something in informal writing, we sometimes use more than one exclamation mark:

Listen!

Oh no!!! Please don't ask me to phone her. She'll talk for hours!!!

- Commas (,)

We use commas to separate a list of similar words or phrases:

It's important to write in clear, simple, accurate words.

They were more friendly, more talkative, more open than last time we met them.

We do not normally use a comma before *and* at the end of a list of single words:

They travelled through Bulgaria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

American English does use a comma in lists before *and*:

We took bread, cheese, and fruit with us.

We use commas to separate words or phrases that mark where the voice would pause slightly:

I can't tell you now. However, all will be revealed tomorrow at midday.

We had, in fact, lost all of our money.

James, our guide, will accompany you on the boat across to the island.

- Separating clauses with commas

When main clauses are separated by *and*, *or*, *but*, we don't normally use a comma if the clauses have the same subject. However, we sometimes use commas if the clauses have different subjects:

They were very friendly and invited us to their villa in Portugal. (same subject)

Footballers these days earn more money but they are fitter and play many more matches. (same subject)

It was an expensive hotel in the centre of Stockholm, but we decided it was worth the money. (different subjects)

When a subordinate clause comes before the main clause, we commonly use a comma to separate the clauses. However, we do not always do this in short sentences:

If you get lost in the city centre, please don't hesitate to text us or phone us.

If you get lost just phone us.

When we use subordinate or non-finite comment clauses to give further details or more information, we commonly use commas to separate the clauses:

You do need to wear a darker jacket, if I may say so.

To be honest, I thought they were very very rude.

- Colons (:) and semi-colons (;)

We use colons to introduce lists:

There are three main reasons for the success of the government: economic, social and political.

We also use colons to indicate a subtitle or to indicate a subdivision of a topic:

Life in Provence: A Personal View

We often use colons to introduce direct speech:

Then he said: 'I really cannot help you in any way.'

We commonly use a colon between sentences when the second sentence explains or justifies the first sentence:

Try to keep your flat clean and tidy: it will sell more easily.

We use semi-colons instead of full stops to separate two main clauses. In such cases, the clauses are related in meaning but are separated grammatically:

Spanish is spoken throughout South America; in Brazil the main language is Portuguese.

Semi-colons are not commonly used in contemporary English. Full stops and commas are more common.

- Quotation marks ('…' or "…")

Quotation marks in English are '…' or "…". In direct speech, we enclose what is said within a pair of single or double quotation marks, although single quotation marks are becoming more common. Direct speech begins with a capital letter and can be preceded by a comma or a colon:

She said, "Where can we find a nice Indian restaurant?" (or *She said: 'Where can we find a nice Indian restaurant?'*)

When we use direct speech inside direct speech, we use either single quotation marks inside double quotation marks, or double quotation marks inside single quotation marks:

"It was getting really cold," he said, "and they were saying 'When can we go back home?'"

Jaya said, 'They were getting really excited and were shouting "Come on!"'.

We commonly use question marks inside the quotation marks unless the question is part of the reporting clause:

'Why don't they know who is responsible?' they asked.

So did they really say 'We will win every match for the next three weeks'?

We sometimes use quotation marks to refer to the titles of books, newspapers, magazines, films, songs, poems, videos, CDs, etc:

There's a special report all about it in 'The Daily Mail'.

We can use italics instead of quotation marks for these citations:

There's a special report all about it in The Daily Mail.

Articles or chapters within books, or titles of short stories, are normally punctuated by single quotation marks:

The longest chapter in the book is the last one called 'The Future of Africa'.

- **Dashes (–) and other punctuation marks**

Dashes are more common in informal writing. They can be used in similar ways to commas or semi-colons. Both single and multiple dashes may be used:

Our teacher – who often gets cross when we're late – wasn't cross at all. No one could believe it!

Just wanted to thank you for a lovely evening – we really enjoyed it.

Brackets have a similar function to dashes. They often add extra, non-essential information:

Thriplow (pronounced 'Triplow') is a small village in the eastern part of England.

We use brackets around dates and page numbers in academic writing:

Heaton (1978) gives a convincing explanation of how hurricanes are formed (pages 27–32).

We often use forward slashes in internet addresses and to indicate *and/or* in academic references:

You can find the figures you need on www.bbc.co.uk/finance

Binks (1995/1997) has already researched this aspect of Roman history.

https//dictionary.cambridge.org 31/08/2019 03:49 AM

2.9 Cohesive Devices

Are words used to show how the different parts of a text fit together. In other words, they create cohesion.

Halliday and Hassan (1976, cited in Moon, 2001) defines cohesion as:

'part of the text-forming component in the linguistic system. It is the means whereby elements that are structurally unrelated to one another are linked together, through the dependence of one on the other for its interpretation'. It is achieved by these 'structurally unrelated elements' which occur across written texts creating links and chaining together items that are related by what they define as :

'cohesive ties' or devices so that they can create 'texture', that is, cohesive, meaningful texts (Moon, 2001). In their view, cohesion in English can be **Grammatical** (grammatical words and structures: reference, conjunction, ellipsis and substitution) and **Lexical** (nouns and content words). Reference marks a semantic relationship and it occurs when an item is introduced in the text, which is taken as a point of reference for something that follows, or as a basis for comparison. It can be 'personal' through personal pronouns, 'demonstrative' and 'comparative. Reference can be *exophoric* referring to the world outside the text, or *endophoric*, found within the text. The latter can refer to what has previously been mentioned *anaphoric*, or to what follows *cataphoric*. Substitution and ellipsis both mark grammatical relations. In the first one some words already appeared in the text are substituted by others whereas, in ellipsis whole words or phrases are omitted. Conjunction, which consists of adverbial groups and prepositional phrases, signifies an important semantic recourse for maintaining text cohesion. It can be 'additive', 'adversative', 'causal' or 'temporal'.

Lexical cohesion, is achieved by Halliday and Hassan's 'collocation' (the regular co-occurrence of particular words) and 'reiteration' which includes, synonyms, and

super ordinates (general nouns), winter's **'**Vocabulary 3' list of nouns, Adjectives, and verbs (with grammatical functions though**),** Francis's **'**anaphoric nouns' such as theory, argument, facts, etc. and Tadros's 'cataphoric enumerators', e.g. features, reasons, etc. (Moon, 2001:61-70). They all give quite comprehensive lists of cohesive lexical items.

(McCarthy, 1991) By cohesion we mean the way a text 'hangs together' and makes sense (Moon, 2001), which is achieved with the aid of grammatical and lexical devices. While discourse patterns can be improved or taught (McCarthy, 1991) clause and sentence level problems in EFL students' writing demand closer attention. This can be achieved by addressing discourse signaling vocabulary, the use of conjunctions and other linking words and focusing on reference, ellipsis and substitution.

