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Technology**



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**Investigating the Problems of Paragraph and Essay Writing among
EFL Students of Almergeb and Tripoli Universities-Libya**

تقصي مشاكل كتابة الفقرة والمقال لدى الطلاب الجامعيين الليبيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية لغةً

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Ph.D. in English Language (Applied Linguistics)

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DEDICATION

To my beloved wife, sons, daughters and my whole family

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The thesis writing is indeed a delightful journey through which I discovered that person can learn many things. I owe special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Abdelrahim Mughaddam for his suggestions. From the interactions with him, I learned many valuable things that helped me in my future career. My great gratitude should also directed to co- supervisor Dr. Ahmed Abd Elraman Dona who worked hard and facilitated the problems I face. My thanks also should go to late Prof. Abdusalam Belhaj for his professional help and personal friendship. I am also grateful to Dr. Shandramohan for his generosity of sharing with his profound professional knowledge in the qualitative and quantitative research methodology. This research might be crippled without his help.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the problems that face EFL students and teachers when learning and teaching writing paragraph and essay at university level. A sample of 120 students and 10 teachers of faculty of education was randomly chosen from two different universities, namely: Almergeb University and Tripoli University. A test for the students and a questionnaire for the teachers were used as data collection instruments. For data analysis, descriptive statistical analysis by means of T-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was adopted. The results obtained showed that the overall competence of the group is relatively weak. On the one hand, the group has moderate levels of competence in such areas as punctuation, unity, coherence, spelling, cohesion and word order. The group has also neared moderate levels of competence in Subject – Verb Agreement, Style and Verb – Tense Logic. It lacks sufficient competence in the organization of essay. However, the group has shown a great promise that given proper and adequate exposure, it can fare well in the domain of academic writing. In addition, the teachers did not use suitable ways of teaching writing .The study recommended suitable ways of teaching writing by providing students with guidelines, strategies, and practice in writing in order to prepare them for academic demands; decreasing the use of Arabic in classrooms; and exposing the students to supplementary materials to make writing classes more useful.

ARABIC VERSION

مستخلص البحث

بحثت الدراسة المشكلات التي تواجه الطلاب الدارسين للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية والمعلمين عند تعلم وتدریس مقرر الكتابة على مستوى الفقرة والمقالة في المراحل الجامعية ، اختيرت عينة الدراسة بشكل عشوائي واشتملت على 120 من الطلاب وكذلك 10 من المعلمين من جامعتين مختلفتين وهما: جامعة المرقب وجامعة طرابلس، حيث استخدم اختبار للطلاب واستبيان للمعلمين كأدوات لجمع البيانات، ولتحليل البيانات استخدم التحليل الاحصائي الوصفي وذلك باستخدام اختبار T وتحليل معامل التباين (ANOVA). اظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها ان الكفاءة الكلية للمجموعة ككل كانت نسبيا ضعيفة، لكنها كانت متوسطة في علامات الترقيم والترابط والتلاحم والتهجي وتنظيم المفردات ، كذلك اظهرت النتائج ان العينة اقتربت الى معدل المستوى المتوسط من الكفاءة في موافقة الفعل للفاعل والاسلوب وترتيب ازمة الفعل بشكل منطقي، اما من حيث القدرة على تنظيم المقالة فان النتائج كانت غير مرضية ومع ذلك فقد اظهرت العينة وعدا كبيرا انه بالنظر الي العرض المناسب والكافي يمكن ان تحقق نتائج جيدة في مجالات الكتابة الاكاديمية وعلاوة على ذلك لم يستخدم المعلمون طرقا جيدة لتدريس مقرر الكتابة لهذا اوصت الدراسة بضرورة اتباع الطرق المناسبة في تدريس مقرر الكتابة وذلك عن طريق تزويد الطلاب بالمبادئ التوجيهية والاستراتيجيات المناسبة وممارسة الكتابة من اجل اعدادهم للمتطلبات الاكاديمية والتقليل من استخدام اللغة العربية داخل القاعات الدراسية وتعريض الطلاب لمواد تكميلية لجعل دروس الكتابة لها فائدة اكثر .

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

The Ministry of Higher Education in Libya finds itself, at present, following a period of transition in all domains, education included. One of the greatest challenges is providing sufficient foreign language education so as to meet the growing demand, especially after a long period of time when foreign languages were seriously and damagingly neglected. Consequently, the Ministry of higher education in Libya has taken English education into their consideration. Therefore, they started implementing English compulsorily at the primary school in 2004.

This means that English is taught at all levels in Libya: at primary, secondary and high school levels, in universities, colleges and in special courses for adults. Recognizing the importance of the early learning of foreign languages, the Libyan government would like to make English available to all students starting out in their early stages of education (second, third grades). These children receive about two to three hours of English training weekly in the second and third grades and up to three to four hours per week in the secondary or high schools. Libyan government has also established the secondary school of languages. Students in these schools study Arabic, English, or French as major specialization. However, such schools lack qualified teachers of English and other languages and most of these teachers complain that their payment is low. There are also enough schools – both public and private – in both the large and small cities. The curricula and other facilities in such schools are similar. Classes at private and public schools are usually forty-five or fifty minutes long,

which count as a teaching hour. “The instructional settings and teacher – student relationships observed in English classes at secondary levels in Libya are set by Libyan teachers. For the university level 40% of lecturers are Libyan while the other 60% are Indian lecturers whose accents are very difficult for the students to decipher.

Regarding the way of teaching, there is a heavy emphasis on pronunciation and grammar exercises, large classes with little opportunity for individual participation beyond answering questions and reading passages aloud, and no visual aids other than maps and there is often only one language lab in each department.

However, motivation to study English is strong. For instance, the higher percentage of the students are those who are studying in English departments. The methodology used is a combination of the grammar-translation, reading and audio-lingual methods. Class size is limited to the individual participation of each student; there is a large amount of memory work, the error correction being seen as a necessary part of the teaching process. The university study program lasts for four years. The students spend more than 2500 hours in English classes, on an average of 22 hours a week. Classes last up to 1-1.30 minutes each. The problem with the English teaching process is that it does not focus more on what is considered to be EFL classes, meaning listening comprehension, grammar, translation, conversation and composition. Most of the time is being eaten up by courses like: Introduction to Literary Theory, History of England, Novel, Drama, Phonology, Phonetics, Text Analyses etc.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education in Libya announced that post graduate students of all aspects of education would be required to pass the General English Proficiency Test for three levels in 2008. Now more than 10,000 students have been awarded scholarships in different countries for MA. and PhD. degrees. But the Ministry of Education did not guide those

students to universities which gain high ranks. This is why many of the students start looking for cheaper countries and join universities of low grades and ranks. This is of course because of two reasons: first students' English background is weak. Second the fees given to the students is so low.

The big challenge for English teachers is that they have to develop approaches and methods appropriate for the students who come from different backgrounds and have different proficiencies in English. For example most of the students who are enrolled in universities, or in the faculty of Arts and Education start studying English at the preparatory level and they have never learnt English outside the school system.

Another considerable modification which has also been observed in Libya is the modification in foreign language textbooks. For example the English syllabuses for preparatory and secondary schools are designed by a well-known company namely, Garnet Publishing Limited. The first publication of these textbooks was in 2008. Most of these books focus on teaching language as a whole i.e. the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

However the emphasis is still on grammar, vocabulary, and reading in teaching at the neglect of writing. Moreover in teaching writing at the university level, teachers are still fixed in using one approach. Most of them use the product approach which focuses on imitation and churning out a perfect product, even though very few students can create a perfect product on the first draft.

Most scholars emphasize that writing is one of the most basic and important language skills. In spite of the advanced technology of the means of communication, written language is still very important in our life. To communicate in the target language one must master the grammatical rules

of that language, he has to have a good command of vocabulary, and he has to have a good use of mechanics.

A considerable amount of research has been conducted and reported on the description of academic discourse in English. Academic writing, as one type of academic discourse, is of great importance in the field of research in most universities world-wide. The ability to write academically in English is thus an important need for university students. Generally, academic writing requires good use of vocabulary, grammar such as word order, subject- verb agreement, lack of fragments, non- repetition of the subject; and mechanical considerations such as spelling, punctuation and capitalization, as well as content and organization.

Moreover, writing a complete sentence in one's own language is difficult enough; the skill will be more difficult if students are asked to form a sentence in a second language (hereafter L2). This is because we do not write or speak English by putting words together randomly. Instead we carefully arrange our words into patterns. For example, when a student writes a sentence, he cannot use his gestures, facial expression or give his audience additional clues, since words are his only means of communication. Failure to put these words in correct patterns usually prevents communication because sentences are the foundation of all writing and speaking. The idea of framing a sentence is very important and the mastery of it will lead to effective writing and speaking as well.

The teachers of English language (EL) and students encounter certain difficulties in teaching and learning writing. Zheng (1999) states that acquiring the writing skill seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other three skills. Nunan (1999:271) considers writing an enormous challenge to produce a "coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing" in one's second language. Thus, teachers of writing started thinking of combining more than one approach in order to suit all writing

tasks and prepare the students for the writing that they have to do after they graduate.

The collaboration of adopting more than one approach is one of the changes that happened in English language teaching (ELT). One of the greatest changes was the shift in English language teaching, from a teacher-centered, to a learner-centered approach.

Throughout a researcher's experience in teaching English as a foreign language, it has been observed that the fourth year university students of English department at Almergeb University and Tripoli University have encountered difficulties in writing effectively. Some of these difficulties are in: vocabulary use, grammatical use such as word order, subject verb agreement, fragments, repetition of the subject; mechanical considerations such as spelling, punctuation and capitalization, as well as in content and organization. Unity and coherence are mostly found lacking.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It is noticeable that the fourth year university students at Almergeb University and Tripoli University face problems with both paragraph and essay writing. These difficulties may be due to the interference of first language (here after L1). In negative transfer, for example, an Arab learner of English may write a sentence in English such as "Ali a boy." The student is transferring the utterance from his first language here and because the form in his first language is different, the performance will be, of course, wrong . The second cause of difficulty may be due to the lack of exposure and teaching language methodology. For instance, there is a heavy emphasis on pronunciation and grammar exercises, large classes with little opportunity for individual participation beyond answering questions and reading passages aloud, and no visual aids other than maps and there is only one lab in each department. Thus, the methodology used in teaching

language skills is a combination of the grammar-translation, reading and audio-lingual methods. Class size is limited to the individual participation of each student; there is a large amount of memory work, the error correction being seen as a necessary part of the teaching process. The third cause may be due to the English language itself or to learning strategies. Thus, the study focuses on these difficulties that fourth year university students of Al-Mergeb University and Tripoli University may face when forming in sentences in English at a level higher than the sentence (i.e. paragraph and essay)and then investigate and analyze the students' performance selected from the mentioned universities.

1.3 Research Objectives

Throughout researcher's experience it is clear that students performance in the field of academic writing at university level is relatively weak. Thus, the study is an attempt to achieve the following objectives:

- **To** identify the major problems that Libyan fourth year university students of English face in the field of academic writing.
- **To** investigate the source of these problems that students face.
- **To** investigate the effective strategies and techniques applied by teachers of writing to overcome students difficulties in academic writing.
- **To** explore the potential solutions to improve students writing .

1.4 Research Questions

This study is an attempt to investigate the major problems that fourth year university students of English in Almergeb University and Tripoli University in Libya may face when they are asked to write their essays and do research papers. Thus, this study will try to find answers to the following questions:

- 1- What is the competence of Libyan learners of English in handling the written discourse?

- 2- What is more necessary for Libyan learners of English to be aware of to improve their writing: vocabulary, grammar, style, mechanics, cohesion, unity and coherence.
- 3- Do teachers of English use a particular approach or a mixture of two (i.e. product process approach)?
- 4- What strategies and techniques do teachers of writing utilize in teaching writing?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Considering the problem of the present study as well as the research questions which have been raised and after studying the literature related to this study, it is hypothesized that:

- 1- Despite their low level of English language proficiency, Libyan learners of English at fourth year of university level are not absolute beginners with respect to their exposure to academic writing . However their overall competence in this field of the study is expected to be relatively weak.
- 2- Libyan learners' performance in writing reflects misuse of writing vocabulary, grammar, style , mechanics, cohesion ,unity and coherence .
- 3- Teachers of writing in Libya may not apply more than one approach when teaching writing i.e. Most teachers are expected to apply a product approach in teaching academic writing .
- 4- Teachers of writing may not use different methods and strategies and hence the paragraph essay development is wrongly stated.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study focuses on the major problems that most of students in Libya face when writing their assignments, research papers and projects. Thus, the findings of this study will be so useful for both teachers and students. This study will be as a guide for both teachers and students who work in the field of academic writing. It will also give clear proof about the students' work in their class. Moreover the current study will be useful for teachers who work in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It will help them to adopt suitable methods and activities to make the learning process easy and effective. The results of the current study will also be helpful for course designers and for those who work in the field of education as a continuous process of improvement and refinement.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This stud comprises two groups of the participants. The first group includes fourth year students in the academic year 2012/2013 from two faculties of education at Al-Mergeb and Tripoli universities. The total number of the participants from these two faculties was 120. They all agreed to participate in this study. The second group is academic staff teaching writing skills in the two mentioned faculties. The total number of the sample who agreed to participate in this study was 10 teachers.

1.8 Methodology of the Study

The methodology adopted in the present study is a descriptive analytical approach. The population of the study comprises two groups. The first group is 120 EFL fourth year students, studying at two faculties of educations, namely: Al-Mergeb and Tripoli universities during the academic year 2012/2013. The second group is 10 teaching academic staff who agreed to participate in this study. They are five teachers from each faculty. There are two main reasons behind choosing this sample: (1) fourth

year students are expected to be acquainted with the structure of the essay writing; (2) at this stage of fourth year study, students are asked to write essays as well as research projects. The tool used in this study is of two types. The first type is a written test which is given to the students, asking them to answer the test items. The aim of the present study is to analyse and assess the problematic area of the students written discourse in the two faculties regarding grammar, mechanics, capitalization, unity, coherence, cohesion and essay organisation. The second type is a questionnaire presented to the academic staff teaching writing skills to the students in the mentioned faculties , asking what causing them the most difficulties when reading the students' writings and what approaches and techniques used by those teaching staff in teaching writing. Then both instruments were collected, described and analysed. The results were presented in tables and graphs.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the definition of academic writing, types of writing, cohesion and coherence, paragraph developments and essay structure, such as, topic sentences, supporting sentences, introduction and conclusion, organizing essay, mechanics the approaches to teaching writing, the combinations of more than one approach in teaching writing, as well as the reviews of the scholars' writings ,

2.1 The Definition of Academic Writing

It is not an easy task for both researchers and teachers to determine what academic writing is and what students need to know in order to produce their own body work. Therefore many L2 writing instructors have tried several different approaches most of which fostered controlled composition and did not satisfy students' need to learn how to produce their own body work for other university courses.(Spack1988, p.29)

It is also difficult to have students create their own academic texts . For example Bander as quoted by Spack (1978,p.31) suggests that science students begin with a topic sentence such as " The importance of oxygen to mankind cannot be overstated" and that humanities students show how "the revolutions that took place in France ,the USA , and Russia results in major changes in these countries'. Moreover, academic writing has been defined other scholars. For example Murray R. and Moore S. (2006:ix) state that: "...academic writing is often a highly problematic but always potentially transformational activity. Despite the great diversity within and between different academic disciplines, several common themes are associated with the experience of writing in academia. It is often

encountered as a process that is full of paradoxes".(Murray and Moore , 2006,p.ix)

This means that exploring writing complexity and paradoxes might help a learner to make more sense of his experiences of writing and gain more control over its associated process. For Janet C. Richards &K. Miller (2005)," Academic writing is generally held to be writing that conforms to specific expectations of language, structure, and purpose."

Thus,, Christopher Thaiss and Therese Zawacki (2006,p.4) agree that "it is not easy to give a clear definition to academic writing and most of the definitions provided by scholars are abstract and imprecise." For Christopher Thaiss and Therese Zawacki, (2006,p.4) academic writing is "any writing that fulfills a purpose of education in a college or university in the United States. For most teachers, the term implies student writing in response to an academic assignment, or professional writing that trained "academics"—teachers and researchers—do for publications read and conferences attended by other academics."

According to Bailey (2003,pp.3-5) academic writing means to read around the subject. It is still vital to be able to assess the usefulness of journal articles and books. He also adds that the one who wants to write has to read because reading is an essential step before start writing. Therefore, a student must read and understand as much as necessary for the needs of the essay. Understanding a text is not just a matter of vocabulary; the reader needs to find out the writer's intentions.

For Maggie and et al (2009, p.2) academic writing is seen as a social practice. More recently, the social dimension of student writing has been the specific focus of attention. In the same vein, Bizzell (1986) states 'students' intellectual socialization may be accomplished not only by interacting with people, but also by encountering the writing of others. Bazerman (1980) adds that instructors have to apply various techniques of

absorbing, reformulating, commenting on, using reading. So there is a need to prepare the students to enter the written exchanges of their chosen disciplines and the various discussions of personal and public interest.

In summary it is essential to master the techniques of reading if a student wants to be a good writer. In the same way Spack (1988) supports this saying. He stresses that to become better writers, students need to become better readers. Thus summarizing, quoting and paraphrasing are of great skills that students need to master not only for linguistic purposes but also for analyzing an author's style and logical reasoning.

According to Borg (2002,p.4) "academic writing is a central feature of the British university education". This means that students are expected frequently to write at length during their study, whether they plan to study on an undergraduate or postgraduate course. He also adds that students are asked to write papers which will vary in length from 1,000 words to 10,000 words or more. Although students may face examinations, they have to write many papers outside of class time as assignments and not under examination conditions. These papers will of course include research papers, short and long essays and projects.

For Maimon,1983:122 as quoted by Spack (1988) academic writing is a process in which students' papers become teaching tools of the course and an assigned paper is not a test of their ability to follow prescribed rules of writing , but a chance to examine and organize , and then reexamine and reorganize ,their thinking . Because more than one draft is read, it is not a matter of better luck next time. But try again until you have communicated your ideas clearly. Students can be trained to respond productively to each other's work- in- progress; thus, they can learn how collaboration among scholars evolve. These experiences in collaborative learning help students become socialized into the academic community.

Borg (2002,p.5) states that the requirements for academic writing in Britain are not only academic vocabulary and academic style but also paragraph structure and paraphrasing and summarizing other people's writing. He also adds that direct and indirect quotation as well as the organization of long papers are also important. Hedge (2005,p.7) in her comparison between speaking and writing mentions the requirements of effective writing which are:

"a high degree of organization; a high degree of accuracy, so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and a careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns and sentence structures to create a style that is suitable to both the subject matter and the readers".

After mentioning the requirements for the academic writing, Borg adds that the academic writer needs to study skills so that the learner can: work independently; organize a long paper ; define key terms ; find out what other people have said about his topic ; include their ideas in his paper ; include his own experiences and ideas in his paper ; show the links between the ideas ;and create an academic paper using a computer so that it is attractive and easy to read.

In addition to Borg's idea for the requirements of the academic writing, Tribble (1996,p.67) also mentions that a successful writer should master the following: (1)content knowledge which means knowledge of the concepts involved in the subject area; (2) context knowledge which is the knowledge of the social context in which the text will be read including the reader's expectations and knowledge of the co-texts alongside which this new text will be read;(3) language system knowledge, that is the knowledge of those aspects of the language system(e.g. lexis, syntax) that are necessary for the completion of the task; (4)and writing process

knowledge which is the knowledge of the most appropriate way of preparing for a writing task.

Tribble(1996,p.68) summarizes that if the writer wants to write something effectively, he has to be aware of what to write in a given context, what the reader expects the text to look like in a given context and which parts of the language systems are relevant to the particular task in hand and has a command of writing skills appropriate to this task.

It can be concluded that academic writing is different from writing in general. The former is impersonal. For example, arguments are usually developed with evidence from books and experiments. Thus, academic writing often uses the passive voice, formal language, uncontracted verb forms, and subordination while the latter uses co-ordination, personal, and informal language.

2.2 Types of Writing

Writing is rarely practiced outside the professional world. This is why teachers of writing should be aware of the role of writing in the classroom and the demands made on students. Accordingly, the types of writing should include six categories as Hedge (2005,pp.86-87) suggests. First, personal writing which is the writing for oneself. It comprises various types of aide-memoires, as well as diaries and journals. These writing activities would normally be achieved in the first language but using such type of writing in the language classroom activities is beneficial and motivational as well. Hedge adds that "composing, keeping journals of various kinds can provide valuable practice opportunities". Second, study writing is the writing for academic (WAP) or educational purposes. It comprises all those tasks that can be done by the students in the classroom or at home, such as, writing notes and summaries for themselves or writing essays, reports, and reviews as well. These tasks are read and often assessed by teachers. Third, public writing is writing for a member of the general public

to organisations or institutions. Such type of writing is conventional to follow in the writing. It consists of such activities as writing letter of enquiry, application, and complaint letters to the editor, and form filling of various kinds. The fourth type of writing is called creative writing which can comprise poems, stories, rhymes, drama, all of which can be for oneself or shared with others. Teachers usually use this kind of writing at primary and lower secondary classrooms in the first language education. This is simply it has the values of helping personal and social development, and building self-esteem. Some teacher report great success with creative writing in adult classes too, but care is needed about appropriateness with particular groups. Fifth is called social writing which includes all the writing that constructs and maintains social relationships with family and friends. Examples of this type of writing are: personal letters, invitations, notes, with congratulations, condolences, telephone text message, and personal emails. These will be so relevant to EFL students who are in need to learn the correct formats and formulae. The last category is the institutional writing which relates to professional roles. Possible examples can be given to draw up a core list of this type of writing. The following are some of these examples: agendas, minutes, reports, memos. Hedge (2005) concludes that each profession should have its own specialized texts such as legal contracts, advertising copy, or academic papers. Language students in more specialized groups can usually choose specifications of their own needs in writing English and provide authentic examples. Designing a writing programme for a group of students, teacher has to be aware when establishing a checklist of writing relevant to group or even to have an elaborated list. The following tables explains Hedge's checklist (2005):

Table (2-1) Hedge's checklist about Personal, Public, and Creative Writing

Personal writing	Public writing	Creative writing
<p>Diaries, journals, shopping lists ,reminders for oneself, packing lists, recipes</p>	<p>Letters of -inquiry - complaint - request Form filling Applications for (membership)</p>	<p>Poems Stories Rhymes Drama Songs Autobiography</p>

Table(2.2) Hedge's checklist about Social Study, and Institutional Writing

Social writing	Study writing	Institutional writing
Letters, invitations, notes of condolence Notes of thanks Notes of congratulations, emails, telephone messages, Instructions to families or friends	Making notes while reading, taking notes, making a card index, summaries, synopses, reviews Reports of: -experiments -workshops - visits - essays, bibliography	Agenda, posters, minutes, instructions, memoranda, speech, reports, applications, reviews, curriculum vitae, contracts, specifications, note-making, business letters, note-making. Public notes, advertisements, emails

Source: (Hedge2005:86-87)

2.3 Cohesion vs. Coherence

Generally speaking, coherence and cohesion are two factors of creating discourse. To know the difference between these two terms, learners as well as writers should have back ground of some of the definitions developed by some scholars. For instance, Warriner and Griffiths (1977,p.329) considered the movement from one sentence to the next in a paragraph" should be smooth, clear and logic". For Oshima and Hugue (1983,p.27) coherence in writing is "the movement from one sentence to the next (and in large essays ,from one paragraph to the next)". This means that the movement must be logical and smooth. They also add that "there

must be no sudden jumps. Each sentence should follow smoothly into the next."

From the above definitions, it is clear that a piece of writing whether it is a paragraph or an essay should be treated as a whole unit. In other words, coherence refers to the unity created between ideas ,sentences ,paragraphs and a section of a piece of writing . It also gives the reader a sense of what to expect and ,therefore, makes the reading easier to follow as the ideas appear to be presented in a natural ,almost automatic way. This means that the focuses does not only on coherence as logical relationships between sentences but also takes into account the reader's reaction to a piece of writing.

According to Zemach and Rumisek (2003) coherence is related to unity. Ideas arranged together in a clear and logical way is coherent. Coherence helps the reader to understand the text more easily. This means that the best way to achieve coherence is by creating an outline which helps the learner to make a well-organized essay. However, it is known that there is a is the difference between the lines of words and a good piece of written English. This difference is called *organization* which means the way things are joined together. Like a stone of wall, a good piece of writing is carefully constructed and all the parts are properly linked, not just put next to each other. Phrases are connected to form sentences ; sentences are joined to make paragraphs; paragraphs are linked to together to build up a text. For cohesion, Halliday and Hasan, (1974,p.4)as quoted by Tanskanen(2006) state that" *Cohesion in English* "refers to relations of meaning that exist within a text and that define it as a text ". This means that cohesion is realized through grammar and vocabulary. Cohesion can therefore be divided into grammatical and lexical cohesion. The former includes devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction, while the latter is divided into reiteration (repetition, synonymy etc.) and collocation (co-

occurrence of lexical items) . This means that lexical cohesion concerns two distinct but related aspects: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration is “the repetition of a lexical item, or the occurrence of a synonym of some kind, in the context of reference; that is, where the two occurrences have the same referent” (Halliday & Hasan 1976,p.318–9), while collocation is the use of “a word that is in some way associated with another word in the preceding text, because it is a direct repetition of it, or is in some sense synonymous with it, or tends to occur in the same lexical environment” (Halliday & Hasan 1976,p.319).

Collocations may include any words that are in some sort of semantic relationship, although Halliday and Hasan (1976) draw special attention to superordinate, hyponyms and antonyms. Thus lexical cohesion according to Halliday & Hasan as quoted by John Flower and Michael Mahlberg (2009) is about meaning in text. Lexical items relate to each other and to other cohesive devices so that textual continuity is created. This means that cohesion is considered to be a part of coherence. This consideration lies in the fact that it deals with the techniques of linking sentences and paragraphs in a text . But coherence includes both cohesive devices and patterns of organization.

However, it should be remembered that some scholars argue that coherence can be achieved without cohesion especially in spoken language. The example presented by Widdowson (1978,p. 29) has been used to illustrate that coherence can be created without cohesion:

A: That's the telephone.

B: I'm in the bath.

A: O.K.

In the above example there is no surface textual cohesion in this short conversation, but the three utterances can be understood and still form a reasonable whole, because a situation can easily be imagined in which their

propositional content would make sense together, i.e. cohere.(cf. Tanskanen 2006)

Tanskanen (2006) argues that it is quite difficult to achieve coherence without cohesion. As a result, the same examples have been used by many scholars in several studies to illustrate the lack of surface cohesive elements in a coherent text. For instance, Brown and Yule (1983,p.196) and Lautamatti (1990) make use of Widdowson's constructed example quoted above avoid claiming that cohesion is without any explanatory value, as long as it is distinguished from "underlying semantic relations". The scholars emphasize, however, that an obvious test for cohesion would be to "take any narrative text and, leaving the first sentence . . . , scramble the next few sentences". They anticipate that readers would not find the scrambled collection a text anymore, despite the formal markers of cohesion still present, and thus it would be shown that cohesion cannot guarantee identification as text .(Brown & Yule 1983,pp. 197–198) Thus, from the illustrations quoted by Tanskanen(2006) it can be said that coherence without cohesion can possibly be used but it is uncommon.

From the above discussion, it can be said that the importance of cohesion when it is compared with coherence actually has little explanatory value in text studies. Carrell (1982) agrees with Morgan and Sellner (1980)and maintain that cohesion is only an illusion. An illusion is created by a text's coherence. (cf. Tanskanen 2006,p.17)

2.4 Developing Paragraph Topics

The essential requirements of academic writing is both the paragraph structure and essay structure. Knowing how to construct a paragraph is of great importance. This is simply because constructing paragraphs helps students to develop good essays. This means that to obtain an organized essay, it is necessary for a good writer to be aware of the paragraphs of his writing. The present study in this chapter is an attempt to shed light on

the definition of paragraphs, the elements of paragraphs as well as the length and the shapes of paragraphs, then it will move to the essay structure and its body and outline.

2.4.1 Paragraphing

A paragraph has been defined by many scholars and teachers of writing. For example, Warriner and Griffiths (1977) consider a paragraph as a series of sentences developing one topic. For Johnson (2007,p.15) "a paragraph should deal with one idea and should be clear to the reader.. " For Savage and Mayer (2006,p.2) a "paragraph is a group of sentences about the topic . A typical paragraph begins with a topic sentence ,which introduces the topic." For Zemach and Rumisek (2003) a group of sentences can constitute a paragraph and these sentences refer to a single topic.

All the above definitions and others which are not mentioned agree that the paragraph is the basic unit of organisation in writing in which a group of related sentences develop one idea. Of course a paragraph consists of three basic elements. These are: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. In addition to this a good paragraph should have unity and coherence. Savage and Mayer (2006) claim that the supporting sentences that follow support the idea in the topic sentence with explanations, reasons and other details while the concluding sentence brings the paragraph to the end.

2.4.2 Topic Sentence

A topic sentence states the main idea and limits the topic to one specific area that can be discussed completely in the space of a single paragraph. Warriner and Griffiths (1977,p.309) argue that "the topic of a paragraph should be stated in a sentence somewhere in a paragraph".

A typical paragraph always begins with a topic sentence. This is because placing the topic sentence at the beginning helps the readers by giving them

a clear idea of what is going to be said. However, a topic sentence may be placed at any point in a paragraph. For instance, in a long essay which of course has several paragraphs, it is unwise to begin every paragraph in the essay with a topic sentence. This will make the writing more monotonous. Savage and Mayer (2006) mention four features of a successful topic sentence. First, the topic sentence includes a specific idea, and this idea should not be too general, otherwise, the topic sentence will be unclear or vague. Second, the topic sentence contains an idea or opinion about the topic. This idea is called a controlling idea about the topic. Third, the topic sentence usually appears as the first or second sentence of a paragraph. Fourth, the topic sentence implies the purpose of the paragraph which can be done through explanation, narration, comparison, description, telling causes or effects, demonstrating or arguing, telling steps in a process.

It should be remembered that in academic writing, the topic sentence nearly always works best at the *beginning* of a paragraph so that the reader knows what to expect. This is simply because a good paragraph cannot be made of nothing. The writer must have in his mind details that can be developed. These details are of many kinds such as comparison and contrast, facts, arguments, and other themes that can be investigated and discussed.

2.4.3 Supporting Sentences

The fourth feature mentioned by Savage and Mayer (2006) demonstrate the development of the topic sentence. Warriner and Griffiths(1977,pp.313-319) provide different strategies which help students develop their paragraphs. " To improve the writing skills, students should have the ability to develop a topic sentence into a good paragraph. An effective paragraph cannot be made out of nothing". The students should have in their minds the details which help them develop the topic sentence. These details are of many kinds. For example a topic sentence may be developed by facts, examples,

incidents, arguments, comparison and contrast, definition, or a topic sentence can be developed by a combination of methods mentioned.

Moreover, developing the topic sentence is of course by giving additional details information in support to the idea expressed in the topic sentence. Most of the course books in writing focus on the ability to develop the topic sentence into a good paragraph. For facts, it is necessary to note that the details used to develop the topic sentence is by giving meaning to the opening statement and of course the whole text will sound more scientific. Beatrice and Linda Jeffries (2002) mention four patterns that help the writers develop their ideas. They claim that these patterns are basic and they help the brain of the reader to understand and remember information. The four patterns are: listing, sequence, comparison/contrast and cause and effect. Each pattern has its own signal words . For example, In a *listing* pattern, the writers main idea is a general main statement that is followed by a list of supporting details. some of the signal words for listing are: *a few, several, numerous, other(s), many, a variety, another, in addition, besides, ,one first, second, last....etc.* (cf. Linda Jeffries 2002,p.100) The second pattern is the *sequence* which is used for organizing two kinds of material: events ordered by time as in events in chronological order or steps in process as in experiments, instructions and directions. Some of the signals of this type are: *first, next, last, finally, before, after, while at last, at the same time, ...and so on.* Other signal s for this pattern are: *dates, years, seasons, and plain numbers.* (Ibid. writing Linda Jeffries (2002,p.107)

The third pattern is *comparison/contrast*. This pattern is used to show how two things are similar or different. A comparison comprises two aspects: only similarities or similarities and differences; however, a contrast includes only the differences. Some of the signal words for the comparison-contrast pattern can be of two types: (1)signal words of difference and

signal words of similarities. The former are: *however, in contrast, instead, but, although, though, in spite of the fact that, while, yet, more than, less than, rather, different from, on the other hand, conversely....and so on*. The latter, on the other hand are: *like, as, both, same, also, similar, in the same way, in common, similarly. ...so on*

It is necessary to note that comparative forms of adjectives and adverbs are also used to express difference as in *older, faster*. It is also important that some books of writing classify these signal words or connectives into formal and informal connectives.(cf. Cory1999,p.15)

The last pattern mentioned by Linda Jeffries (2002) is *cause and effect* pattern which are used to show how one event or condition is caused by another. Causes and effects are widely used. This is simply they are a part of person's daily lives. This is why this pattern is usually found in history books, science text, and novels. The following are signal words used for cause and effect pattern: *cause, can cause, lead to, produces, gives rise to, results in, results from, brings about*. Sometimes a signal cause leads to a signal effect which of course leads to another. This is called a 'chain reaction'

It is necessary to remember that when developing a paragraph, students writers should "supply enough information to insure adequate development and should avoid the thinness which results from merely repeating in different words the idea in the topic sentence."(c.f. Warriner and Griffiths 1977,p.326)

2.4.4 Concluding Sentence

The third element of a paragraph is called a concluding sentence which usually sums up the facts in the paragraph. In other words it brings a paragraph to an end. It is important not to end the paragraph with a digression or irrelevant detail. Each sentence in the paragraph should be part of the internal structure. In informal paragraphs, a concluding

sentence sometimes comes at the end of the paragraph which summarizes the information that has been presented. It seems that a concluding sentence appears as a sort of topic sentence in reverse. Similarly, the topic sentence and concluding sentence "hold" the supporting sentences in the paragraph. A concluding sentence functions to conclude the details and end the paragraph. (cf. El-Ashab and Varalakshmi 2008,p.51)

2.4.5 Unity and Coherence in the paragraph

Of course effective writing must have unity. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) state that unity is achieved by discussing only one topic in a paragraph.. El-Ashab and Varalakshmi (2008,p.53) demonstrate that every paragraph should have only one main idea and that idea is stated in the topic sentence. They also add that "each and every supporting sentence develops that idea". Savage and Mayer (2006,p.9) mention three important points which help writers to achieve unity in a paragraph. They are:

"First, a paragraph must have one controlling idea in the topic sentence. Otherwise the paragraph loses focus. Second, the supporting sentences must support ,demonstrate ,prove or develop the main idea in the topic sentence . Otherwise, they will be irrelevant and the unity of the paragraph will be destroyed. Third, the concluding sentence should restate the idea in the topic sentence to reinforce the main idea for the reader."