2.9.1 Cohesion in EFL Writing

cohesion function within a text establish semantic ties and benefits EFL writers in order to elaborate meaning .according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the concept of cohesion is semantic one ; it stand for relations of meaning that exist within the text , and that illustrate it as a text .

There are two types of cohesion will be discussed thoroughly under their respective in following:

2.9.2 The Concept of Cohesion and Text

According to the writer Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are six main ways that cohesion is created in a text. These called: Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis, Chains, Cohesive Nouns and Conjunction.

2.9.3 Grammatical Cohesion

Grammatical cohesion can be attained through reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunctions. In general, the concept of reference is traditionally used in semantics to refer to the relationship between a word and what is means in the real world. In Halliday and Hasan's (1976) view, it simply stands for the relationship between two linguistic expressions : "items in the text instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right make reference to something else for their interpretation " (p.31).

2.10 Reference

Hallyday and Hasan (1976) elaborate that reference is commonly achieved through the use of certain grammatical items, namely, the personal pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives and the definite articles "the". These items direct the reader of a written discourse to retrieve information from other sentences elsewhere in the text and this is technically known as "endophora" or from situation outside the text and this is known as "exophora". The most common presuming reference items are:

Definite Article ""the"

Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, these, those.

Pronouns: he, she, it, etc. (Martin & Rose, 2003: 34).

In other words referential relations are realized through the use of the above mentioned words.

- Anaphoric reference :

Using words that point back to a word used before:

Look at the sun. It's going down quickly.

- Exophoric reference :

Using words that point to something outside the text:

Look at **that car**. It is damage.

- Cataphoric reference:

Using words that point forward to a word that has not been mentioned yet.

It is going down quickly, the sun.

Modern discourse analysts like Egins (2004) and Martin and Rose (2003) have come up with more classifications concerning cohesive devices particularly, cohesion by reference.

When the writer uses a presuming reference item, the reader actually tries to retrieve the identity of that item in the order to follow the text. If the reader becomes unable to retrieve the referent, the interaction between the reader and the writer will run in to problems (Martin and Rose, 2003). Those analysts go on to say that the identity of a presuming reference item may be retrievable from a number of different contexts, which are:

- General context of a shared culture (knowledge).

This is known as homophoric reference. Eggins (2oo4) assumes that both the reader and the writer share a homogeneous culture (or knowledge).

How hot the **sun** is to day! (We all know which sun we are talking about, the specific sun of our solar system).

- From the shared context of situation.

This is known as exophoric reference. (Pointing outside the text).

Look at that **car**. It is damage.

- From elsewhere within the text itself. This, as has been explained above by Halliday & Hasan (1976), is known as endophoric reference .

Martin & Rose (2003), Eggins (2004), and Tabodda (2004) further classify endophoric reference in to 7 types:

Anaphoric reference: it happens when the referent is earlier mentioned in the text.

Nada is apharmasist . She works in Portsudan.

Cataphoric reference: it takes place when the referent will be mentioned later.

She is adoctor, Doctor Maha works in Madani .

Esophoric reference: it occurs when the referent is mentioned within the same noun phrase.

Obama, the president of the United States visited Canada.

Comparative reference: it happens when the writer compares what is going to be mentioned with what has earlier been mentioned. Comparative reference is realized through the use of words like: the same, similar to, etc.

Location reference: it involves the use of transition words like   : here , there , as well as , firstly , secondly , thirdly , finally ,

Bridging reference: it happens when the reference item refers back to an earlier mentioned item from which it can inferentially be derived.

The writer can talk in one paragraph about how the situation in Sudan is very bad. Then in any following paragraph mentions that Sudanese Universities lack   the qualified teachers, particularly the PhD holders. Inferentially, we understand that this very bad situation forces the teachers to fly out.

Whole text reference: it occurs when the referent is a sequence of actions or ideas that has been mentioned previously.

To make it clear, Eggins (2004) says that the thesis statement   of any essay includes controlling ideas. Each idea is developed in a separate paragraph. So all these paragraphs refer back to or anaphorically to the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph.

2.11 Substitution

Is the replacement of one item by another .Hatch (1992:224) substitution is a relation on the lexico – grammatical level, the level of grammar and vocabulary. Also, substitution is a sort of counter which is used in place of particular item.

I bet you **get married** before I **do**. "using do as a substitute for get married "

Substitution comes in three forms:

Nominal, verbal, and clausal.

1. Nominal substitution: it is the substitution of a noun or noun group. The words used as substitutions of a noun or noun group are: one, ones, and the same.

Ok. Mohammed. Thanks for the **meeting**, let's start the next **one.**

John bought the round glasses. The oval ones hurts his nose (Hatch , 1992) .

One is a substitute term for meeting. One or ones are the terms most commonly used for nominal substitution in English.

Ali gave his daughter **some chocolates and a toy**. He gave **the same** to his son.

The same is substitute term for some chocolates and a toy.

2. Verbal substitution: It is the substitution of a verb or a verbal group.

The substitution of a verb or a verbal group are: do, does, did, doing, and done. Verbal substitution is realized through auxiliary verbs: do, be, have, sometimes together with another substitute term such as so or the same.

Ahmed plays **football** on Friday, also Ali **does.**

Does is substitute term for plays football on Friday.

Eastern people **take this issue seriously**, at least some of them **do** (Hatch, 1992).

Do is a substitute term for take this issue seriously.

3. Clausal substitution: It is a kind of substitution in which the entire clause is substituted by words such as: so, and not. So is the positive form of substitution, while the negative form is of clausal substitution is realized through not.

IS there going to be an earthquake? It says **so**.

So (clausal positive substitution for) substitutes for the clause: there is going to be an earthquake. (Hlliday and Hasan, 1976:130)

3- Ellipsis:

On the other hand, ellipsis is interpreted the same way as substitution, but an elliptical element is replaced by nothing. Thus ellipsis can be regarded as substitution by zero. (Halliday and Hasan, 1985) McCarthy (1991:43) states that writers use ellipsis when they assume that it is obvious enough within the specific context. Accordingly it is classified in to nominal, verbal, and clausal ellipsis.

a-Nominal ellipsis: it is the omission of a noun in which a noun modifier is upgraded to the status of a noun.

Do you have a red pen? Sorry, I have a blue.

B-Verbal ellipsis: it is the omission of the verb from the verbal group.

Is he complaining? He may be; I don't care. (Halliday and Hasan 1976:171)

c- Clausal ellipsis: It is a process in which the clause is omitted as in the case of direct response s (e.g. yes/ no and wh-questions).

Is there any problem? Yes (there is a problem).