From this discussion it can be said that unity is a very important characteristic of good paragraph writing. Unity means that only one main idea in a paragraph should be discussed. That is, all the sentences from the topic sentence to the concluding sentence including the supporting sentences are all telling the reader about one main topic. If these sentences in the paragraph are not related to each other and they do not refer back to the main topic, it will be said that the paragraph lacks unity or that the sentence is "off-topic."

For coherence within a paragraph, which is discussed deeply in this chapter (see 3.7), it is necessary to note that coherence in a paragraph means that the ideas have a logical flow. Thus, a paragraph is coherent when its sentences are logically and clearly related to one another and their total effect is the clear development of the paragraph topic. To achieve coherence within a paragraph, it is important to arrange the details in a clear and logical order. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) mention four plans for the arrangement of the details in a paragraph which Savage and Mayer (2006, p.9) call them "the patterns of organization". These four plans are: *time order*, *spatial order*, *the order of importance*, and *comparison and contrast*. Similarly, Hedge (2005, p.86) argues that "the most effective way of helping students to produce a coherent and cohesive writing is to offer practice at the text level".

Hedge (2005) also adds that "activities which encourage the putting together of the sentences out of context are not as useful as those which take a whole text as a frame and develop practice within it". This means that if the context of the writing is clearly established, all the devices in focus can be practiced in a meaningful way.

According to the above quotations mentioned by the scholars, it can be summarized that there are some of the methods for achieving coherence in writing which are as follows:

- Repetition of key terms or phrases is of a great importance to avoid confusion, skillful writers usually repeat words and phrases.
- It is beneficial to use synonyms which means words with identical or very similar meanings. These synonyms can help writers provide some variety in the word choices while helping to connect important ideas.
- The use of pronoun reference; such as, *this*, *that*, *these*, *those*, *he*, *she*, *it*, *they* and *we*, are useful pronouns for referring back to

something previously mentioned. Be sure that ambiguity can be achieved when the reference is clear. These pronouns according to Warriner and Griffiths (1977) are called linking expressions.

- Transitional words are connecting words that serve as a bridge, connecting one paragraph, sentence, clause, or word with another and signal the relationships between sentences and ideas in a piece of writing. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) regard these connectives as transitional devices and they make writing coherent. For Beatrice and Jeffries(2002) these connectives are called signal words. In narration Cory, H.(1999) regard them as linking words and he provides a chart for these adverbial conjunctions. The following table illustrates Cory's (1999,p.60) linking words in narration:

Table (2-3) Cory's (1999) linking words in narration

Earlier	Meanwhile	Next
Before that	At the same time	After that
Then	In the mean time	After a while
Beforehand	Simultaneously	Afterwards
Preciously		At once
By the time/ By then		Before long
Until that time/ until then		Later on
		Soon
		Immediately
		At the moment
		Suddenly
		Then
		Within second/days

Source: Cory, H. 1999:60

Procter, M. (www.writing.utoronto.ca) also calls these connectors as certain specialized linking words. She regards them as powerful tools for pulling ideas together. She also adds that the writer should avoid sprinkling them into the sentences but he/she has to use them to support his/her logic. Procter (n.d) classifies these special linking words into three types: (1) to signal a reinforcement of ideas as *also, in other words, in addition, for example, moreover, more importantly*; (2) to signal a change in ideas; such as, *but, on the other hand, however, instead, yet, in contrast, although, nevertheless, in spite of [something]*; and (3) to signal a conclusion as *thus, therefore, accordingly, in conclusion, finally, so [informal]*.

It can be concluded that coherence makes the paragraph readable and understandable because (1) the supporting sentences within the paragraph are in some kind of logical order and (2) the ideas are connected by the use of appropriate transition signals. (3) Coherence in writing means that all the ideas in a paragraph flow smoothly from one sentence to the next sentence. With coherence, the reader is relaxed and he

2.4.6 The length of the paragraph

It is necessary to note that there is no absolute rule which tells the writers about the length of a paragraph. This is simply because the length of a paragraph depends on the idea being treated. However, an ideal paragraph should not be less than three sentences. The number of sentences is unimportant in a paragraph; however, a paragraph should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly. A paragraph may also be one part of a longer piece of writing such as a chapter of a book or an essay. (cf. Johnson, 2007)

For the shape of a paragraph, it is usually necessary to leave one inch margins on the left and right side of the page. Then indent the first sentence. "The rest of the

sentences should follow each other, so that the paragraph looks like a square with a little space taken out of the corner." (cf. Savage and Mayer 2006:2)

2.5 Essay Structure

An essay is longer than a paragraph. Savage and Mayer (2006,p.15) illustrate that an essay should include three basic elements. They are: "introduction, body paragraph and conclusion". This structure is normal for short essay. Al-Ashab and Varalakshimi (2008,p.113) define an essay as " piece of writing several paragraphs which are tied together by adding an introduction and conclusion. "Johnson (2007) stresses that the material in a good essay should be presented in a logical, coherent way. This means that a good plan is needed when writing essays. Johnson mentions the key elements of an essay which are: introduction , paragraphs , evidence, and the conclusion .By evidence he means the opinions of an expert or the results of a study which support the writer's ideas. This of course can be either achieved by acknowledging the original source through referencing or by using direct quotations. However it is essential to recognize that , the steps in planning long compositions, fall into two main stages: planning and writing . For planning the writer has to include three steps. They are selecting and limiting the subject, assembling materials and organizing outline. (cf. Warriner and Griffiths 1977,p.3)

The structure of an essay will lead the researcher to focus and investigate the three elements of short essays as well as the steps of planning long compositions suggested by scholars and teachers of writing. For example the introduction can make the purpose of the essay clear so the reader can read the body paragraphs with this purpose in mind. In some cases when the paragraph begins a new section, it may be necessary to write a separate paragraph which explains how the following section relates to the piece as a whole. In the conclusion the end of the essay can show the significance of the point, refer back to the beginning of the introductory paragraph, comment on the implications of the point as a whole, or

make a link to the next paragraph. It also gives the reader an impression that the essay is ended.

It should be remembered that each paragraph in the essay should be part of the internal structure. Body paragraphs provide a structure for the writing. They enable the reader to identify and follow the developing stages in ease. It should also be remembered that each main idea in the body paragraphs should refer back to the previous paragraph by the use of transitional devices.. The effective use of essays can be seen in writing when the reader can gain an overview of the content by reading the first main idea of the introduction and feel satisfied by the concluding paragraph. The following is the brief summary obtained from some scholars about the three main elements of the structure of the short essay as an example.

2.6 Introductions and Conclusions

Introductions and conclusions play a special role in the academic essay. A good introduction should identify the topic, provide essential context, and indicate the particular focus in the essay." It also proceeds from general to specific idea.' The last sentence in the introduction is called the "thesis statement", which is the most specific idea in the introduction. The thesis statement of course should not be a statement of facts but should communicate a clear idea or opinion. To avoid repetition, they also add that the words used in the conclusion should not be the same as words used in the introduction. (cf. Cohen and Miller , 2003,pp.31-32)

According to the hand out from the internet by Margaret Procter, University of Toronto Coordinator, (www.writing.utoronto.ca) writing an essay requires a good thesis statements which is capable of creating an argument. Of course there is no absolute rule about the position of thesis statement. Procter mentions some characteristics of good thesis statements. They are as follows: First, it makes a definite and limited assertion that

need to be explained and supported by further discussion. Second, it shows the emphasis of the argument and indicates its methodology. Third, it shows awareness of difficulties and disagreements. Procter also mention some myths about thesis statements and some better idea. They are:

- Use a thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph.
- Construct a thesis statement on one sentence in length.
- A thesis statement must give three points of support.

(cf. Margaret Procter, University of Toronto Coordinator,
www.writing.utoronto.ca)

In essay writing, a conclusion is a paragraph which reminds the reader of the main idea of the essay. Most scholars agree that a conclusion is necessary because it brings an essay to close. Thus, a strong conclusion will provide a sense of closure to the essay while again placing the concepts in a wider context. It will also, in some instances, add a stimulus to further thought. Since no two essays are the same. Freedman, L. and Plotnick, J. (www.writing.utoronto.ca) mention beneficial guidelines which may help the writer to construct a suitable beginning and end for the essay.

They are as follows:

- 1- Students are not asked to put their emphasis on the shape and perfection of the introduction. Thinking deeply in the perfection of the introduction will waste time and effort. The preferable way is to put the great emphasis on the outline and planning of the essay. Sinking too much time into the introduction is dangerous.
- 2- It is not necessary to begin the writing with an introduction. It can be delayed to the last stage.
- 3- It can be fine to leave the writing of the introduction for a later stage in the essay-writing process. Some people write their introduction

only after they have completed the rest of the essay. Others write the introduction first but rewrite it significantly in light of what they end up saying in the body of their paper.

- 4- The length of the introductions should depend on the length of the paper. In other words the size of the introduction should bear some relationship to the length and complexity of the paper. For instance, a twenty page paper may call for a two-page introduction, but a five-page paper will not.
- 5- It is necessary to get to the point as soon as possible. Generally, most of writers want to raise the topic in the very first sentences. A common error is to begin too broadly or too far off topic. Avoid sweeping generalizations.
- 6- Typically a thesis statement appears at the end of the introduction, even though that is not a hard-and-fast rule. A writer may, for example, follow his thesis with a brief road map to his essay that sketches the basic structure of his argument. The longer the paper, the more useful a road map becomes.

(cf. Leora Freedman and Jerry Plotnick, University College Writing

www.writing.utoronto.ca)

2.6.1 The Body

An essay can be divided into three parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Mary and Judith (2006:30) state that the body of an essay may have more than one paragraph and include the information that supports the thesis statement. This information may be in the form of statistics, anecdotes, facts, examples, or reasons. Cohen, and Miller (2003,p.31) also state that "the body of an essay gives support for the opinion or idea in the thesis statement. Support can include: *facts, reasons, statistics, explanation, examples, comparisons and contrast and recommendations*". The body of an essay can be one paragraph or more. It also discusses the subtopics ,one by one . This is why sometimes it

contains many paragraphs. It should be remembered that the writer should be aware of using these paragraphs in an essay . For example each paragraph in an essay should express clearly one point and these paragraphs should be linked together to provide the reader with a sense of logical progression. (cf. Johnson, 2007)

2.6.2 Organizing an Essay

As mentioned before the essay is more complex and longer than a paragraph, so it is necessary to be careful of the organisation of the essay. Scholars mention significant stages that help students to achieve good essays. For Warriner and Griffiths 1977,p. 340), there are four steps in writing compositions . Warriner and Griffiths focus on the importance of the outline and thus they mention some rules that help students construct good outlines. These rules can be summarized as follows:

- 1- The title should be placed above the outline.
- 2- The terms *introduction*, *body*, *conclusion* should not be included in the outline. This is simply because these terms are not topics to be discussed in the writing They are just organizational units in the writers mind.
- 3- The main topics should be given Roman numbers while subtopics are given letters and numbers .
- 4- Subtopics should be indented in a way that all letters or numbers of the same kind will come directly under one another in a vertical line.
- 5- Topics as well as subtopics should be capitalized.
- 6- In a topic outline , there is no period at the end of these topics.
- 7- Alone subtopics should be avoided. It is acceptable to use either two or more subtopics or none at all.
- 8- Parallelism is needed in main topics as well as subtopics . If for example the first topic is a noun the other topics in the list should be nouns. If it is an adjective the others should be adjectives and so on .

Warriner and Griffiths (1977) state that the step which follow the constructing of the outline is the writing of the first draft in which the writer should include all the revisions necessary in achieving a satisfactory final draft. However Jerry Plotnick,(Director of the University College Writing Centre .www.writing.utoronto.ca) states that the terms : *introduction ,and conclusion* can be included in the outline. He gives an example of an outline for an essay on Hamlet as follows:

Thesis: Despite Hamlet's highly developed moral nature, he becomes morally compromised while delaying his revenge.

I. Introduction: Hamlet's father asks Hamlet not only to seek vengeance but also to keep his mind untainted.

II. Hamlet has a highly developed moral nature.

A. Hamlet is idealistic.

B. Hamlet is aware of his own faults, whereas others are self-satisfied.

C. Hamlet does not want to take revenge without grounds for acting.

III. Hamlet becomes morally compromised while delaying.

A. The turning point in Hamlet's moral decline is his killing of Polonius.

B. Hamlet's moral decline continues when he sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to their death.

C. Hamlet already began his moral decline before the turning point in the play, the killing of Polonius.

1. Hamlet treats women badly.

2. Hamlet criticizes others in the play for acting falsely to get ahead, but in adopting the disguise of madness he, too, is presenting a false face to the world.

IV. Though Hamlet becomes more compromised the longer he delays, killing the king would have been a morally questionable act.

V. Conclusion: The play Hamlet questions the adequacy of a system of ethics based on honour and revenge.

Jerry Plotnick, argues that it is not easy to generate an outline . He mentions the way which helps students avoid the most common pitfalls so he argues that:

"the structure of an essay should not be determined by the structure of its source material. For example, an essay on an historical period should not necessarily follow the chronology of events from that period. Similarly, a well-constructed essay about a literary work does not usually progress in parallel with the plot. Your obligation is to advance your argument, not to reproduce the plot. If your essay is not well structured, then its overall weaknesses will show through in the individual paragraphs."

2.6.3 Types of Essays

Generally, many essays cannot be categorized as one type. Some scholars classify essays into two types: descriptive, discursive, and narrative. The descriptive essay requires the writer to describe persons, places , emotion, event, experience, or process and the description should be crisp ,interesting and vivid. Savage and Mayer(2006:33) state that in the descriptive essay,' the writer uses details to tell how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels. The essay should make the reader feel like responding to what he or she is reading'. However, the discursive essays should examine a subject,

consider facts and opinions and help weighing up arguments and sometimes structure them into personal recommendation or conclusion. This type of an essay is considered as the most difficult type. This is because it requires careful analytical and organizational skills. While the narrative essay focuses on the factual information, real-life experience, or inventing a story. The following is the explanation of narrative and descriptive essays:

Narration

Narration is the process of telling a story through the use of text where an event or series of events is retold. Writing narration requires careful skills because everybody has a different style and will tell his/her stories in his/her own way. Alshab and Varalakshmi(2008,p.124) define "a narrative essay as the narration of the incidents, journey, biography, a story...etc". Savage and Mayer (2006) divide narrative organization into three parts. They are: introduction; body paragraphs and conclusion. The following are some general things that should be kept in mind when writing narration:

- 1- A narrator should make use of chronological structure of the events.
- 2- A good narration will typically use strong description and sensory language in order to give the reader a vivid picture of the setting and the events which took place.
- 3- As other forms of writing, narration should typically begin with a thesis or main idea.
- 4- Although a story may just be a story, good narration should allow the reader to understand the thesis and the aspects of its importance.
- 5- The tone is also important because it refers to the attitude writers take towards their subjects. The attitude in a particular composition may be formal, informal, serious, humorous, and so forth. Thus, a narrator has to be aware of his audience. Because the thesis deals directly with the purpose in telling the story, a discussion of audience will inherently follow in order to apply that purpose to a group.

When storytelling, a writer should give thought to what he would like his audience to leave the piece with. The purpose of course should relate directly to the target audience so that the implicit rhetoric does not go unnoticed.

- 6- Events of the story must be listed. Then a narrator starts gathering and addressing many questions such as, which events best illustrate the purpose in telling the story? Which events are clear, and will be most easily related? What is the best order to relate the events? Treat this step like a brainstorming process.
- 7- It is also important to have a temporal sense when writing narration chosen. Because narration tells a story, it is important to have an idea of the story's beginning and end. This will provide a framework with which to work, and allow more accurately and efficiently.
- 8- Choose which events will tie most directly with the purpose of the essay. (cf. Warriner and Griffiths (1977,p.374, Savage &Mayer.2005,p.53, Cohen &Miller. 2001,p.133))

Description

Description is the process by which a writer describes things he or she senses in order to evoke those same senses in the reader. Consequently, much of descriptive language makes use of sensory language (i.e. touch, sight, smell, taste, and sound). The following hints help learners to write a good descriptive essay:

- 1- The first step in any descriptive writing is to choose a topic and begin to work out a thesis statement. If the topic of the piece is merely to describe a particular place, a writer must decide what elements of that place when described in text, will become most vivid for his audience.

- 2- The writer of the descriptive essay must be accurate and must be able to describe what he/she has sensed.

In description, nouns and adjectives should be chosen specifically and efficiently to describe a particular sense. Make the language more powerful and much of description should deal with making the abstract more concrete. For example, the abstract idea of freedom may have many definitions for different readers. When described in terms of the freedom given slaves through the Emancipation Proclamation however, the idea of freedom becomes much more concrete. (cf. Hilton and Hyder, 1992)

2. 7 Mechanics

Capitalization and punctuation serve many purposes in writing. They are considered as the one of the essential writing skills. This is simply because when we write a short sentence we should have little need for other punctuation marks. However, good writing should contain a variety of sentence lengths and structures which need capitalization and additional punctuation marks to separate groups of words and give the reader extra clues. The intention of this section is to give a brief and basic guide to both capitalization and punctuation.