- The verbal group substitution and elision:

It occurs when a verb phrase is **elided** or **substituted**.

The verbal group substitution: Who ran to school? I did.

Did substitutes for **ran to school**.

The verbal group elision: Have you read much? I am trying to.

I am trying to elided the verbal group read much.

- The nominal group substitution and elision:

It occurs when a noun phrase is elided or substituted.

The nominal group substitution: who has a pen? I have one.

One substitute for a pen.

I will ask my colleague about the pens and whether he has any.

Substitution is often with the words one or ones.

The nominal group elision: Our tax rates are comparable to Germany's.

2.12 Lexical Cohesion

It is another type of cohesive ties which has to do with repeated occurrences of the same or related lexical items. It seems that the complement of grammatical cohesion involve system of open lexical items (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Lexical cohesion is the use of lexis or vocabulary that is semantically related in meaning to another lexis or vocabulary in an earlier part of the text. Lexical cohesion provides cohesive effect which is achieved by the selection of vocabulary .The categorization of lexical relation s include: reiteration or repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, meronymy, and collocation.

1. Repetition / **Reiteration**: repetition is the use of the same word in a discourse.

A **conference** will be held on national environmental policy. At this **conference** the issue of salination will play an important role. The word conference is lexical cohesion by repetition. (Halliday 1985).

2. Synonymy: is the use of two or more words having the same or similar meaning.

The meeting **commenced** at six thirty. But from the moment it **began**, it was clear that all was not well. The meaning of commence and began are similar. (Mc Carthy, 1991:65)

3. Antonymy: antonymy is a relation between lexical items which is established through the meanings of oppositeness. Bill **created** a new life for himself, and he **destroyed** all reminders of his old ones.

Created and destroyed are opposite in meanings.

4. Hyponymy: Hyponymy is also a lexical relationship between words. The meaning of one word includes the meaning of another. (Halliday, 1985). In other words, in hyponymy: one word represents a class of a thing and the second represents a super class or a sub class.

Tree, oak, pineapple, strawberry. The word tree represent a class of a thing , while the other words (oak , pineapple , strawberry) represent the sub class of a thing .

We were in town today shopping for **furniture**. We saw a lovely **table** . Table is in hyponymy relationship with furniture (Halliday , 1985).

5. Meronymy: meronymy is a relation between concept and its parts. Two words have a relationship of a meronymy if **A** is an inseparable part of **B**. In other words, meronymy : words that refer to parts of a whole .

It was a **canary**. The **beak** was injured. The beak is a part of a canary. Tree, trunk, branch, leaf.

6. Collocation: refers to the use of words that's co-occur together. i.e. when one sees the noun pipe in a sentence, it is more probable that the verb to smoke will also appear in the sentence .

Drink water. Sip coffee. Smoke cigarette

2.12.1 Conjunctions

Conjunction is the fourth type of cohesive device. Mc Carthy (1991) draws a clear distinct ion between conjunctions and cohesive devices by saying that conjunctions play the role of linking and organizing the relationships among the sentences of a text or discourse. Conjunction Is the use of variety of strategies to tie the sentences meaningfully , conjunction words , such as but , however , because , so , rather, although , etc , contributes to producing cohesive texts .

For Hatch, "Cohesive devices are used to tie pieces of texts together in specific ways". Hatch, (1992: 209) Generally English have five types of cohesive devices, reference, substitution, and ellipsis are grammatical while lexical cohesion and parts of conjunctions are lexical.

Cook (1989) confirms that conjunctions are the most apparent type of cohesive devices of formal relations between sentences with in a text. He adds that conjunctions contribute to the cohesiveness of the text as they connect one clause or sentence to another and they can generally be classified as follows:

1. Additives: words or phrases which add more information to what has already been said (e.g. further, moreover, add to that …etc). Like these words support and connect the argument and organize discourse.

2. Exemplifiers: words or phrases which may elaborate or exemplify the information already given. (e.g. for instance , for example , in other words …etc) . Like these words compare general statement and convincing the reader.

3. Adversatives: words or phrases which may contrast new information with old information or put another side to the argument (e.g. on the other hand, but, however, …etc).

4. Casual: words or phrases which may relate new information to what has already been said in term of causes (e.g. because , for this reason , consequently ……etc).

5. Words or phrases which may indicate anew departure or a summary (e.g. to sum up , to conclude , well , any way , ...etc) .

Martin and Rose (2003) say that conjunctions create inter-connections with in a text .through the process of adding, comparing, sequencing or explaining. This connection creates the semantic unity.

2.13 Review of Some Previous and Relevant Studies on Difficulties Encountered by EFL Students in Writing

2.13.1 First, an MA study about analysis of grammatical and lexical devices in students' composition writing by Mohamed Abulgasim Hamad Abulgasim submitted to the Nile Valley University, Sudan (2013). The findings of the study revealed that the participants, had knowledge of grammatical and lexical devices and they employ some of them in their writings. However, a part of the grammatical and lexical devices employed were wrongly used which made it difficult to comprehend the text . Among the five devices examined , conjunction (49%)formed the highest percentage of the total number of cohesive devices used in in the composition , followed by references devices (38%) and lexical devices (11%) substitution and ellipsis formed the lowest percentage (0.5-1.0%) .

Amore detailed analysis of the grammatical and lexical devices used in the composition showed that , in reference devices category , pronominal devices (65%)were the most frequently used while demonstrative (20%) the least frequent used.

2.13.2 Second study in an M.A thesis conducted by Asma Taha Elhusien (2004), University of Nile Valley , under the title " Astudy of university students' problems with punctuation mechanics in English Language " the study aimed at investigating the punctuation errors made by students in their written performance . Students of second year at Al-zaiem Al-azhary University .

The sample: Are 30 students enrolled in the E.L.D .

The study provides implications , recommendations , and suggestion that hopefully improve the writing performance of the learners.

The study conducted that:

1. The second level students of Al-zaiem Al-azhary university (2004) , were unable to utilize the punctuation marks satisfactorily and correctly .

2. Some knowledge of the major punctuation marks help learners to convey their ideas and communicative purpose.

3. In spite of all current researches. Punctuation is still problematic area in EFL writing.

4. The absence of the instructions of the punctuation rules and uses in the syllabus and the teachers of English language pay no attention to this field.

5. Some punctuation errors can be attributed to the complexity of the English system.

6. There is no rigid system of punctuations universally used.

To sum up, the results have shown that punctuation mechanics is a problematic area in writing English Language.