2.7.1 Capitalization

An English sentence is always defined by grammarians as "group of words making a complete grammatical structure, generally begun with a capital letter and ended with a full stop or its equivalent." From this definition, it can be derived that the role of the capital letter is so important. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) explain the different purposes of the capital letters which are: they indicate the beginning of the sentence, which is important for the reader; they distinguish names, title, etc., from the rest of the sentence; they show respect ; and sometimes they are used customarily observed by educators. This means that readers expect capital letters to be used by according rules established by custom. Many course books of

writing focus on the usage of capital letters. Whether the discourse is standard or non standard sometimes depend on the use of capitalization. For example, in standard usage the names of seasons are not capitalized, but some newspapers capitalize them. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) and some dictionaries as oxford (1992) and Macmillan (2002) suggest the following rules that the writer need to follow in order to achieve accurate capitalization:

- 1- It is necessary for the writer to capitalize the first word in any sentence. Writers should always be aware of the beginning and the ending of the sentence. If they fail to recognize the end of one sentence and the beginning of the next ,error will appear. Also, formal statement as well as direct quotation should be capitalized.
- 2- It is also important that the pronoun **I** and the interjection **O** must be capitalized especially when the interjection **O** appears at the beginning of a sentence.
- 3- Proper nouns as well as proper adjectives should also be capitalized. Thus name of persons and places ,such as, geographical names must be capitalized.
- 4- Names of organizations, business firms and brand names of business product, institutions, nationalities, races, religions and government bodies should also be capitalized. Other names of historical events, special events and calendar items are also capitalized.
- 5- It is also interesting to note that the names of the ships, planes, monuments and awards must be capitalized.
- 6- Book titles, authors names and all important words in the title of poems, novels, movies and theses are capitalized.
- 7- Words referring to the Deity; such as, God, Almighty, Lord and the pronouns referring to these words must be capitalized.

2.7.2 Punctuation

In spoken English, speakers have pitch, pace, hand gestures, facial expressions, and other means to let a listener know such things as which points to link to each other and which points should stand on their own, or whether information is necessary in that it restricts meaning or whether it is extraneous. Moreover, ordinary speech usually accommodates a listener's questions, allowing for a more rapid arrival at a joint understanding between speaker and listener. While in written English we need to use punctuation which functions as a rich set of clues that have emerged specifically for readers working through text on a page or screen, visually and two-dimensionally. This is simply the nature of reading demands such clues precisely because text is not speech. Thus a code that can work to give clues about the writer's intended meaning in the absence of such direct two-way communication is punctuation. Hilton and Hyder (1992,p.10) argue that "a piece of writing which has no punctuation or is punctuated incorrectly is impossible to understand and convey wrong message." Thus punctuation is necessary because the misuse of it is misleading and it is usually called in writing run-on sentence. This is why most of the teachers of writing advise their students to have proofreading. Punctuation serves another function as well: that of credibility marker. Using punctuation according to the conventions of the academic community does serve as a sort of license into, and within, that community. This is another way in which conventional punctuation operates on more than a merely arbitrary level: It serves to indicate relationships among ideas in a sentence or paragraph that echo the very ways in which the academic community organizes and develops its lines.

It should also be remembered that using too much punctuation is just as bad as using too little. Warriner and Griffiths (1977) mention two reasons of using punctuation marks: (1) use punctuation mark because meaning

demands it, or (2) because conventional usage requires it. Otherwise omit punctuation.

It should be noted that most of the course books in writing provide appendices which contains common grammar terms and punctuation guidance. The following are hints that may help the writers use correct punctuation marks which are summarized from series of effective academic writing Savage and Mayer(2006) in academic writing², and Savage and Shafiei(2006) in academic writing¹, Warriner and Griffits (1977) ,Hilton andHyder (1992),Oxford dictionary (1992), and Macmillan dictionary(2002). These hints are as follows:

- a) End marks such as a full stop, question mark, and exclamation mark are usually used at the end of the sentence.
- b) The comma is used before coordinate conjunctions between independent clauses; to separate two or more adjectives preceding a noun; to set off participial phrases and introductory clauses; and in certain conventional situations.
- c) The semicolon is used between independent clauses joined by adverbial connectives; and between items in a series if the items contain commas.
- d) Use a colon before a long; formal statement or quotation; before a list of items; and in certain conventional situations; such as, between the hour and minute, volume and number.
- e) Quotation marks are used to enclose a direct quotation-a person's exact words; to enclose title of chapters, articles, short stories, poems, songs, and other parts of books and periodicals; to enclose technical terms and fixed expressions; and dialogues in conversations.

- f) The apostrophe is used to form a possessive case of singular and plural nouns; in indefinite pronouns in the possessive case; and in contractions.
- g) The hyphen is used with compound numbers; with prefixes and suffixes; with compound adjectives ; and to divide a word at the end of a line.
- h) The dash is used to indicate an abrupt to break in thought; to mean namely, in other words, that is.
- i) Use parentheses to enclose incidental explanatory matter which is added to a sentence but is considered of major importance.
- j) Use brackets to enclose explanations within parentheses or in quoted material when the explanation is not of the quotation.

2.8 Approaches to Teaching Academic Writing

In the past several decades, different approaches have been used in the field of teaching writing depending on different issues such as how to determine the importance of correct spelling and punctuation in early drafts, how to treat the different steps in the composition process, and how to analyze a text for its context and purpose.

In the USA, for instance, different approaches are summarized and put into context by Silva (1990). The first one was controlled or guided composition ,in which the main concern was the manipulation of language structures and sentence patterns. In UK however, such an approach, based on substitution tables, stemmed from the work of F.G. French, and In New Zealand from H.V. George.

The second major development in the USA was "current traditional discourse " with its emphasis on the logical arrangement of discourse forms in the context of paragraph. In UK this approach is known as functional approach, in which the main focus at the starting point was on sentences

and paragraphs then moved to the essay development with its structure of introduction, body and conclusion. (cf, Jordan 1997, p.164)

Because the focus on writing was to pass examinations or to get a grade from the teacher, students were not interested in writing and their work became more artificial, giving students no real sense of purpose. Although these problems will persist, there are ways to improve the teaching of this skill to benefit all writing tasks and prepare the students for the writing that they have to do after they graduate. Therefore, the researcher will attempt briefly to describe three main approaches to teach writing, namely, the product approach which is concerned with the finished product- the text; the process approach and genre approach. These approaches have been advocated and used in the past few decades of English language teaching. Then the researcher will look at useful recent research about the combining of more than one approach (see James', 1993) proposals for a combination of product and process, and the genre approach. And see also Badger and White (2000) for a combination of process, and the genre approach. First, the product approach.

2.8.1 The Product Approach

With the product approach according to Brown (1994) as quoted by Guo Yan, 2005 Forum), the main concern of teachers is to focus on what a final piece of writing will look like and measure it against criteria of "vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations such as spelling and punctuation" as well as content and organization.

Likewise Clenton (2000) in a paper entitled academic writing: towards an integrated approach states that:

Typically, students, in classes adopting the product approach, would find themselves studying model texts and attempting various exercises aimed towards drawing attention to relevant features of a text. These exercises would require students to check comprehension by completing sentences or

adding logical connections following which, in a final exercise, students would produce parallel texts based on their own information.

From the above definitions ,it can be said that the normal procedure according to this approach is to assign a piece of writing ,collect it, and then return it for further revision with the errors either corrected or marked for the students to the corrections . (cf. Raimes,1983)

Although the product approach is still very popular, it has received much criticism. For example, Clenton(2000) argues that this approach "fails to consider a non-native student's individual needs in, for example, wanting to determine how native speakers arrive at their final products". The product approach demands that a student focus, sequentially, on model, form, and duplication. White (1988); Jordan (1997) and Escholz (1980) as quoted by Clenton(2000,p.1) argue," in adopting such an approach not only does the very nature of this sequence provide little or no insight into the actual processes involved in managing to arrive at the final product, but the students are also being restricted in what they can write." Escholz (1980,p.24) points out that the product approach encourages students to use the same plan in a multitude of settings, applying the same form regardless of content, thereby 'stultifying and inhibiting writers rather than empowering them or liberating them.'

From the arguments conducted by the mentioned scholars, it can be concluded that firstly, the product approach ignores the actual process created by students. It focuses on imitation and churning out a perfect product which of course very difficult for learners to develop a perfect product from the first draft. Secondly this approach requires constant error correction which of course affect students motivation. Thirdly , the product approach does not effectively prepare the students for the real world or teach them to the best writers in future.

2.8.2 The Process Approach

In the mid -1970s the process approach began to replace the product approach. Jordan(1997)points out that the process approach gives students more responsibility for their own learning. Consequently, students changing classes from product to process, from an approach devoted to correct form and accuracy would potentially find themselves liberated with an approach concerned with individual levels of fluency and expression. With the process approach, students will have chance for discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback and revisions. Feedback is the most important element in the process approach. Jonathan Clenton(2000) highlights the importance of feedback and question, and the significance of assimilating the conventions of a genre for EAP. Clenton(2000,p.5) states:

" Employing the process approach within EAP demands a shift of attention, which, in the case of feedback reveals weaknesses with traditional methods and approaches to the student-teacher relationship."

Consequently, as Jordan(1997,p.172) suggests:

" if an EAP specialist favours the process approach then ‘what [is] needed [is] more specific guidance to help students to understand how to revise their writing and to lead them through the “cycles of revision”.

He also(1997) adds that in applying the process approach, students find their teachers' feedback so useful. This is because this kind of feedback helps the students to improve their writing. Clenton(2000,p.4) argues:

"In support of the process approach, evidence tends to suggest that it is important for teachers not to correct learners or to give correct answers immediately. Presenting students with a degree of autonomy in this way empowers them in becoming active participants in written compositions rather than passive recipients of feedback".

Keh(1990) as cited by Jordan(1997) also mentions three kinds of feedback: peer evaluation, conferences, and written comments. By conferences she means the teacher- student interaction . Thus, Tribble (1996) investigates that the process approach identifies four stages. They are: prewriting, drafting/composing, revising, and editing. These stages are recursive, or nonlinear, and they can interact with each other through the writing stage. (cf. Guo Yan (2005,v43p19) .

This means that this approach has many advantages. One advantage of this approach is that it emphasizes revision and also feedback from others, so students can produce many drafts .The other advantage is that many writers return to the prewriting activities during some stages of revision process to develop a new idea. The third concern of the process approach is that it make its students more responsible , Thus this approach enables students to make clearer decisions about the direction of their writing ‘by means of discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback and informed choices and encourage students to be responsible for making improvements themselves.’ (Jordan, 1997,p.168) In supporting process approach Camacho (2005,v43:30) also states that "through planning ,drafting, revising ,editing with peer and teacher feedback, many teacher have discovered, accepted and implemented approaches". This means that students with this approach will have opportunity to explore a variety of methods of discovery while they read, write and talk to each other. Zamel(1985) as cited by Camacho (2005,v43,p.29) also recommended process writing. She adds "the act of composing should become the result of genuine need to express one's feelings, experience, all reaction within a climate of encouragement". (1980,89) For, Orlova(2013,p.641) process approach is seen as" a multi level , circular process, some stages of which repeat and overlap. In more simple terms, it studies how to produce a piece of writing".

However, Badger and White (2000) argue that the process approach has received many criticisms because it views the process as the same for all writers regardless of what is being written and who is doing the writing and because it gives insufficient importance to the purpose and social context of the piece of writing. (cf. Guo Yan 2005, v43p.20) In the same vein Horowitz, D.(1985:141) claims that the process approach does not prepare students to the real writing. It stresses the need for students to produce multiple drafts of papers in order to allow the process of evaluation and revision to go forward. Rose (1985) also adds that the process approach does not prepare students to struggle with the challenges of academic life. It postpones the students confrontation with the complex linguistic and rhetorical expressions of the academy.

Compared with the product approach, the process approach as quoted by (Jonathan Clenton (2000) seems closer to meeting the needs of the EAP teacher, subject tutor, and student. Moreover, if the aim of EAP is to develop a non-native student's understanding of the actual processes involved in composition then one can discount the product approach as 'process cannot be inferred from a product any more than a pig can be inferred from a sausage' (Murray, 1980, p. 3).

In the discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the two mentioned approaches, it can be concluded that although the process approach views writing as creative and the task of teachers as being to engage students in creative process, the product approach is still very popular within EAP. While writing 'conventions governing the organisation and expression of ideas are very tight' (White, 1988, p. 5) the product approach would seem to be the better of the two approaches. He states that :

...much EAP writing is very product oriented, since the conventions governing the organization and expression of ideas are very tight. Thus the

learner has to become thoroughly familiarized with these conventions and must learn to operate within them. (cf, Jordan 1997:168)

It can be summarized that the implication of this approach is as follows:

1- Teachers as well as students should be aware that there are three stages in the writing process:

1. pre-writing;
2. writing;
3. and rewriting.

2- In prewriting, students should be aware of some useful strategies which help them express their ideas before they begin writing their assignment. These strategies are: note taking, reading for academic success, semantic mapping which is creating a web or a map of the topic, brainstorming, planning, organizing, ordering, and peer interviewing a fellow students to exchange ideas.

3- In writing stage, students will be ready to write a first copy of their plans and outline and making meaningful connections among their ideas and information. Students should also take in their account the Organisation of the information to be included in the paper in a logical and coherent manner.

4- In this stage paragraphing is also important which includes indentation signals to the reader the start of a new paragraph and helps section the paper into units of information that are unified in topic and focus

5- Synthesising which is joining pieces of information from different sources together in a smooth and coherent manner is also essential.

- 6- This stage also includes revising: which is the process of modifying and reshaping the ideas in writing in order to convey the message in the most reader friendly way.
- 7- Editing: is the final process of preparing a piece of writing for an audience. Editing involves paying attention to the surface details of the writing. At this point you should look at:
 - a. word choice
 - b. sentence structure (avoid sentence fragments) see sentence and grammar errors
 - c. Grammar (make sure subject and verb agree) see sentence and grammar errors
 - d. Spelling: do not worry about spelling during the planning , drafting and revising stages.
- 8- Make sure of using correct mechanics such as capitalization and punctuation marks.

2.8.3 The Genre approach

In the 1980s the genre approach became very popular. This is because applying this approach will make students benefit from studying different types of written texts. According to Nunan (1999) as quoted by Yan (2005v43.p.20),"different genres of writing are typified by a particular structure and by grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre. "This means that when students investigate different genres , they will have the ability to perceive the differences in structure and form and apply what they learn to their own writing. In defining genre, Davies (1988) follows Swales and *et al* (1994), who states that:

‘A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are

recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style' .

From the above definition of genre, it is clear that two important terms are introduced: communicative event and communicative purpose. The former includes not only the discourse itself and its participants , but also the role of the discourse and the environment of its production and reception, consisting its historical and cultural associations.

Orlova (2013,p.642) states that "genre approach is aimed at the written message as a " product", where one normally follows certain genre patterns, lexical conventions, style and register conventions..etc." This approach is widely used in ESP(English for Specific Purposes) classroom in order to develop the students' awareness of the requirements imposed by the genres applicable to their field. Blake (1993)ascertains that there are four key concepts that the learners need to be aware of in this stage. They are:

- 1- formats and mechanics- technical accuracy and conventions;
- 2- precision in the use of terminology;
- 3- clarity and brevity- clear organization and usefulness of information;
- 4- technical technological culture awareness- understanding of target situation requirements.

In the same vain Cope and Kalantzis(1993) also mention three stages which are identified by the genre approach to writing. These stages are(1) the target genre is modeled for the students,(2) a text is jointly constructed by the teacher and the students, and(3) a text is independently constructed by each student.

In discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the genre approach, Badger and White(2000) argue that the genre approach acknowledges that

writing takes place in a social situation and reflects a particular purpose and that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis, which facilitate explicit instruction. Badger and White (2000) state that this approach has been criticized because it undervalues the processes needed to produce a text and sees learners as passive. However Yan (2005, V43p.20) argues that:

"supporters of this approach respond that the genre approach has some of advantages ;for example, it succeeds at showing students how different discourses require different structures . [Moreover],introducing authentic texts enhances students involvement and brings relevance to the writing process."

2.8.4 The Combination of more than one Approach in Teaching Writing

Today many writing teachers recognize that it is necessary to adopt more than one approach in the writing classroom. Therefore, scholars as well as teachers start thinking of combining more than one approach in teaching and learning writing. For example, James (1993) as quoted by (Jonathan Clenton (2000) presents a useful discussion, relevant to Horowitz(1986a) who criticizes the process approach of not preparing the students for the real academic world .Also, James' (1993) proposals may provide an appropriate response to claims that the process approach fails adequately to meet the relevant demands of the real academic world. Instead Clenton, J. (2000) suggests that instructional methodology should aim towards recreating the conditions under which actual academic writing is performed. This includes: real academic time constraints; students working on their own specialized subject; students focusing on the needs of a respective readership; and presentation of a text in an acceptable, discipline-specific form.

However, Clenton (2000) rejects the believe that the EAP specialist should faithfully reject one approach in favour of the other, as James' (1993) study in which he implies two approaches namely: process and product. This combination may reward teacher and student with the best of both approaches. The application of the two approaches according to James (1993) is as follows: First, the class is presented with an information-structuring exercise in which students, arranged into four groups, evaluate the significance of a text's component parts as part of a preparation for special subject essay writing. Second, all students, presented with the same data, are then given time to study, discuss, and ask questions. Third, as soon as the teacher assures that all students understand the relevant information, then he has to begin the task. Subsequently, the groups are asked to select and then present their findings to the class as a whole; each group then votes according to which of the other group presentations is preferred. Having discussed the relative merits of the chosen presentation, as a class, individuals then write an introduction and conclusion for the text.(cf. Jonathan Clenton (2000,p.5)

The exercise provided by James (1993) shows the importance of a good outline. In support of James' (1993) claims, Wier's findings (from the results of questionnaires returned by 940 overseas students, 530 British students and 559 staff, on academic writing) 'that subject tutors are more concerned with content than the mechanical accuracy features .James claims that 'what is mainly at fault is their ability to organise information systematically and coherently in ways appropriate to the discipline' (James,1993: 98).

Thus, students should be aware of the processes involved in improving their writing ,and actively to take part in developing those processes. Also students should be aware of the target product . "Their writing will require to conform to the requirements of their disciplines and specific departments

and the appropriate academic genre" (c.f. Jordan ,1997,p.176). To promote pair, group and class discussion according to James, individual awareness will be raised in 'working one's way to a written product that is to be made acceptable to the new (or newly re-entered) discourse community' (cf.Tames,1993,p. 100). Furthermore, this approach seems more appropriate given the time constraints demanded by the real academic world.

James (1993,p. 98) states that there are "serious problems if one favours such an approach to an EAP type of teaching where the writing is source based, examinable and fiercely time-constrained". Thus it should be noted that an approach which aims to develop and strengthen student ability to answer the particular needs of the new academic setting would seem more appropriate. Where students do not have the time for a first and second, and possibly third, draft as proposed by Allwright, James' exercise would seem far more relevant. (c.f. Jonathan Clenton 2000,p.6)

Likewise, Badger and White (2000) suggest that combining the approaches results in a new way of thinking about writing. One example is the synthesis of the process genre approach, which Badger and White have aptly termed the process genre approach. Badger and White(2000) argue that using the process genre approach requires three general guidelines . First , teachers should adopt the role of assistant and guide and work closely with students to encourage them offering helpful feedback and suggestions. Second, teachers should train students about writing strategies. For example if teachers explain how prewriting activities the schemata and outline strategies for the drafting and revising process , students will be more successful in writing compositions. Third, teachers should integrate the four language skills. In other words, teachers should include the listening, speaking and reading skills in the writing classes. This leads to a typical teaching procedure for the process genre approach. This procedure according to Yan 2005,p.20)can be divided

into six steps. They are as follows:(1)presentation,(2)modeling and reinforcing,(3)planning ,(4) joint constructing,(5)independent constructing,(6) revising.(c.f. Yan 2005v43p20)

To sum up, Jonathan Clenton (2000,p.7)in her conclusion states that:

"the product approach remains popular within EAP largely because writing, at least within a British University setting, remains very product-orientated. While teaching according to the process approach would surely help promote understanding of academia's requirements, it seems unrealistic to demand one-to-one feedback, in what already seems a fiercely competitive and cost conscious academic society. Finally, the seemingly unrealistic need for subject tutors to give up more of their time providing EAP writing tasks and syllabuses seems to suggest (sic) that the genre approach, at best, is untenable."

2.9 Previous Studies

Many studies have been carried out on overseas students, Arab learners' written discourse and native speakers' compositions. In this section , the researcher will try to shed light on these previous studies in order to find gaps and make his research more empirical.

2.9.1 Learners' written discourse

Ibrahim et al (2000) have investigated the differences between English and Egyptian colloquial Arabic as well as the Modern Standard Arabic. They state that English uses a relative pronoun that agrees with the noun it replaces, i.e. *who* for subject-case human, *whom* for object-case human, *which* for non-human, *that* for both and *whose* for human and non-human possessive determiners. Egyptian colloquial Arabic uses one relative pronoun /illi/ for the different structures. Modern standard Arabic uses relative pronouns that need to agree with the head noun in case, i.e. nominative, genitive or accusative, e.g /allata:ni/ اللتان vs /allatejini/ اللتين, gender, i.e. feminine or masculine, e.g. /allaḏi:/, التي /allati:/, and الذي

number, .i.e. singular, dual and plural ,e.g. الذي , /allaði:/, اللذان /allaða:ni:/, اللذين /allaði:na/. In other words, English and both Egyptian Colloquial Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic differ in this dimension. Consider the following examples:

1-/hijja di-il-mudarrisa illi juftaha imba:rah/ (colloquial)

/ha: ðihi hija al-mudarrisa allati: ra'ajtuha ams/ (Standard Arabic)

This is the teacher whom you saw her yesterday. (Lit.)

2- /huwwa da il-kita:b illi iddaituhulha imba:rah/ (colloquial)

/ha:ða huwwa al-kita:b allaði: aʕti:tuhu lahu ams / (Standard Arabic) This is the book that I gave it to him yesterday. (Lit.)

Balhouq (1982) investigated the lexical errors detected in the written English of intermediate –advanced Libyan university students. Balhouq is considered as one of the pioneering research project in error analysis from a lexical prospective .He classified the lexical errors into two types : a) L2 based strategies accounting for 31%of the total errors . b) first language based strategies which were subdivided into first language motivated overgeneralization ,literal translation, formal similarity between first language and second language lexical items and language switch. The main concern of Balhuoq's study is the lexical errors.

The present study, however, is different from the Balhouq's study in that the former handles all aspects of the errors on the level higher than a sentence i.e. essay writing.

Averil Coxhead (2000) as quoted by Borg E.(2002) developed 570 word families which occur frequently in academic writing. Borg adds that the most important thing is to be able to understand and use these words correctly. "Although some of these words are used in general English, they often have different meanings in academic English." For instance, the word *vehicle*, which can be a general word for an auto, bus or truck used to carry people or things, in academic contexts; however, vehicle is often used in a

more abstract way, to describe something that people use in order to achieve something or as a way of spreading their ideas, or opinions. Consider the follow example:

-The present vehicle of this economic domination by the North of the South is the multinational corporation (Seitz, 2002, p. 16).

Therefore, it is important to know these words in context. This list which is developed by Averil Coxhead (2000) contains the head words of the families in the Academic Word List. A head word is a noun or verb whose meaning is explained in a dictionary. The family of the head word includes derived words, that is, words that are closely related, such as *accommodate* and *accommodation*. The list is divided into ten shorter lists. These Sub-lists indicate how common a word is in academic usage. For example, a word in Sub-list 1 is approximately twice as common as a word in Sub-list 2. (cf, Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. TESOL Quarterly, 34(2), 213-238.)

Thus, a distinctive feature of academic writing style is choosing the more formal alternative when selecting a verb, noun, or other part of speech. For verbs, English often has two (or more) choices to express an action or occurrence. The choice is often between a phrasal or prepositional verb (verb + preposition) and a single verb, the latter with Latinate origins. Often the verb + preposition is used in every day spoken English; however, for written academic style, the preferred choice is a single verb wherever possible. This is one of the most dramatic stylistic shifts from informal to formal style. Consider the following examples:

*-Researchers **looked at** the way strain **builds up** around a fault. (less formal style)*

*- Researchers **observed** the way strain **accumulates** around a fault. (academic style)*

The following are some examples of academic vocabulary: *assist reduce . create , investigate, raise, establish, increase, determine fluctuate, eliminate*

2.9.2 Learners' written discourse at the level higher than a sentence

Jordan (1981,97) looked at writing difficulties of overseas postgraduates attending writing class in the UK. He used a six – point scale ranging from "no difficulties to a lot of difficulties ". Students were asked to comment on their own writing problems. The findings of Jordan's study are explained as follows:

Table (2-4) Findings of Jordan's study about students' performance

Items	Percentages
Vocabulary	62%
Style	53%
Spelling	41%
Grammar	38%
Punctuation	18%
Handwriting	12%

The same questionnaire conducted by Jordan was also given to the academic staff teaching the students, asking what caused them the most difficulties when reading the writing of these overseas students. The results were as follows:

Table (2-5) Findings of Jordan's Questionnaire to the Teachers

Items	Percentages
Style	92%
Grammar	77%
Vocabulary	70%
Handwriting	31%
Spelling	23%
Punctuation	23%

From the above questionnaire given to both teachers and students, it is clear that style, grammar and vocabulary appear to cause the staff a higher level of difficulties than the students. He also added that "the predominance of academic style, in particular, should be noted . Spelling bothers staff less than it does the students, but understandably, handwriting poses more problems for staff than students!" (cf. Jordan)

Weir (1988c) as quoted by Jordan (1997:48) also conducted a much more detailed and wide ranging survey among staff and students into the writing difficulties of overseas students .Weir reached to a conclusion that "subject tutors are more concerned with the content than with the mechanical accuracy features " (Ibid :48)

A contrastive analysis of English and Arabic has been established by Kharma and Hajjaj (1989: 146,154). They specify the area of difficulty faced by Arab learners of English when they write at the discourse level. The identification of the difficulty was supported by the actual samples chosen from the writings of university students who should represent advanced competence. They state that Arab learners even at the advanced stage of learning, usually fail to do the following: a) to organize a passage or discourse in terms of antecedents and references, b) to use the devices normally used in writing: punctuation, capitalization,, indentation ,

paragraphing..e.tc. , c) to develop a paragraph appropriately in terms of unity, coherence, order of sentences and topicalisation, d) to use a various types of compositions development; process; narratives; description, analysis as well as a combination of these into long composition, e) to develop the whole theme in several paragraphs.

It is clear that Kharma and Hajjaj study is different from the present study in that the former focuses mainly on the identification of the difficulty that Arab learners face when writing in general. The latter; however, deals with the problems that fourth year university students face when writing their essays and research papers. Thus the present study analyzes and assesses the errors committed by the cross section of fourth year university students of the faculty of education in both Khoms and Tripoli.

Bloor and Bloor (1991) also investigated the difficulties that overseas students face in writing. They analyzed the writing of these students at Warwick University retrospective views of their expectations about writing in English. Bloor found that 50% had expected to be assessed on the basis of objective-time examinations and not on the basis of written term assignments. These false expectations as Bloor said stem from students' belief that universities have universal academic conventions. The Bloor also noted that the reason behind unintentional plagiarism was the lack of the awareness of the need to acknowledge all the sources in the writing of the essays or research reports.

Many studies have been conducted on the interference of L1 on learning L2 writing. Among studies contrasting L1 and L2 strategies , there have been those that dealt with how students resort to the L1 in order to think about the task writing. One of these studies was conducted by (Jones&Tetroe,1987)on the transfer of writing strategies. The findings showed that 6 Spanish students in an ESL programme used the same strategies for writing in L1 as for writing in the target language (hereafter

TL).This means that there are similarities among strategies used by the students for the two processes of writing.

Uzawa and Cumming,(1989) also conducted a small-scale study compared the writing processes in Japanese and English. The participants were only 4 intermediate learners of Japanese as a FL. The participants had been given two tasks one writing an essay in Japanese and the other in English on the same topic. The results showed that the participants 1 and 2 provided little verbal report about their writing processes in both languages, but they performed the same content information in the two essays. Participant 3, with beginning- level proficiency in Japanese, depended strongly on the L1 essay, attempting to keep the organization and information while simplifying the Japanese essay. Participant 4 was unable to perform an essay in Japanese. He provided general use of translation in order to complete the task.

In the same vain Uzawa (1996) conducted another research on the use of translation in teaching and learning writing. He compared between the writing tasks directly in the TL and the translated writings. Uzawa found that a)most of students used a "what- next approach" in both the L1 and L2 writing tasks and a sentence by' sentence approach" in translation task, b)attention patterns in the L1and L2 writing tasks were similar. However, there is quite different in the translation task- attention to language use in the translation task. It was significantly higher than in the L1and L2 writing tasks. Thus, scores on language use in the translation task ranked higher than on the L1 and L2 writing tasks. The most important issue revealed in Uzawa's study is that the students whose proficiency is lower benefited most from the translation task.(cf. Uzawa 1996,p.171, The Modern Language Journal, 85, 2001)

Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) also conducted a study on a group of Japanese students. The subjects were given an hour of class time to write

each two essays on two successive days , one in Japanese which is the participants(L1)and then one in the FL which is English . Then on a third day they were given another hour to translate one of the essays into English(TL). This technique gave students much time to make sure that their translated essays were of the highest quality writing they could produce. Kobayashi and Rinnert suggested on the basis of their results that, at least for students at lower level of proficiency , " a translation strategy in writing might be beneficial and that as their proficiency improves, they would switch more to direct FL writing , depending on what they were writing ". (cf. Kobayashi and Rinnert ,1992,pp.183-184)

Brooks(1996) also carried out a study on the use of translation in writing. The subjects were thirty-one intermediate level students. They were instructed to prepare the two essays out of class, first in draft form, and then in revised one. This means that the students were not under time pressure and spent a considerable amount of time doing their task. The first form was written directly in the TL (French); the other one was translated from a rough draft into English. The findings of Brooks study revealed that subjects did better in the translation mode therefor, their performance in the translated mode were higher than in direct writing mode. When ratings of performance were broken down by categories : accuracy/cohesion, coherence, and argument, the translated versions of the essay ranked significantly higher on the cohesion/coherence dimensions (i.e. the extent of cohesion as contributor to coherence). "These results may be illustrated by an analysis of syntactic complexity in the writing , where higher levels of subordinations and coordination were viewed as indicators of "good writing".(cf. Brooks, 1996,p.172)

From the above illustrations it can be concluded that Uzawa and Cumming,(1989), Uzawa (1996) ,Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992), and Brooks studies(1996) are different from the present study. First, these studies

conducted their research on small groups of learners from Japan and France while the present study's populations are 120 Libyan students. Second, these studies used open questionnaire in which the participants were asked to write directly in the TL and then they were asked to translate a topic from their L1 to the L2. The researchers' aim was to compare writing directly in the TL with the translated writing tasks and to compare the strategies used by the learners in both languages writing tasks. However, the present study has adapted the Single-Group Experimental Design, in which the data from a single group, in this case, a group of Libyan learners of English as a foreign language, are analyzed for the group as a whole. comprising multiple choice test items, and the researcher's aim is to investigate and analyze the difficulties that the Libyan learners, studying at both Almergeb and Tripoli Universities may face in the field of academic writing.

There is a concept that, by the end of the writing courses, certain changes have happened in the students that are more far reaching than the predicted outcomes described in the syllabi. These changes appear to occur across the board, independently of the specific objectives spelled out for specific courses. Concerning expected changes, some aspects of the students writing during the course are encouraging and interesting while some are disappointing. Of course, many researchers in both L1 and L2 conducted studies on these issues. They have dedicated much effort to evaluating the writing outcomes of writing instruction from various theoretical points of view. These changes were examined quantitatively and qualitatively in an earlier study by three authors at two Israeli universities in 1999. They are :Katznelson, Perpignan, & Rubin. The researchers suggest that other changes, which are not strictly in writing, get developed along with these writing outcomes. The researchers gave a term of these other changes as "by-products" of writing courses and contend that, "within the students'

general educational context, they are equally worthy of attention, although to our knowledge they have not received it".

According to these researchers "by-product" means any outcome of the EFL writing courses, including a change in the students' perceived attitudes or behaviors, which may have an effect on aspects of their lives other than their writing in English. According to the researchers the word "outcome," is used as a term which describes the learning process that they suspect "comes out" of their courses, insofar as they see learning as an ongoing, continuous process.

Katznelson, Perpignan, & Rubin, (1999) conducted their study on a sample consisted the outcomes of 72 students in EFL Academic Writing courses, with both qualitative and quantitative data interpretation. The tools used in their study included a quantitative evaluation of student performance using a timed essay and a pretest posttest design, as well as the measurement of one aspect of a specific social and affective variable in writing. These two quantitative measures were used for triangulation with the data from learners' and teachers' perceptions. These perceptions of outcomes of writing courses are called "by-products," The qualitative data were used to explore and document in this study. The qualitative approach the researchers employed enabled them to collect a beneficial information about: (1) student perceptions of their development in writing in English, (2) student perceptions of other outcomes or "by-products" not in English writing but related to course participation, and (3) teacher observations of changes in students during the writing courses.

The sample of the study comprised 72 undergraduate and graduate students, studying at two Israeli universities. All participants in various Writing for Academic Purposes (WAP) courses were taught by the researchers at Tel Aviv University and Bar-Ilan University. The following are the procedure explained by the researchers of the course:

The students belonged to three groups—each taught by one of the researchers: Group 1 (n = 19), Group 2 (n = 28), and Group 3 (n = 25). Group 1 consisted of MA students from various disciplines enrolled in required writing courses in English as a Foreign Language Department. Group 2 was made up of PhD students from various disciplines participating in Academic Writing in English for Graduate Students courses, about half of whom were required to take these courses. Group 3 consisted of undergraduates majoring in English Literature enrolled in two required courses in the Writing Programme of a Department of English. The common objective of all the writing courses included in this study was to develop students' academic writing skills in English. To achieve this objective, all the teachers had applied a process approach in which students are asked to learn appropriate strategies for planning, composing, revising, editing, and using bibliographical and technical resources for producing their papers. Writing skills were integrated with reading and speaking. All courses also enhanced a teacher– student dialogue and used portfolio and self-assessment as an integral part of the writing process. All courses lasted in one semester. Two and four hours of instruction were given per week. However, the specific objectives of each course were different. For example in the MA and PhD courses (Groups 1 and 2) students learned to write in a variety of genres (e.g., abstracts, grant proposals, dissertation chapters) and worked on real world tasks such as abstracts for conferences, literature reviews, and research reports for publication. In the undergraduate composition courses (Group 3), on 1 All PhD students at Tel Aviv University and Bar-Ilan University and all MA students at Bar-Ilan University fulfill academic reading and writing requirements in English during their studies. At Bar- Ilan students from various departments are enrolled in the same EAP courses; at Tel Aviv University many of the courses are ESP. (cf,146 H. Katznelson 2001,pp. 141–159)

In order to explore developmental changes in writing in English and, more importantly, perceived outcomes or changes not related to writing in English, the researchers at two Israeli universities designed a tool for their study which consisted of two open-ended questions, previously piloted on an equivalent population, designed to enhance students' reflection on their learning. These two questions were as follows:

1. *What areas of writing in English do you feel you have made progress in?*
2. *Are you aware of any other outcomes related to your participation in this course (aside from your development in writing in English)? YES/NO.*

Although the questions of the study were presented in English, students were given the option of responding in Hebrew. This is simply because the students' reading comprehension in English is at a very high level as required by Israeli universities, whereas their writing proficiency might not be sufficient to express themselves freely. All the students in the sample were consenting participants in the study. The participants have no idea about the exact purpose of the research. The reason behind this was to elicit responses unbiased by leading questions. Interviews were also conducted with 10 students in order to elicit students' in-depth reflection on changes they might have undergone along with the changes in writing.