2.13.3 The third one had done by Abdulla (2000). Conducted study in which he investigates the written discourse of the fourth year students of the University of Khartoum, Omdurman Islamic University and Nelain University . The study is evaluative in sense that it attempts to access the extent to which the students under study have benefited from linguistics and literature training in improving their

writing. The researcher found that the students were not able to make correct use of written discourse properties , which eventually reduce the overall writing quality . The researcher also found that the average of students' writing was characterized by a variety of coherence breaks whether in terms of misleading paragraph division or irrelevance. The study showed serious cohesion errors. The students were not able to use referential devices to create cohesion. The students' use of conjunctions is also erroneous. The study also showed that students avoided using substitution and ellipsis. Misuse of cohesive devices resulted in unintelligibility or monotony in the relevant texts. Many examples were used to show that the communicative value of the relevant text was blocked by ill-formed grammatical and textual structure.

2.13.4 The fourth and final study had done by Giabir. D. (1995). Investigated the foreign language learners' knowledge of cohesive devices and the contribution of the syllabus to develop the students' knowledge of cohesive devices. The objective of his study were 60 Sudanese English foreign language, second and fourth year students at University of Khartoum , faculty of Arts . English department. The data were collected by means of two tests designed to examine the students' competence at specific areas in writing. Test (1) was designed to explore the students' knowledge of cohesive devices. It is thought to find out to what extent the students were aware of manipulating references, ellipses, conjunction and lexical cohesion beyond the sentence level. Test (2) was design to assess the competence of the subjects in coherence and cohesion. The result showed that no statistical significant difference was found between the performance of the two groups of students, which means that four year students did not benefit from the courses in cohesion and coherence.

It was also observed that students of the two groups adopted contemporary strategies such as overgeneralization and avoidance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that has been used in this research. It provides full description of the instrument which was employed to collect data that was needed, and the reliability of the instrument.

3.1 The methodology

This chapter describes and explains the procedures of the research which are used during data collection; it also describes the design of the study, sampling techniques and data collection. The study methodology is descriptive and analytical. It adopted quantitative numerical dada.

3.2 Population

This study examines the grammatical punctuation and linguistic cohesion through quantitative and qualitative analysis. These questions are answered by 1st year university students at College of Languages Sudan University of Science and Technology. The sample of the study composed of thirty students. All of them are Sudanese girls and boys whose ages range between 18 years to 20 years old.

3.3 Research tools

In this study the researcher used students' test which consists of three hypotheses concerning students' ability to understand grammar, punctuation and linguistic cohesion. The test contains of two questions, question one is divided into A and B and students are asked to choose the best alternative in question one A, while in the second part B of the question the students are asked to rewrite, apply capitalization,

choose the correct punctuation for each sentence below fill in gaps using appropriate items of punctuation. In question two the students are also asked to fill in gaps using cohesive devices. The use of this test will lead to more valid and reliable result. Thus, the main aim of these questions is to check the subject of cognitive ability to deal with the context of grammatical items, punctuation and cohesive devices.

Questionnaire is used for the third hypotheses to find out the difficulties faced by the students in using grammatical items, punctuations, and cohesive devices in writing according to teachers' view.

3.4 Statistical Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the reliability of any test, to obtain the same results if the same measurement is used more than one time under the same conditions. In addition, the reliability means when certain test is applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one are counted; then you can describe this test as reliable. Moreover, reliability is defined as the degree of the accuracy of the data that the test measures. On the other hand, validity also is a measure used to identify the validity degree among respondents according to their answers on certain criterion. The validity is counted by a number of methods, among them is the validity using the squire root of the (reliability coefficient).

3.4.1 Test validity

Validity refers to the factors that data collection should measure what it is supposed to measure Best & Kahan (1986). For example, Halliday and Hassan's taxonomy is used by many researchers.

3.4.2 Test reliability

The concept of the term reliability is defined by Lado (1978) as the stability of the source to the same sample that means attest is reliable if the testers get nearly the same source in the same test on different occasions. The researcher use the students test answers as source for data.

3.5 Procedures

According to procedures adopted, the researcher used students' test which is answered by 30 students at Sudan University, faculty of languages, in the academic year 2019. The students are not aware of the purpose of the test. The test tried to test students' ability to produce a well grammatically structured, punctuated and coherent text. The time given to the test is reasonably sufficient for the students to fill-in the gaps and to choose the appropriate answer for the objective questions.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Cranach's alpha method: -
Where reliability was calculated using Cranach's alpha equation shown below:

$$\text{Reliability coefficient} = \frac{n}{N-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation college grades}}$$

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\frac{n}{N-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation college grades}}}$$

Cranach alpha coefficient = (0.87), a reliability coefficient is high and it indicates the stability of the scale and the validity of the study

Validity coefficient is the square of the islands so reliability coefficient is (0.93), and this shows that there is a high sincerity of the scale and that the benefit of the study.

3.7 Summary of the study

In this chapter the researcher explained the methodology of the study, the tools and the procedures used for the conducting the study. The chapter provided full description of the population and the samples selected. Moreover, it provides full description of the discussion of the validity and reliability of the study tools and procedures which were employed for conducting the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of the data collected through students' test which was given to 30 respondents and questionnaire for 20 English language teachers in Khartoum State.

4.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire

Table (4.1) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Teachers of English language do not use teaching aids (PowerPoint ...) so as to facilitate learning grammar

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	11	55.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package
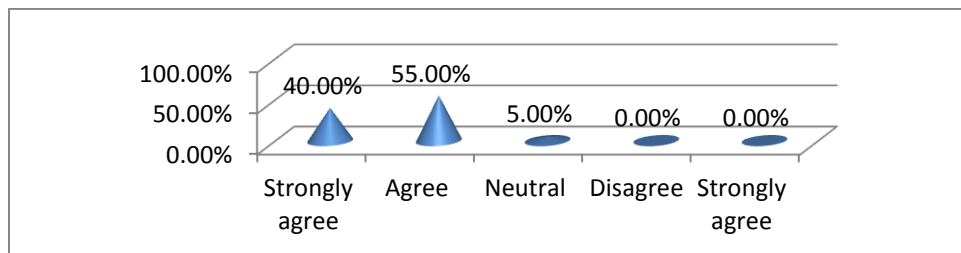
Figure (4.1)

Source: excel 2016

Table and Figure (4.1) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%40.0) and Agree by (%55.0) and Neutral by (%5.0) and Disagree by (%0.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.2) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Many
students pay a little attention to learn grammar, because it is boring

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	55.0%
Agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0%

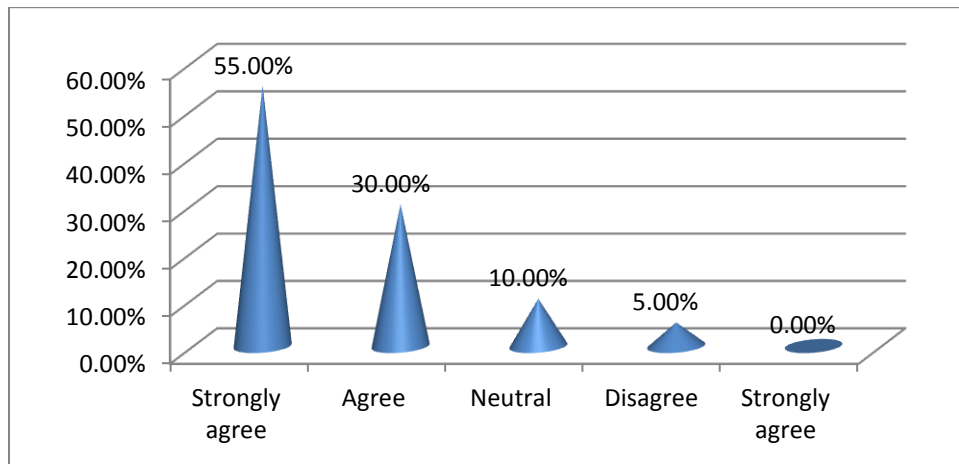Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.2)

Source: excel 2016

Table and Figure (4.2) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification
Strongly agree by (%55.0) and Agree by (%30.0) and Neutral by (%10.0) and
Disagree by (%5.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.3) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the 1st year university students are unable to identify the function and use of punctuation marks because the process of writing is difficult

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	8	40.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0%

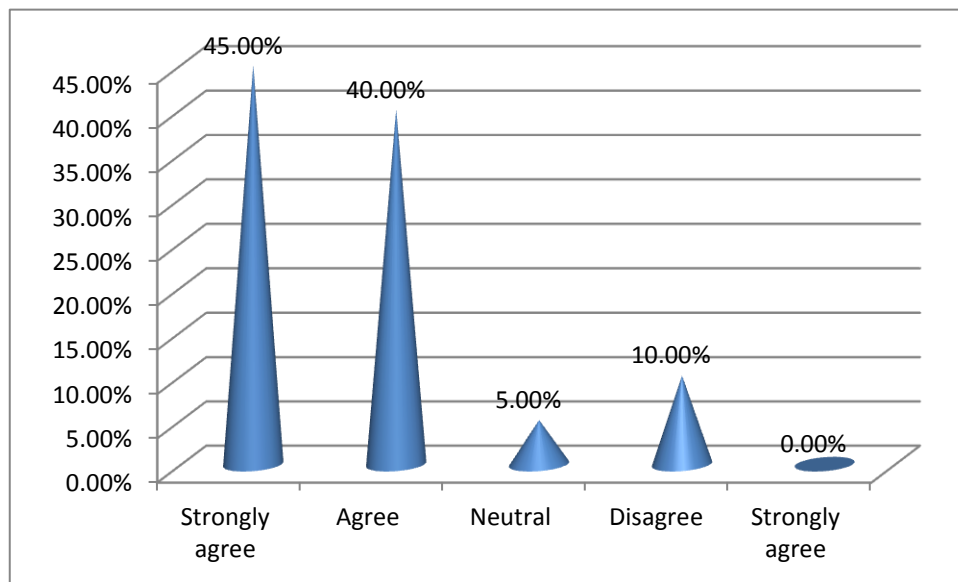Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.3)

Source: excel 2016

Table and Figure (4.3) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%45.0) and Agree by (%40.0) and Neutral by (%5.0) and Disagree by (%10.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.4) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Teachers of English language neglect the use of punctuated sentences in class rooms

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	10	50.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.4)

Source: excel 2016

Table and Figure (4.4) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%40.0) and Agree by (%50.0) and Neutral by (%5.0) and Disagree by (%5.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.5) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the University syllabus does not sufficiently cover the area of cohesive devices

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	30.0%
Agree	10	50.0%
Neutral	4	20.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.5)

Source: excel 2016

Table and Figure (4.5) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%30.0) and Agree by (%50.0) and Neutral by (%20.0) and Disagree by (%0.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).
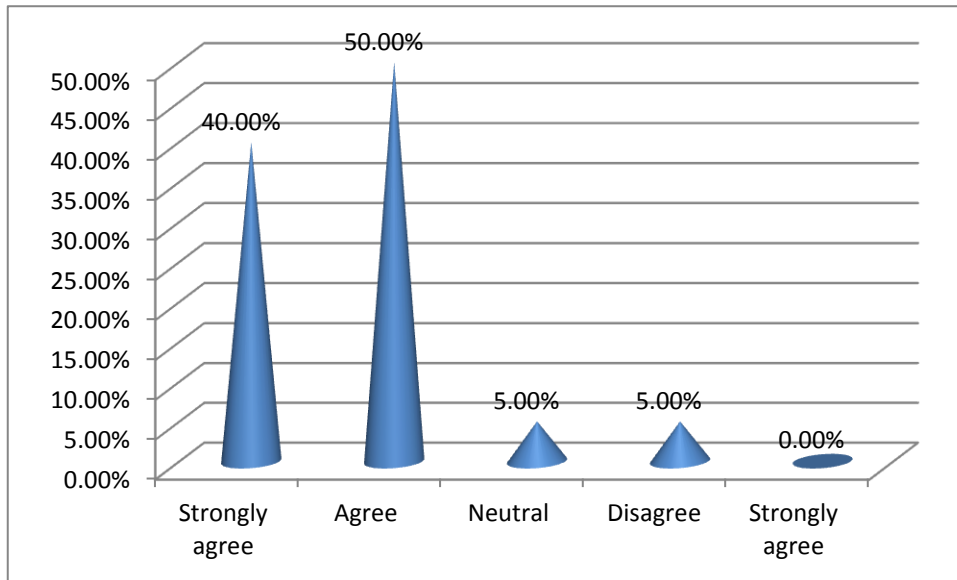
Table (4.6) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Teachers of English language do not encourage writing as an important part of class room activities

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	4	20.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	20	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Table (4.6)