For the interviews, students were aware of the purpose of the research, as they were asked to go in depth into some of the responses they had given in writing. Each researcher interviewed her own students in order to take advantage of the connection already established with these students during the semester course. This participant observation approach was adopted, despite the possible bias of the student responses, because it was decided to forego objectivity in favor of depth of understanding (Allwright, 1988). The results of the study were as follows:

For the open-ended Question 1-*What areas of Writing in English, if any, do you feel you have made progress in?* — all students described their

progress as they perceived it. The response to Question 2 -*Are you aware of any other outcomes related to your participation in this course (aside from your development in writing in English)?* — showed a very **high** number of **positive** responses; only three students out of the total of seventy-two answered in the **negative**. When investigated the nature of these outcomes (Whatever your response, please explain), our subjects revealed a wide variety of perceived areas of change. For the categories of change, data reduction and sorting revealed three main categories of change. Initially, the findings were classified into two major categories: “Perceived Outcomes in Writing in English” and “Perceived Non-Writing-in-English Outcomes” (“By-Products”), which reflected the responses to the two open-ended questions, respectively. However, a number of responses to the question about their own writing in English (open-ended question 1) indicated that some students, not surprisingly, found it difficult to draw a distinct line between what they perceived to have learned about writing in English from what they perceived to have learned about writing in general. Similarly, some responses to the question about the other outcomes of writing courses, the “by-products” (open-ended question 2), could be analyzed as outcomes in “writing in general,” . This is simply because some of the students are developing writers in their native language as well as in English, and thus cannot distinguish the skills. This means that there are similarities among strategies used by the students in both L1 and L2 writing skills. This lack of discrimination in student perceptions of their development as writers in L1 and writers in L2 is linked to the yet unresolved issue of transfer of writing expertise (Connor & Kramer, 1995; Cumming, 1989).

From the above studies it is interesting to note that the subcategories consisting of a relatively high number of responses came from all three groups, revealing that there were similarities in the perceptions of change,

despite the differences between them in population, course contents, and methodology. The results showed that the largest number of responses (48) was in the category called “Grammar,” which shows that students did perceive changes in writing in English. This finding was not necessarily reflected in the teachers’ evaluations of their students’ written work as described in their journals or in the pre/posttest writing sample reported on in a previous study (Katznelson et al., 1999). This finding showed two related explanations: Firstly, students’ previous experience with learning English likely placed emphasis on this aspect of their learning to write, therefore, they would be expected to obtain acquired a greater awareness of it. Secondly, students have acquired the metalanguage with which to express grammatical concepts, which may not be the case for other aspects of their writing. For the category “Academic Writing” (41) which is almost equal in size seems that many of the students have perceived changes when dealing with style, audience awareness, and genre. Thus, according to Katznelson et al., 1999 study there is an understanding that academic writing has specific discourse features different from those of other discourse. For the sub- category “Making Connections,” which refers to the ability to use connectives effectively between words, sentences, and ideas, the respondents were relatively few (14) but students expressed strong feelings in their post course interviews. The subcategories for outcomes in writing in general and representative responses can be seen as follows:

These perceived outcomes were fascinating in that they crossed the line the researchers had initially drawn between responses to “changes in writing in English” (Question 1) and responses to “other changes” (Question 2), illustrating that students were not always sure whether these changes related only to their writing in English or to their writing in general. The large number of responses in the “Content and Structure” subcategory

(67) shows that there are similarities regarding form and content in both their writing in English and to their writing in another language. This means that many students who had acquired knowledge about the form and content of written texts that they felt was applicable both to their writing in English and to their writing in another language. One interesting subcategory is “Expressing Ideas Coherently.” Students declared in their interviews that training in expressing their ideas coherently in English helped them in applying a logical line of thinking in writing in other languages and in other disciplines. Another thought-provoking subcategory is “Awareness of Self in the Writing Process,” a subcategory that was generated from virtually the same number of responses as the subcategory “Learning to Write.” This shows that some students began to see that academic writing does not occur spontaneously, but rather it is some sort of conscious developing process, in addition to the implementation of writing strategies. The fact that this subcategory appears within “Perceived Outcomes in Writing in General” expresses the students’ recognition of the transferability of such awareness to other writing contexts.

The subcategories of the other major category of findings, the perceived non writing outcomes of writing courses that the researchers have called the “by-products,” and representative responses can be seen as follows:

The largest category of findings, in terms of number of responses, referred, as might be expected, to the acquisition of skills in areas other than writing, such as reading, speaking, thinking, or even the use of technology. For instance, several students later reported in their interviews that the writing course prompted them to become computer literate. The researchers suggest that there are several reasons for this finding. Firstly, in a course designed to develop skills, it is likely that skills will interact with each other to produce results (e.g., reading impacts writing and vice versa).

Secondly, it may be that students will more easily acknowledge learning skills in a course that is designed as a skills course rather than acknowledge affective or behavioral changes in that course.(cf,146 H. Katznelson 2001,pp. 141–159)

It was satisfying to note that no more than four out of the total number of students in all three groups perceived “negative” non writing outcomes from their writing courses, and that those four did not all come from the same group. After reflecting on these outcomes, within their overall context, the researchers judged that the first three were not necessarily negative, since any added awareness either of ability or of “being” might be considered a positive step in the learning process.

The “by-products” revealed by the students’ responses to the researchers’ questionnaire represent a wide range of aspects of the students’ knowledge, behavior, and what they have called “being.” The results lead the researchers to the general conclusion that the larger subcategories of the “by-products” (i.e., Other Skills and Affective Outcomes) were not course-specific and were generated from responses coming from all three very diverse groups. On the other hand, several “by-products” which did seem to be course-specific (i.e., Teamwork or Broadening of Knowledge Base in Other Fields) could be attributed to specific elements of class practice or circumstance. The findings indicate that these courses may be catalyzing affective and behavioral processes, in addition to cognitive ones. (H. Katznelson et al. / Journal of Second Language Writing 10 (2001) 141–159 155)

All the students who participated in the study did, in fact, report on perceived improvement in some aspect of their writing. This declared success might have, in some cases, been due to a desire to please the teacher, in order to show that her efforts were appreciated; or it might have been, as mentioned previously, due to an acquired ability to express

achievement in the terms taught in the course (e.g., improved organization of ideas, constructing a thesis, coherence). These terms were likely to be more accessible to our students than the terms related to “by-products,” which perhaps explains why they were more frequently used in the responses. Even so, students recognized that many additional outcomes had impacted other aspects of their academic lives. This gave them a feeling of satisfaction, which might have led to the perceived increase in self-esteem students reported. One aspect in the design of the study that may have triggered students’ attention to their personal growth was the self-reporting instrument. This instrument may have been the factor that allowed students to focus on outcomes such as “growth in being.” gave the teachers’ perspective.

Moreover, this study has opened the door to an in-depth case study of a number of the subjects (Katznelson, Perpignan, & Rubin, 2000), where interesting correlations between writing ability, writing apprehension, and the impact of the “by-products” on individual learners are revealed. As for teachers’ perceptions of the outcomes perceived by the students, here too, the researchers have only begun to explore the relationship between students’ perceptions and teachers’ perceptions of student growth and development. There are, for example, some surprising entries in teachers’ journals which suggest that students’ perceptions of the changes they undergo combined with teachers’ perceptions of these changes may play a part in changing the “being” of teachers.

By taking a step back and observing this picture from a distance and in context, the researchers may be able to better understand the outcomes of academic writing courses, primarily from the student’s perspective. They have also become intrigued by the possibilities for inquiry that have been opened up by this data, an avenue of investigation that examines the overall educational value of the teaching of writing to university students.(156 H.

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It should be noted that reading-based writing is of great importance in academic training across disciplines. This is why many empirical studies have been conducted on this basis (Carson, 2001; Cumming, Kantor, Powers, Santos, & Taylor, 2000; Horowitz, 1986). Most of these studies have shown that reading-based writing tasks are real-life challenges for L2 learners in academic contexts.

Baba (2009) investigated the effect of aspects of the lexical proficiency of EFL students on their summary writing in English by controlling for the impact of a range of linguistic abilities in English and Japanese (L1). The subjects of her study were sixty-eight Japanese undergraduate students, learning English as a foreign language. Their age ranged from 18 to 25. The subjects of the study were 47 female students with percentage of (69.1%) and 21 were male with a percentage of (30.9%). About one-third of them were majoring in English literature, another third had not yet chosen their majors (because they did not have to until their third year), and the other third of the students were majoring in various fields such as philosophy, psychology, and sociology. All of them had at least 6 years (an average of 8.36 years) experience learning English in junior high school and high school in Japan. The participants shared similar educational and cultural backgrounds, so these intervening variables were controlled in the study. Their level of English proficiency varied, but most were in the intermediate level. They were asked to write two summaries of English texts in English. Their English lexical proficiency, English reading comprehension, English proficiency, knowledge of Japanese vocabulary, and writing proficiency in Japanese as well as the length of summaries were assessed. This means that the participants completed eight tasks: (1) writing two summaries in English, (2) a test of English vocabulary size, (3) a test of depth of English

vocabulary knowledge, (4) a word definition test in English, (5) reading comprehension tests in English, (6) a self-assessment questionnaire of communicative English ability, (7) writing a composition in Japanese, and (8) a test of Japanese vocabulary knowledge.

The results of Baba's study revealed that different aspects of lexical proficiency associate differently with L2 learners' summary writing performance. The study also showed that the effect of lexical proficiency on the summary writing task was not pronounced compared to the L2 abilities (English proficiency, reading comprehension, and writing fluency). The most notable finding of Baba's study (2009) was that the ability to define words gave a significant contribution to the students' summary writing performance even after the effects of reading comprehension and writing fluency were controlled for. This study also focused that the ability to write sample sentences, the other component of word definition ability, will not make students uniquely predict summary writing performance, and this difference between the effects of the two components merits closer examination.

The students in the mentioned study tended to use more words with paradigmatic relations in writing definitions than in writing sample sentences. Some such examples were synonyms of the test items, e.g., *movie for cinema, show or display for exhibit, shop or mall for market*. The participants also tried to give superordinate words for test words (though not always successfully), e.g., *leadership for presidency, and machine for projector*. Sense relations such as synonyms, hyponyms, antonyms are involved in a class (e.g., *produce and consume*) and co-hyponyms (e.g., *the old, the poor, the weak*). In contrast to definitions, most sample sentences contained words that had associative or syntagmatic word relations with the test words (e.g., *watch and cinema, serious and problem*).

It should also be noted in Baba's study (2009) that words with paradigmatic relations were found in relatively effective summaries. For example, in the Sample Summary, the first sentence of the first paragraph states, “*Democrats and Whigs held different views on the economy.*” This sentence is a brief paraphrase of a sentence, “*Whigs and Democrats held different attitudes toward the changes brought about by the market, banks, and commerce.*” In the paraphrased sentence, *views* are used as a synonym for *attitudes*. Likewise, the first sentence of the third paragraph in the Sample Summary, “*Democrats and Whigs also differed in their perspectives on the role of government,*” comes from a source sentence, “*Whigs and Democrats differed not only in their attitudes toward the market but also about how active the central government should be in people’s lives*” (c.f. Baba, 2009)

To sum up this study revealed that the ability to define words made a unique contribution to the students’ summary writing performance even if they drew on the source text, that is, when their knowledge of words as well as background knowledge was controlled for to some extent. Moreover, the effect of this ability on summary writing was not fully explained by those of reading comprehension and writing fluency. Thus, Baba's study has empirically shown that the well-structured semantic network of words and the ability to productively use this network as well as the L2 writer’s metalinguistic knowledge constitute the construct of summary writing.

Thus, Baba's study is different from the present study in that Baba's study is considered as pioneer in investigating the construct of summary writing with componential analyses, although further research is necessary to explore not only how the writers summarize texts in L2, but also what language abilities and knowledge they need to write a summary. This line of investigation will shed light on the mechanism of summary writing from

an additional angle. The present study, however, does not deal with summary writing. This is simply because summary writing is a special type of writing in which writers inevitably use words from a source text. Of course, entire dependence on the source text causes problematic, as shown in the relationship between lexical diversity and the quality of summary writing that was found in this study.

A study was also conducted on the relation between reading and writing by Camacho (2005, v. 43 no.3p. 29). In the Camacho's study both reading and writing are similar. This is simply because they both depend on the reader's or writer's background and knowledge to construct meaning. Camacho has also investigated that reading and writing are two separate processes with little in common. Camacho reached to a conclusion that both reading and writing share similar linguistic and cognitive elements.

For instance when readers read and writers compose, they plan, draft, align, revise, and monitor. In the same way Stotsky (1983) investigated the relation between reading and writing. His conclusion was as follows :(1) good writers tend to be better readers than are less able writers,(2)good writers tend to read more frequently and widely and to produce syntactically complex writing,(3)writing itself does not influence reading comprehension,(4) reading experiences have as great an effect on writing as direct instruction in grammar and mechanics .

Likewise Spack (1985b, 1988) investigates that: "To become better writers, students need to become better readers." Thus techniques of reading according to Spack are considered as a part of L1 and L2 composition instruction. For example, marginal notes, note taking, working journals can be of great importance in training students to discover and record their own reactions to and evaluations of a text. For this purpose "summarizing, quoting and paraphrasing are skills students should master not only for

linguistic purposes but also for analyzing an author's style and logical reasoning".

Hweidi (2003) conducted a study on the text-coherence problems in writing. He assumed that Libyan learners may have problems with producing coherent essays when writing on a general topic in English. Therefore, his study investigated the text-based coherence problems in the written materials produced by university students within the area of Shabiat Al-merghib. The subjects of Hweidi's study were third year university students in the departments of English in the faculties of arts and science – University of Al-Mergheb (i.e. Faculty of arts and science at Al-Khoms); and the teacher training higher institutes in both Zliten and Al-Khoms. The number of the sample included (40) pieces of writing in essay format produced by the subjects themselves. The findings of Hweidi's study indicated that the subjects' knowledge of the different conjunctions and structures was rather limited. Therefore, 25% of the subjects failed to parallelize the first element of the sentence with the element following the conjunction "but". It is significant that the subjects had great problems in the use of transitional device. For instance, 45% of the subjects failed to use transitional devices correctly. However the subjects had fewer problems with repetition of the key words, chronological order, and topical order. The study also showed that the subjects had no problematic area in climactic order, spatial order, and pronoun reference.

From the above analysis it can be declared that the present study is different from Hweidi's study regarding the number of the subjects, and the number of the universities. For instance, the samples of the current study with more than (120) subjects from two main universities in Libya namely: Almergeb and Tripoli. Moreover, the current study will focus on the errors that Libyan learners may face in the field of academic writing as well as the techniques and the methodologies used by the teachers, teaching the

participants in teaching writing skills ;whereas, Hweidi's study focused only on the techniques used by the learners in text-based coherence.

In addition to the previous studies, Jamoum (2006) investigated the effectiveness of the interactive writing techniques on improving English writing skills of secondary school students in Zawia - Libya. The problem of the study is that secondary school students are unable to write well. Jamoum suggests interactive writing techniques which depend mainly on group work and pair work in the method of teaching. Jamoum(2006) in his study provided a theoretical survey of the nature of writing and the approaches to teaching writing .Then the study lays more emphasis on the interactive language teaching and learning, interactive writing techniques, group work and pair work in which interactive writing techniques depends. Jamoum conducted his study on two groups of second year basic science. One of them was taught writing by using the interactive writing (experimental group) while the other was taught writing by using traditional teaching methods (control group). Two tests, pre and post were prepared to measure students' writing skills. These two tests were divided into two parts: the first was a objective test , and the other was a subjective test (essay test).The pretest was given to the two groups at the beginning of the investigation period, while the post test was held at the end of the experiments. The mean scores of the two groups were compared by using a statistical tool called t-test.

The findings of the study showed that the mean scores of the post test of the experimental group is higher than the mean scores of the post test of the control group and the mean scores of the post test of experimental group is also higher than the mean scores of the pre-test of the experimental group . This proves that the interactive writing techniques develops the students' writing skills.

Jamoum's study is different from the present study since Jamoum conducted his study on a secondary school students; whereas, the present study will be conducted on the fourth year university students in English department at both Al-Mergeb University and Tripoli University. The present study , moreover attempts to investigate the subjects' discourse errors and relate them to different causes while Jamoum's study assumes that the main cause behind students' weakness in writing is the use of traditional methods and he hypothesizes that the students' writing skills will be improved if they are taught writing by using the interactive techniques.

Dawood (2006) also conducted a study on the manifestation of cohesion and coherence in the written English discourse of Palestinian Senior university students at Al-Quds University. Dawood identified a major and serious weakness in the students' ability to write cohesive and coherent essays. He arrived at the conclusion that:

- There is an astonishing degree of weakness in the student's ability to produce cohesive and coherent text in English

- There is a very serious weakness in the students' manifestation of the following rhetorical and linguistic features :

- a) Cohesion (local) reference, conjunction, lexical, ellipsis, and substitution

- b) Coherent (global): A) Text-Topicality : development, focus , reference, and continuity, B) Text- Typology: organization, deviation, and parallelism

- There are statistically significant differences in the number and in the use of cohesive devices in texts written by those students.

- There is no statistically significant correlation between the number of cohesive devices written by those students and the quality of those students' writing performance in general.