Source: excel 2016

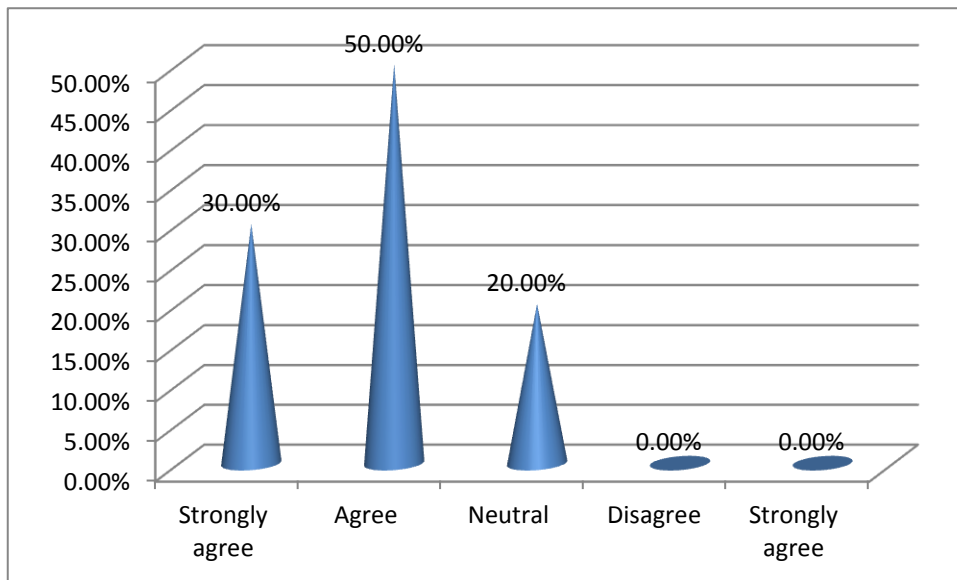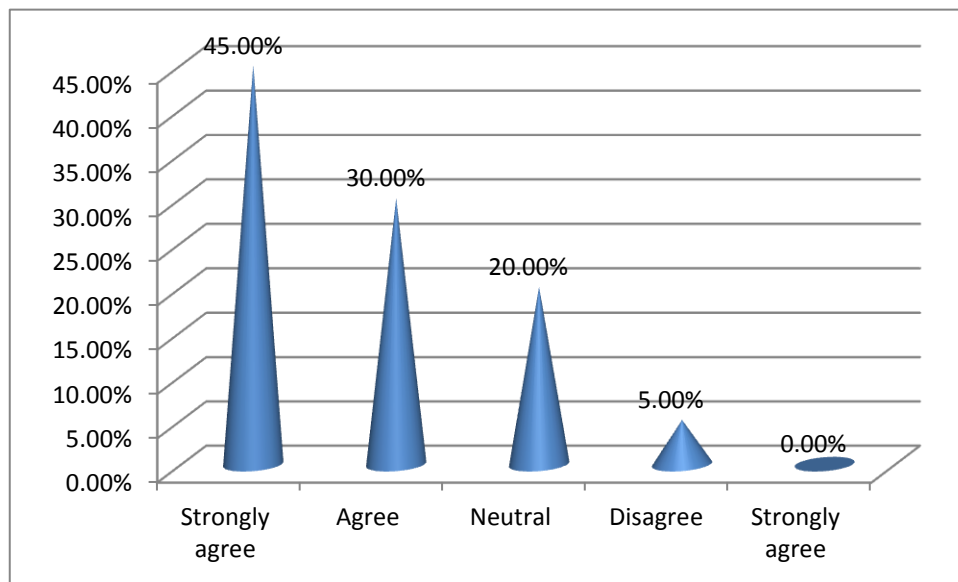Table and Figure (4.6) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%45.0) and Agree by (%30.0) and Neutral by (%20.0) and Disagree by (%5.0) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.7) illustrates chi-square teat results for the difficulties in using grammar and cohesive features in writing

No	Phrases	Chi-square value	df	Sig.	Median	Interpretation
1	Teachers of English language do not use teaching aids (PowerPoint ...) so as to facilitate learning grammar.	17.90	2	0.000	4.00	Agree
2	Many students pay a little attention to learn grammar, because it is boring.	12.40	3	0.000	5.00	Strongly agree
3	1st year university students are unable to identify the function and use of punctuation marks because the process of writing is difficult.	10.00	3	0.000	4.00	Agree
4	Teachers of English language neglect the use of punctuated sentences in class rooms.	13.20	3	0.000	4.00	Agree
5	University syllabus does not sufficiently cover the area of cohesive devices.	12.80	2	0.000	4.00	Agree
6	Teachers of English language do not encourage writing as an important part of class room activities.	16.80	3	0.000	4.00	Agree

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

The results of table (4.7) Interpreted as follows:

1. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the Teachers of English language do not use teaching aids (PowerPoint ...) so as to facilitate learning grammar was (17.90) with P-value (0.000) which is lower

than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

2. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the Many students pay a little attention to learn grammar, because it is boring was (12.40) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

3. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the 1st year university students are unable to identify the function and use of punctuation marks because the process of writing is difficult was (10.00) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

4. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the Teachers of English language neglect the use of punctuated sentences in class rooms was (13.20) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

5. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the University syllabus does not sufficiently cover the area of cohesive devices was (12.80) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

6. The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the Teachers of English language do not encourage writing as an important part of class room activities was (16.80) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically.

4.2 Data Analysis of the Test

Table (4.8) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Question one suction A

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Pass	14	46.7%
Fail	16	53.3%
Total	30	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.7)
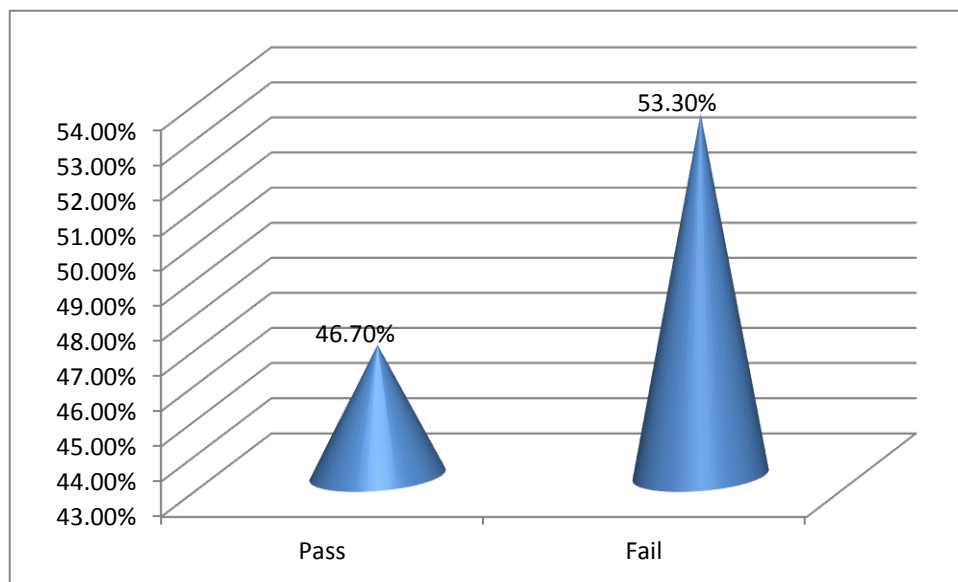
Source: excel 2016

Table (4.8) and Figure (4.7) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification pass by (%46.7) and fail by (%53.3).

Table (4.9) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Question one suction B

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Pass	4	13.3%
Fail	26	86.7%
Total	30	100.0%

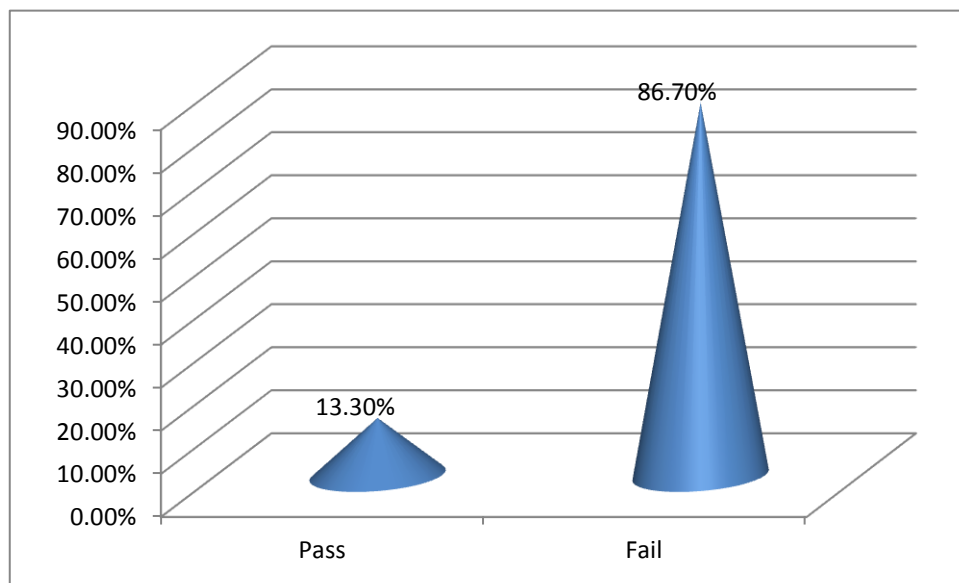Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.8)

Source: excel 2016

Table (4.9) and Figure (4.8) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification pass by (%13.3) and fail by (%86.7).

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Table (4.10) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Question two

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Pass	10	33.3%
Fail	20	66.7%
Total	30	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.9)

Source: excel 2016
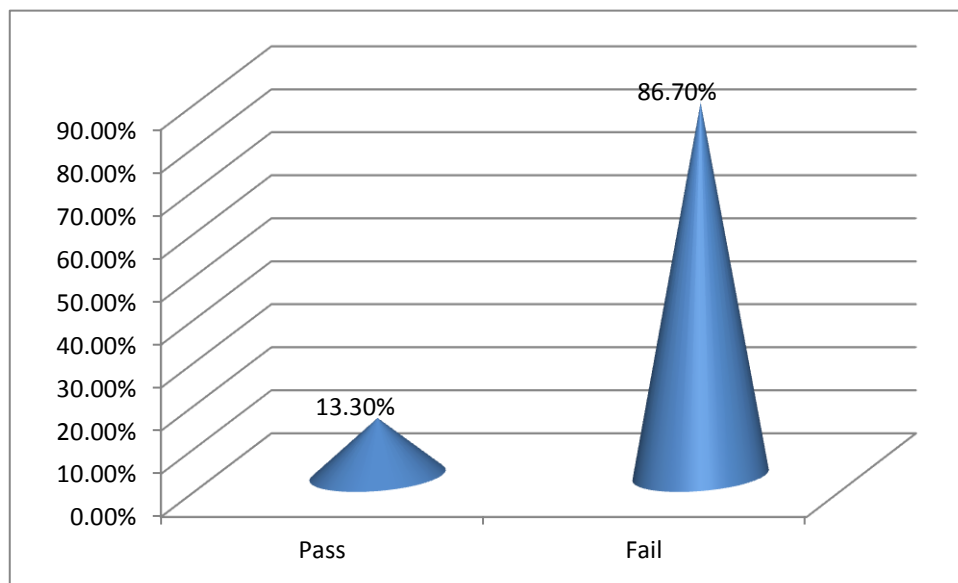
Table (4.10) and Figure (4.9) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification pass by (%33.3) and fail by (%66.7).

50

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

Table (4.11) illustrates the t-test for the EFL students' misuse of grammatical and punctuation features can affect students writing.

N	t-test	df	Sig.	Mean (5)	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
30	-2.97	29	0.006	3.93	1.96	Fail

The value of t-test calculated to signify the differences between thee FL students' misuse of grammatical and punctuation features can affect students writing was (-2.97) with P-value (0.006) which is less than level of significant value (5%) these refer to the existence of differences statistically, the mean (3.96) these refer to the fail.

Table (4.12) illustrates the t-test for the EFL students' misuse of cohesive devices can affect students, writing.

| N	t-test	df	Sig.	Mean (5)	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
30	-8.72	29	2.0	1.77	2.025	Fail

The value of t-test calculated to signify the differences between the EFL students' misuse of cohesive devices can affect students, writing was () with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically, the mean (1.77) these refer to the fail.

Table (4.13) illustrates the frequency and percentage for the English syllabus and student's weakness are behind difficulties faced the students in using grammatical items and cohesive devices in writing

Value	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	51	42.5%
Agree	51	42.5%
Neutral	13	10.8%
Disagree	5	4.2%
Strongly agree	0	0.0%
Total	120	100.0%

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

Figure (4.10)
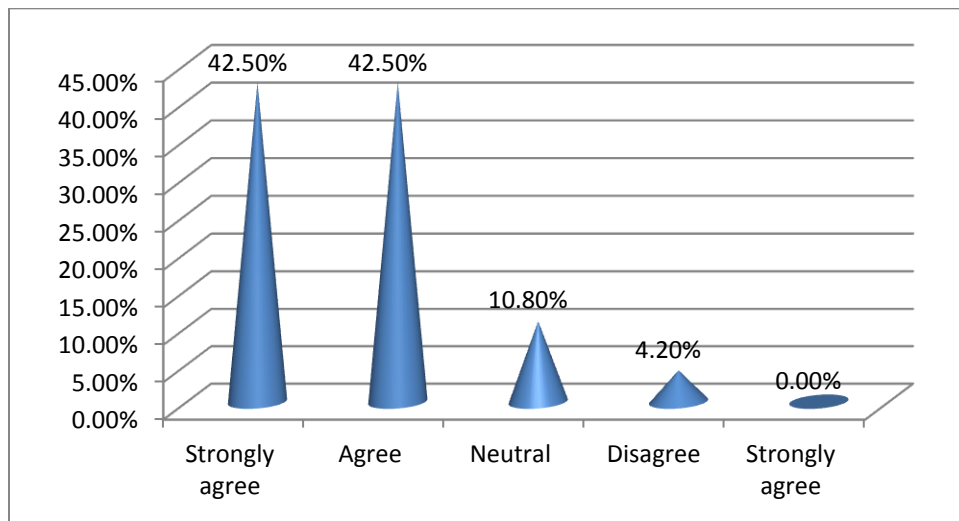
Source: excel 2016

Table (4.13) and Figure (4.10) illustrate the views of the distribution of the Qualification Strongly agree by (%42.5) and Agree by (%42.5) and Neutral by (%10.8) and Disagree by (%4.2) and strongly agree by (%0.0).