- There are statistically significant differences within the students' performance both in class and home
- There are no statistically significant differences within students' writing skillfulness at the performance level and at the cognitive level.
 - There are no statistically significant differences within students' writing abilities at both the performance level and at the cognitive level

It can be concluded that Dawood's study and Hwiedi's study are similar in some aspects and different in another. Both of them conducted their study on Arab learners and both of them dealt with coherence in writing. However, Hweidi's study is different from Dawood's study regarding the number of population and the methods of analysis. For Hweidi' study, the population of the study was (40), while in Dawood's study it was (100). In addition, Hweidi's study also ignored to analyze and assess the errors which are not related to the text-based techniques in writing on general topics in English . However, Dawood identified and analyzed a major and serious weakness in the students' ability to write cohesive and coherent essays.

Dawood's study and the present study share some similarities. Both of them are conducted on the level higher than a sentence i.e. an essay level. However, the two studies are different in another aspect which is the Dawood's study manifests and analyzes students' performance at both class and home while the present study conducts the questionnaire in the class. Dawood study is also different from the present study in that the former 's instruments were written compositions of (100) students in the university of Al-Quds in Palestine and the students were asked to write two versions: one in class and the other in home in order to manifest and analyze students' ability to produce cohesive and coherent essays ,while the latter 's instruments: (1) has adapted the Single-Group Experimental Design, in which the data from a single group of (120) students distributed into two universities namely: Al-Mergeb University and Tripoli University at the

departments of English in Libya, in this case, a group of Libyan learners of English as a foreign language, are analyzed for the group as a whole. The analysis is based on their achievement in terms of the marks scored by them in a paper and pencil test comprising multiple choice test items. The scores obtained by the group as a whole were subjected to the tests of statistical significance: t tests or ANOVAs. (2)A questionnaire is also distributed to the academic staff teaching the participants, asking what approaches and techniques used when teaching the writing skills to the students.

Farahat's study (1994) and Abd El Raheem's study (1999) are similar. Both Farahat and Abd El Raheem investigated grammatical errors in the students writing performance and both studies were conducted on the university students studying at English department. However the context of each study is different from other. The subjects of Abd El Raheem's study were Palestinian fourth level students while Farahat's subjects were Sudanese freshman students.

The sample of Farahat's study was 180 female and 120 male students at the English department Faculty of Arts, University of Khartoum. The data of Farahat's study was collected from 300 final exam composition scripts of first level students enrolled in the academic year 1991. Farahat classified the errors into seven major types: articles, tense, grammar, concord, pronominal, copula, adjective positioning and adverb positioning errors. Farahat (1994) states that these errors are due to two main causes . The former is learning strategies adopted by the subjects which were the omission of the grammatical formatives such as articles, the past tense marker (ed.), wrong selection and wrong addition while the latter is mother tongue interference. For Abd El Raheem (1999), the subjects were fourth year university students studying at different Palestinian institutions namely, Al Azhar University Gaza, Islamic University of Gaza and Al

Aqsa University. The findings of his study showed that the students' overall competence in writing is below average. *Forty three* students got a pass degree , *ten* students did better and got good grade degree and only *one* students got a very good grade.

Bataineh (2000) investigated and analyzed the compositions written by Jordanian first , second, third, and fourth – year university English foreign language students . Her study aims at identifying the types of errors made in the use of the indefinite articles. Bataineh stated that the analysis revealed that all errors, except one , are independent of the learners' native language .She added that among other sources the only type of error which could be traced to the influence of Arabic was the deletion of the indefinite article. Bataineh found that developmental factors and common learning strategies as simplification and overgeneralization were found to account for the majority of learners' errors.

In the same vein Abu Jarad (1986) analyzed students' written performance. The subjects of his study were 32 first year university students from different six faculties of the Islamic University of Gaza. They were asked to write three paragraphs of free composition. He reached to a conclusion that the learners use English tenses unsystematically and that the learners shift from one tense to another without any prior indications that they were going to shift the tense and without any considerations for the tense rules of the TL. Abu Jarad also noticed that the subjects faced difficulties in forming in sentences, containing progressive tenses as well as concord in relative clauses. He gives an example of verb to be "*is*" which appears only in forming negation.

Similarly, Radwan (1988) analyzed grammatical and lexical errors committed by Syrian university students in dealing with noun phrases. The subjects of Radwan study were Syrian freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in the Department of English –University of Aleppo. They were

required to write a short essay on a topic to be chosen from a variety of topics. The results of Radwan study showed that the overall percentage of grammatical errors was 52%. He noticed that the main cause behind such errors is the mother tongue interference. He also found that his subjects used the strategies of transfer of language patterns, overgeneralization of L2 structures and approximation.

The present study; however, is different from Radwan's study in that the latter is limited to analyze both grammatical and lexical errors committed by Syrian university students in dealing with noun phrases ;while , the present study comprises 67 MC items , administered to a sample of 120 Libyan students studying in the fourth year of University courses of various disciplines. All of them have studied English as a foreign language in their school level as well as university level programmes. The multiple-choice items were based on language use and expressions. Such features as grammatical categories, punctuation, spelling and nuances of continuous writing were tested. Each right response was given one mark: the scoring was for a maximum of 67 marks under 10 headings. The ninth sub-heading 'Formal / Informal Writing' and the tenth sub-heading 'Style' were taken together under one common heading – Academic Writing. Similarly, the eleventh sub-heading 'Adequacy' and the twelfth sub-heading 'Thesis Statement' were taken together to form the last heading – Organizing Essay.

In addition, a set of subject experts and classroom teachers evaluated the multiple choice items selected for testing. They (N=10) were also administered a questionnaire containing 30 items. The five-point attitude scale, based on the Likert model, attempted to study on their attitude towards teaching writing and their approach to it.

Chandrasegaran (2001) conducted a study on the awareness of rhetorical goals and academic writing competence. It was on a group of university

student writers at the National University of Singapore. The findings of her study have application to all university student writers with problems in academic written discourse production. The main aim of the study was to investigate student writers' decision-making behaviours during pauses in the course of writing. The aim was to discover what decisions are made, and how they are made. One of the questions the investigation seek to answer was: what factors influence the decision-making procedures of better writers but do not figure prominently in the decision-making of less competent writers. The cognitive behaviours of six subjects, identified through three composition tasks as moderately competent writers, were compared with the behaviours of six basic writers in the group. The results of Chandrasegaran 'study (2001) consistently showed that moderately competent writers pay more attention to discourse-level and rhetorical considerations in their composing decisions in both planning and revising than basic writers. Unlike basic writers, the moderately competent writers are more aware of the larger rhetorical problem as they write and are tend to be less restricted to the local concern of generating the next word or sentence. The results also showed that during the stage of planning main ideas, supporting ideas, and organisation, the moderately competent writers in the study were also more of employing rhetorical strategies; their planning decisions were more often influenced by rhetorical parameters such as anticipated reader response and the aim of the discourse.

Similar results were also obtained for revising decisions . There was a much higher incidence of rhetorical strategies among moderately competent writers. This means that they did better on the level of revising organisation and development at paragraph or whole text level and they made changes to meaning at sentence level.

A statistical procedure called MANOVA (Multivariate analysis of variance) was used as tool on five extended pause behaviours. The reason behind choosing this type of the statistical procedure was to discover what cognitive writing behaviours are most responsible for the difference between moderately competent writers and basic writers. It was as follows:

1. Planning main idea, i.e. generating and selecting key points at paragraph, section, or whole-text level
2. Discourse-level planning, i.e. planning organisation and development
3. Revising meaning, organisation, or development
4. Using rhetorical strategies of decision-making
5. Global level of focal concern, i.e. the perspective adopted during decision-making encompasses considerations of thesis, purpose of the essay, writer's role, and audience effect.

For each of these behaviours the MANOVA procedure computed a statistic called the univariate F. This univariate gives us the degree to which the behaviour is responsible for the difference in competence between the two groups of writers. The results showed that while all five behaviours have significant effects on writing competence, the use of rhetorical strategies and a global level of focal concern in decision-making have the largest univariate Fs, showing the key role they play in the production of successful writing. The highly significant Fs obtained for rhetorical strategies and global-level concern were assured by the students' descriptions of their composing behaviours during interviews. In describing their planning strategies, for instance, students in the moderately competent group were more likely to refer to some element in the rhetorical situation such as intended audience effect or the writer's intent to project a particular stance in the global thesis.

However, the present study is different from Chandrasegaran' study in that the former investigates the major problems that Libyan university student may face in the field of academic writing and the methodologies used by the teaching staff ,and the students' performance was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively.

The results presented in Chandrasegaran' study confirmed that there was an awareness of rhetorical goals in the students' writing which is considered as a significant factor in students' success in academic writing. According to the results obtained from Chandrasegaran' study(2001), it seems that in order to write effectively, students should approach the act of writing as a response to a rhetorical problem, that is, perceive any writing assignment as an act of persuasion driven by a purpose to make a tutor-reader of the acceptability of the student writer's position on the given topic or issue convinced. The student who takes a rhetorical approach to writing would see an essay or other written assignment not as an occasion for reproducing knowledge found in reading, but as a communicative task the performance of which involves taking into account the target reader's expectations, the assumptions and value system underlying the assignment instructions, and the discourse moves (e.g. support claim, cite authority, etc.) considered necessary following the conventions of discourse in the discipline. It follows that the means to developing academic writing competence is through the development of awareness of rhetorical parameters. The latter ;on the other hand, was to investigate student writers' decision-making behaviours during pauses in the course of writing, to discover what decisions are made, and how they are made.

Vardi Iris(2012) investigated the power of the feedback on the characteristics of university students' writing in Curtin university- Australia. The study investigated the types of changes that third year university students made to their writing assignments in response to

feedback. The findings revealed the types of feedback influenced change as well as the types of feedback which did not influence change. The findings also showed the implications for universities and lecturers who want to improve their students' written assignments through feedback.

Orlova Irina (2012) analyzed the learning situation at the Faculty of Engineering of the Latvia University in order to identify both the lacks and the needs in technical writing. The participants of this study was 75 students who study civil engineering and mechanical engineering. They were first year university students. The tool used in this study was testing, observations, interviews and case study. Compared with other language skills, writing takes the lowest position in terms of evaluation results. Thus the study revealed the following: The learners believe that the major reasons for the lack of progress in FL writing are: a) lack of background writing instructions at secondary level, b) lack of communicative element in the process, c) lack of experience, d) lack of peer real-life purpose for writing and fear of errors and teacher evaluation.

In the same vain, Alamri (2012) conducted a study on the value of the web 2.0 application Facebook and blogs in developing students' academic writing skills. The study also explores if the social use of these tools boost students' academic skill in writing. The population of her study was 75 participants ,studying at Sultan Qaboos University. They were third year college of arts and social science. The findings of the study showed that when respondents were asked to indicate their frequency in using Facebook in enhancing their academic writing proficiency, the students find using Facebook in developing their writing useful and interesting. 40 %of them state that Facebook makes them think about and interact with the readers of their posts.31.75 %of them use formal language when they write on Facebook, 32,2% will always be careful of sentence structure and paragraph organization,35.6 % will always check word spelling and learn

new vocabulary. For blogs, the results showed that blogs are beneficial in terms of enhancing grammar proficiency and fluency. The present study of course is different from Alamri's study in that the latter has limited to investigate the use of new technology in enhancing students writing skills and did not tackle accuracy and form. The present study ;however, focuses on the students' performance regarding paragraph organization, mechanics, cohesion, conference , unity and so on.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This study is an attempt to analyze and assess the problems that fourth year university students, studying at English department in both Almergeb University and Tripoli University in Libya may face when writing reports and essays. For such purpose, a descriptive analytical approach is designed for this study.

3-1 Research Design

The data adopted for this study was obtained and collected through two types of tools. The first tool was a test presented to 120 students who were fourth year university students of the two faculties of education in both Al-Mergeb and Tripoli universities during the academic year 2012/2013. All fourth year students of the mentioned faculties agreed to be participants of this study. The second tool was a questionnaire of five likert-scale type presented to the academic teaching staff, teaching writing to fourth year students in the two mentioned faculties. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers to explore what causing them the most difficulties when reading the students' writings and what approaches and techniques used by those teaching staff in teaching writing. The present study adopted a descriptive analytical approach. Thus, the results obtained from the sample were discussed, described and analysed.

3.2 The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this study comprised two groups. The first group included fourth year students in the academic year 2012/2013 from two faculties of education of Al-Merbeh and Tripoli universities. They were all Libyan students. They were 80 students at faculty of education of Al-Merbeh university and 40 students at faculty of education of Tripoli university. The total number of the participants from these two faculties was 120 fourth year university students. They all agreed to participate in this study. The second group was academic staff teaching writing skills in the two mentioned faculties. The total number of the sample who agreed to participate in this study was 10 teachers of writing. They are 5 teacher from each faculty.

3.2.1 Selection of Students

Two English departments of the fourth year students at Faculty of education in two universities ,namely: Al-Merbeh and Tripoli universities were selected. The aim behind choosing these two universities is due to the higher numbers of the students studying in these universities. Then the researcher examined the students' performance regarding writing problems at the two English department in the two mentioned universities . The total number of fourth year in both departments was 120, with 20 boys and 100 girls. The participants for the Faculty of Education in Al-Merbeh University were 10 boys and 70 girls; whereas, the participants at the Faculty of Education in Tripoli University were 10 boys and 30 girls. The former is a mid-sized rural faculty with about 480 students, studying at English department. There were totally 120 students of first year, 130 students of second year,150 students of third year, and 80 students of fourth year. The latter, however, is a sized urban faculty with about 700 students. According to a survey administered to understand the students' background before the study, the results showed that the participants share similar

educational and cultural backgrounds, so these intervening variables were controlled in the study. Their level of English proficiency varied, but most were in the intermediate - advanced level. The findings will be so useful for Libyan learners as well as for teachers of English. The total number of the participants is 120 from the two faculties of education in both Almergeb University and Tripoli University. The female participants were 100 ,whereas, the male participants were 20. Thus the percentage for female is **83.33%**, and the male is **16.66%**. The reasons behind choosing the fourth students are as follows:

- Fourth year university students are supposed to be acquainted with the structure of the essay writing.
- It is noticeable that writing essays, reports, and projects is limited to the fourth year university students.
- Fourth year students have been exposed to effective academic writing 1 at the first year, effective academic writing 2 at the second year, effective academic writing 3 at the third year, and research paper writing at the fourth year. This means that the sample population of the present study is exposed to the three levels of effective academic writing. All students of fourth year agreed to participate in this study.

3.2.2 Selection of Teachers

Teachers who agreed to participate in this study were five in each faculty. According to a survey administered to understand teachers' background in teaching writing, it has been observed that the target teachers have been teaching writing for more than five years. This means that they have long experience in teaching writing for the university level. A questionnaire was presented to the academic staff teaching the students in the mentioned universities, asking what causing them the most difficulties when reading the students' writings and what approaches and techniques used by those teaching staff in teaching writing. This questionnaire consists of a series of

questions and prompts .The mode of the questionnaire used in this study was a paper-and- pencil questionnaire administration where the items are presented on paper. The purpose of these questions is to gather information from the participants. The questionnaire which is adopted in this study is designed by Sir Francis Galton. For reliability the two tests as well as the questionnaire was calculated by the computer programme. For validity the tests and the questionnaire were given to a number of professors of English language to examine them and to give comments on the tests as well as the questionnaire statements. The kind of questions used in the questionnaire was cloze questions in which teaching staff are asked to choose one answer from the choices given to them. When responding to these questions, teaching staff were not allowed to write any answer they want. They were just asked to fill in the boxes right to the alternatives that best present their opinions.

Of course there are three reasons behind choosing cloze questions . First, closed questions are easy to answer and easy to analyze. Another reason is closed questions are useful for getting personal background information which a researcher needs to know. The third reason that a researcher can mention is that the subjects of the study- whether they are students or teachers -prefer answering closed questions rather than opened ones. This is simply because they do not want to spend too much time in answering opened questions. This is why closed questions are preferable rather than opened ones.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

In the part of test design the focus will be on two types. The first one is for the students and the second is for the teachers. Both participants are from the two university mentioned. The following are the illustrations of both the students test and the teachers questionnaire.

3.3.1 Students' Test

The approach adopted in the present study is to examine the actual writing assignments and essays given to the students of English in their classes at both Almergeb University and Tripoli University. Accordingly, the tools which were used for this study were a test given to the students of English, studying at the faculty of education in Al-Mergeb university and to the students of English, studying at the faculty of education in Tripoli university. In this study the researcher looked at writing difficulties of the fourth year university students attending writing class at both faculties, during the academic year 2012-2013. The approach adopted in the present study is to examine the actual writing assignments given to the students in their classes in order to show and analyze students' ability to recognize and produce cohesive and coherent paragraphs and essays. The students' papers were collected and then corrected in order to find out which areas are difficult for the students. The tests were conducted in a quiet room of the university departments. The subjects were asked not to write their names on the papers because their writing will be used as a test to measure their ability about writing. The researcher then collected the data and then corrected them all. The aim of the present study is to analyze and assess the problematic areas of the students' written discourse regarding grammar, mechanics, capitalization, unity, style coherence, cohesion, and essay organization. The design of the students' test included the following:

- For grammar, it included:

(1) subject- verb agreement in which students were asked to read the argument paragraph on the legal arguments about cloning and look for errors in subject-verb agreement. The students were asked to cross out the incorrect verb forms and write the correct verb form

above them. There were 13 errors in total. All these verbs are in active or passive tense.

(2) Word order in which the participants were instructed to reorder words in the proper order. And they have to be careful of capitalization, full stop, exclamation mark and question mark. The aim of this question is to measure students' ability in both constructing correct sentences and mechanics.

(3) Verb tense logic in which students were asked to read the passage and correct the tense.