Table (4.14) illustrates the Chi-square test for the English syllabus and student's weakness are behind difficulties faced the students in using grammatical items and cohesive devices in writing.

N	Chi-square value	df	Sig.	Median	Scale	Interpretation
20	59.86	3	0.000	4.0	Agree	Significant

The value of chi – square calculated to signify the differences between the English syllabus and student's weakness are behind difficulties faced the students in using grammatical items and cohesive devices in writing was (59.86) with P-value (0.000) which is lower than the level of significant value (5%) These refer to the existence of differences statistically, the median (4.0) these refer to the agree.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary for the whole study in addition to conclusion for the results and findings of the study. Moreover some recommendations will make out of the findings. Finally, suggestions for further studies will be provided.

5.1 Main Findings of the study

This study attempted to investigate a very crucial aspect of learning English as foreign language that is the writing skill. Special attention has been given to the use of grammar, punctuation and the cohesive devices in written texts and the role of these units in coining well coherent sentences.

The study contained five chapters. The subject of the study were first year students in Sudan University at the College of Languages as well as English Language teachers .To investigate the problem of the study, the researcher used three hypotheses.

1. EFL students' misuse of grammatical and punctuation features can affect students' writing.
2. EFL students' misuse of cohesive devices can affect students' writing
3. Local English Language syllabus, teachers, and student's weakness are behind the difficulties face EFL students in using grammar, punctuation, and cohesive devices.

To test these hypotheses the researcher used two instruments which are a test for the students and a questionnaire for teachers. The analysis of the data of the study focuses on grammar, punctuation, and cohesive devices. The study dealt with the main types of grammar, punctuation, and cohesive devices. The result presented in chapter four described the students' use of grammar, punctuation, and cohesive devices in their test answers and showed a real weakness in grammar, punctuation, and cohesion.

5.2 The Conclusions

According to the results of data analysis, the study reveals the following:

As related to the first hypothesis which states that EFL students' misuse of grammatical and punctuation can affect students writing, this hypothesis was confirmed and showed low percentage of using them. For the second hypothesis also confirmed, the result showed students weakness in understanding the relevant meaning of cohesive devices n some texts. And the last hypothesis emphasized students, teachers, and syllabus defect to handle the problem of grammar, punctuation, and cohesive devices.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Study results clarify that the students at university level failed to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency in using grammar, punctuation, and cohesion, more focus should be paid to grammar, punctuation, and cohesion in writing at early stages in schools.

2. More practice should be given to writing.

3. Teachers of English Language should use appropriate techniques in teaching grammar, punctuation, and cohesion.

4. Syllabus should provide texts that encourage writing outside classrooms for example, writing stories, news, diaries, writing clubs…etc .

5. The writing courses necessary to university students to produce a more organized text and using writing techniques.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

1. Investigating grammatical difficulties encountered by secondary level students.
2. Investigating how to encourage writing outside classrooms.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX (1)

Dear teachers,

I would be so grateful for your responding to the following questionnaire. The information taken would be honestly treated for academic purpose only.

This questionnaire is designed to collect data about teachers' views about the reasons behind the difficulties in using grammar and cohesive devices in writing.

No.	Statement	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Teachers of English language do not use teaching aids (PowerPoint ...) so as to facilitate learning grammar.					
2	Many students pay a little attention to learn grammar, because it is boring.					
3	1st year university students are unable to identify the function and use of punctuation marks because the process of writing is difficult.					
4	Teachers of English language neglect the use of punctuated sentences in class rooms.					
5	University syllabus does not sufficiently cover the area of cohesive devices.					
6	Teachers of English language do not encourage writing as an important part of class room activities.					

APPENDIX (2)

Students' Test

Answer all questions   time: 40 minutes

Question One:

A. Draw a circle round the best alternative a, b, or c

1. …………………..On one leg, Silver climbed over the fence.

a. stumbling   b. has stumbled   c. is stumbling

2. T0 ………………. is human. To forgive is divine.

a. errored   b. erroring   c. error

3. My bag …………………. someone just now.

a.been stolen   b.was been stolen   c. has been stolen

4. When she was asked to the interview, Sara spoke ………...   .

a.calming   b. calmly   c. calm .

5. …………… Were you talking to, Hassan?

a. Who   b. whose   c. whom

6. Sara …………. for the bus at the station since early this morning.

a. has been waiting   b. has been waited   c . had waiting

7. When we got to Khartoum , our car ……………. And my brother went to get some spare parts.

a. broke out   b . broke off   c. broke down .

8. Although Omer was good……………….English, he failed the exam.

a. in   b.of   c. at

9……………Pacific Ocean is the largest one in the world.

a .   a   b .   The   c. none of

10. Rivers water is ……………than seas water.

a. little   b. less   c. least

B. Rewrite , apply capitalization , choose the correct punctuation for each sentence below :

apostrophe   (') hyphen (-) The period (.) exclamation

mark (!) parentheses (   ) comma (,)   colon (:) question mark (?)

quotation marks "   " dash (__) .

1. jane and jack went to the market

2. kamal went to the market he wanted to buy cucumber lemon grape and radish .

3. this is ahmed book .

4. the author lived 1890 1950

5. sami says I am Here

6. don't go outside, she said

7. the ghost screamed Samar.

8. where are you rami

9.ive no idea .

10 john and jane who were actually half brother and sister both have red hair.

Question Two

Use the following cohesive devices to complete the sentences below:

  ones, but, there, such as, secondly, do, it, as well as, so, after

1.   My brother likes swimming……………………… i don't like it.

2.   My friend hassan visited youth club, i saw him …………….

3. I like sports……………… …..   running, boxing and football.

4. Yesterday we went to the park, first we saw monkeys ,……… we saw lions.

5. Camels are used for long journeys, but donkeys are used for the short……….. .

6. I started a new job ….……… ihad finished my studies.

7. My brother likes fishing, and ……………do i .

8. David speaks English ………………French .

9. My friend plays music, and i ………….so.

10. Look at the sun. ………..is going down quickly.