(4) Run-on sentence includes: a) five sentences which should be rewritten as complete sentences by adding the conjunctions (in addition, otherwise, however, therefore); and b) five sentences which some of them are incorrect. Students were asked to correct punctuation, using a comma, semicolon, or period. Check for proper capitalization.

- For Unity, the participants were given four topic sentences and each topic sentence has three items which may support the topic sentences. The participants were asked to put a check (\checkmark) next to each sentence below that supports the topic sentence.

- For coherence, students were constructed to read the sentences from a narrative paragraph. Some of the sentences are out of order. Students were asked to number the sentences from 1-10 to show logical time order. In addition, the participants were asked to read a paragraph, then find out the connectors that make the given paragraph more coherent.

- For Cohesion, the participants were given the first part of a story- but the narrative lacks cohesion. Each idea is written in a short, isolated sentence which does not connect to the sentence before or after it. Rewrite each one as a single sentence; sometimes it will be necessary to add a connected word. Divide those six sentences into four paragraphs. (words : *from which, he, he, At first, but, when, but, So, he...*)

- For Style, there were two versions: a) the participants were given five sentences which included formal and informal vocabulary. Then the participants were asked to change these words according to the instruction given.

- For Essay organization, it consists of two types: a) students were asked to write an introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph about the given topic; b) the participants were asked to use vocabulary from the box to make these sentences a more formal academic style; and c) participants were asked to decide if the sentences given are good thesis statements . Write 'F' for fact , 'I' for an inadequate thesis statement , or 'T' for a good thesis statement . Give reason for each. It includes four items.

There were totally 12 sub-heads – each sub-head was based on one of the following areas. The number of MC items are given in brackets against each sub-head.

1. Subject – Verb Agreement (12)
2. Word Order (7)
3. Verb – Tense (11)
4. Punctuation (5)
5. Spelling (2)
6. Unity (4)

7. Coherence (2)	
8. Cohesion (8)	
9. Formal / Informal (5)	} Academic Writing (11)
10. Style (6)	
11. Adequacy (2)	} Organizing Essay (6)
12. Thesis Statement (4)	

Accordingly, a test for the students comprising 68 MC items as mentioned above was administered to a sample of 120 Libyan students studying in the fourth year of University courses of various disciplines. All of them have studied English as a foreign language in their school level as well as university level programmes. The multiple choice items were based on language use and expression. Such features as grammatical categories, punctuation, spelling and nuances of continuous writing were tested. Each right response was given one mark: the scoring was for a maximum of 68 marks under 10 headings. The ninth sub-heading ‘Formal / Informal Writing’ and the tenth sub-heading ‘Style’ were taken together under one common heading – Academic Writing. Similarly, the eleventh sub-heading ‘Adequacy’ and the twelfth sub-heading ‘Thesis Statement’ were taken together to form the last heading – Organizing Essay.

3.3.2 Teachers’ Questionnaire

The questionnaire given to the teachers consisted of thirty items. Each item has five choices. These choices include five-likert scale which are: (*Always , often, sometimes, rarely, never*). Teachers who agreed to participate in this study were 10. They were asked to read each statement and put a tick(\surd) in the box right to the alternative that would best represent his/her opinion. In addition, a set of subject experts and classroom teachers evaluated the multiple choice items selected for testing. They (N=10) were also administered a questionnaire containing 30 items.

For clear discussion and analysis, the researcher classified it into 6 heading.

The following explains the researcher's classification of the items :

1. Teaching Writing – 8 items
2. Writing with reference to grammar – 2 items
3. Writing with reference to vocabulary – 3 items
4. Writing with reference to style – 3 items
5. Writing with reference to coherence – 5 items
6. Writing with reference to approaches – 9 items

The following table illustrates the design of the questionnaire which submitted to the teachers:

Table (3-1) Design of the Teachers’ Questionnaire

8 items	2 items	3 items	3 items	5 items	9 items
for teaching writing	for grammar	for vocabulary	for style	for coherence	for writing approaches

Summary

This chapter has given clear map. It focuses and describes the different aspects of the research; such as, research design, population and samples, data collection tools, selection of the students, selection of the teachers, describing students' test as well as describing teachers' questionnaire.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

In chapter four, the data of the study were collected, and analyzed. The results were presented in tables and graphs using Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS). The results were discussed and described. The tools used to collect data of the study were of two types: The first tool was a test presented to 120 participants who were fourth year university students of the faculty of Education in both Al-Mergeb and Tripoli universities during the academic year 2012/2013. The second tool was a questionnaire of five likert-scale type presented to the academic teaching staff, teaching writing skills for fourth year in the two mentioned faculties of educations. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers to explore what causing them the most difficulties when reading the students' writings and what approaches and techniques used by those teaching staff in teaching writing.

4.1 Data Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis approach was utilized in the present study. The usual statistical procedures consist of (i) Descriptive Data Analysis, (ii) Inferential Data Analysis, and (iii) Computer Data Analysis. Descriptive analysis entails the description of a particular group of individuals observed. The data describe one group and that group only. Thus, an attempt has been made to analyze data and then, the results of the study are presented. The analysis was based on their achievement in terms of the marks scored by them in a paper and pencil test comprising multiple choice test items. The scores obtained by the group as a whole were subjected to the tests of statistical significance: t tests or ANOVAs. There

were totally 12 sub-heads – each sub-head was based on one of the following areas. The following are the results of the students' test as well as the results of the teachers' questionnaire.

4.1.1 Results of Students' Test

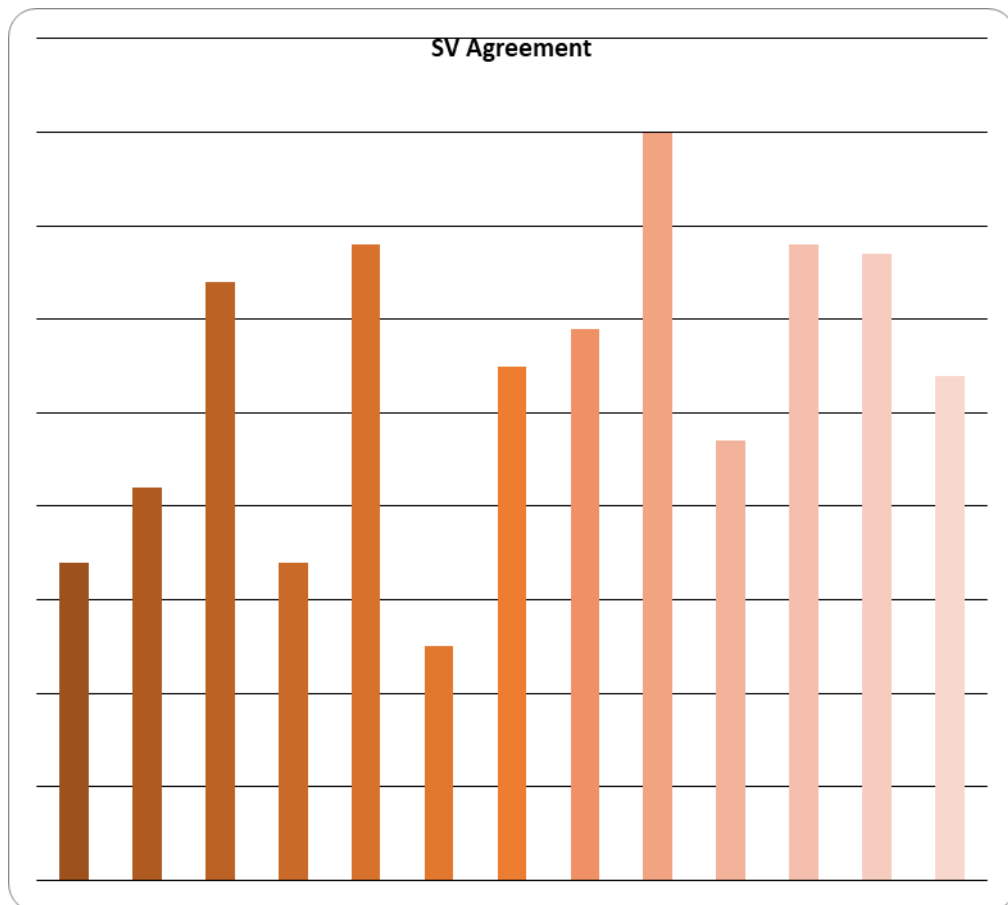
The following table shows the mean scores of the sample population in each of the twelve items under this heading – SV Agreement.

Table (4-1) Scores of the Population in the test(S.V Agreement)

S/V Agreement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Protect	119	.34	.477	.044
Argue	118	.42	.496	.046
Maintain	118	.64	.483	.044
has (collective)	118	.34	.475	.044
Is	118	.68	.469	.043
Say	118	.25	.437	.040
Challenge	118	.55	.500	.046
Explore	118	.59	.493	.045
Are	117	.80	.399	.037
Threaten	118	.47	.501	.046
Are	118	.68	.469	.043
Do	118	.67	.472	.043
Total	1416	.54	.499	.013

The analysis shows that the sub-items scoring below .5 as mean score are five in number - *protect, argue, has, say, threaten*. In these sub-items

many students have scored poorly. The sub-items below .7 but above .5 are six – *maintain, is, challenge, explore, are* (ii) and *do*. In these sub-items, most of the students have scored in a fair manner. Only in one sub-item, *are* (i), the mean score is above .8 in which a majority of students have scored remarkably well. Taking all the sub-items as a whole, the mean score is only .54 which shows that half of the sample population’s perception and use of Subject – Verb Agreement in English sentences **cannot be said to be appropriate**. Only about half of the sample population has attained the usage of English in this item in a significant manner. In the next page there is also a graph which testifies to this fact:



Graph(1)Explains Students' performance in this heading

This is further confirmed by the ANOVA as shown in the following table. The Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan gives the hierarchical order of the subsets as explained above.

Table (4-2) ANOVA for Subject Verb Agreement

S-V Agreement	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	37.183	1	3.380	15.068	.000
Within Groups	314.980	404	.224		
Total	352.163	415			

The following table explains Post-hoc Homogeneous Sub-sets of Subject Verb Agreement.

Table (4-3) Post-hoc Homogeneous Sub-sets of Subject Verb Agreement

Sub-items	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05					
		1	2	3	4	5	
Say	118	.25					
has (collective)	118	.34	.34				
Protect	119	.34	.34				
Argue	118		.42	.42			
Threaten	118		.47	.47	.47		
Challenge	118			.55	.55	.55	
Explore	118				.59	.59	
Maintain	118					.64	
Do	118					.67	
Is	118					.68	68
Are	118					.68	68
Are	117						80
Sig.		.168	.059	.050	.050	.071	.054

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed

(b) Word Order

In the case of word order, the results show a different result. It can be seen from the following table:

Table(4- 4) scores of the population in the test (word order)

Word Order	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
simple sentence	118	.74	.442	.041
adjective clause	118	.59	.493	.045
adverb clause	118	.38	.488	.045
adjective clause	118	.55	.500	.046
simple sentence (misplaced adverb)	118	.70	.459	.042
simple sentence	118	.81	.398	.037
exclamatory sentence	118	.72	.451	.041
Total	826	.64	.480	.017

All the sub-items, except one sub-item ‘adverb clause’, in the set Word Order have each a mean score of above .5. Only in sub-item adverb clause,

the sample exhibits misuse of it. As for as all other sub-items are concerned, most of the students in the sample use these ones with accuracy. So, it **cannot be concluded** that the sample learners' performance in writing reflects misuse of the grammar item word order.

The following graph also confirms this finding:

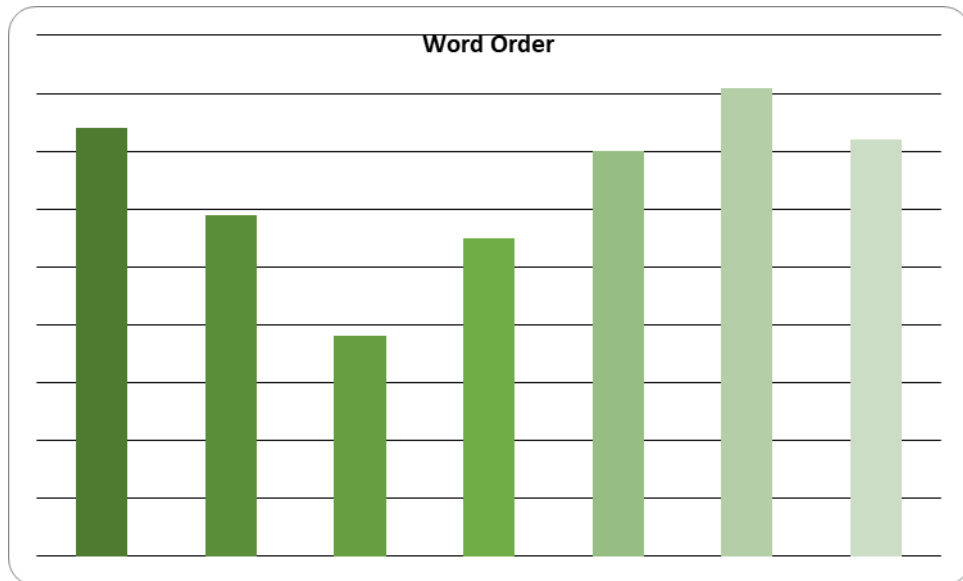


Figure (4- 2) Performance Levels of Sample Population in the Sub-items of Word Order

This is confirmed by the following ANOVA table. The Duncan also ranks down the sub-item adverbial clause and ranks up all the other sub-items.

Table(4- 5) ANOVA for word order

Word Order	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.656	6	2.443	11.414	.000
Within Groups	175.271	819	.214		
Total	189.927	825			

Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan:

Table 4-6: post-hoc homogeneous sub-sets of word order

Word order sub-items	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
adverb	118	.3			
clause		8			
adjective	118		.5		
clause		5			
adjective	118		.5	.5	
clause		9		9	
simple	118			.7	
sentence (misplaced adverb)				0	.70
exclamator	118				.72
y sentence					
simple	118				.74
sentence					
simple	118				.81
sentence					
Sig.		1. 000	.4 82	.0 68	.125

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

From the tables it is clear that the students' performance in the heading word order has reached 63.69%. However, the Duncan ranks down the sub-item adverbial clause and ranks up all the other sub-items.

(c) Verb – Tense Logic

The following tables and graph explain students' performance in the heading verb-tense logic

Table 4-7: scores of the population in the test(verb-tense logic)

Verb Tense Logic	N	Me an	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lo wer Bound	Upper Bound		
was	119	.67	.471	.043	.59	.76		
are	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80		
takes	118	.55	.500	.046	.46	.64		
will improve	118	.38	.488	.045	.29	.47		
came	118	.39	.490	.045	.30	.48		
will be	118	.55	.500	.046	.46	.64		
had	118	.34	.475	.044	.25	.43		
will	118	.30	.459	.042	.21	.38		
are	117	.34	.476	.044	.25	.43		
becam e	118	.75	.437	.040	.67	.83		
was	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80		
Total	1298	.52	.500	.014	.49	.55		

In the items testing the sample population’s understanding of the verb – tense logic in English sentences, the group has not fared well. This is evident from the above table.

The mean scores of many items are far below the standard levels, as evident from the above table. Only in the sub-items *are*, *became* and *was*, the sample population has managed to obtain a respected score. As regards all other items, the mean score values are not at desired levels. This fact is clearly depicted in the following graph:

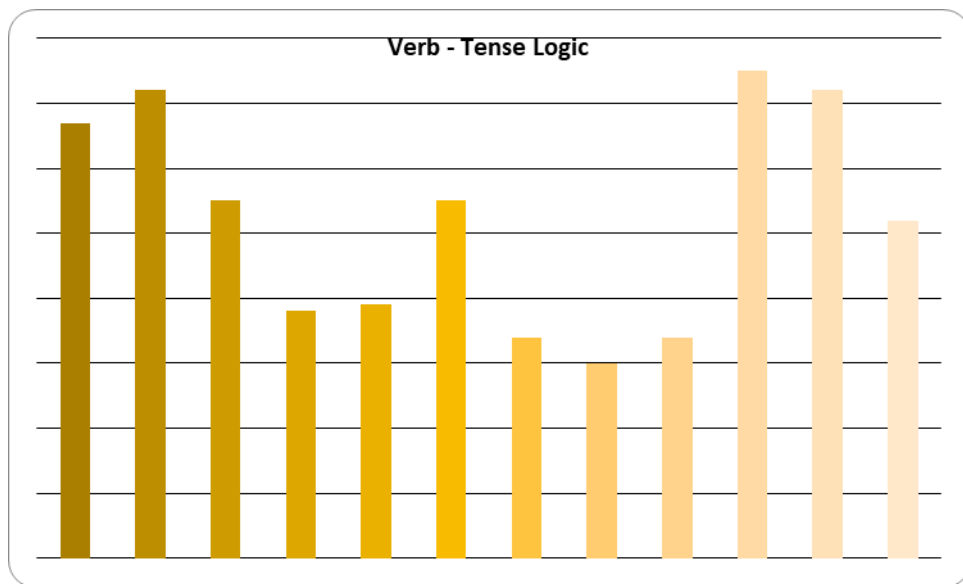


Figure (4- 3) Performance Levels of Sample Population in the Sub-items of Verb – tense logic

The table in the next page also confirms the finding that the performance of the sample population is not significant in the understanding of Verb – Tense logic as found in English sentences.

Table4- 8: ANOVA For Verb – Tense Logic

Verb Tense Logic	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.204	10	3.620	16.189	.000
Within Groups	287.814	87	.224		
Total	324.018	1297			

Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan:

Table 4-9: Post-Hoc Homogeneous Sub-Sets Of Verb – Tense Logic

Sub-items	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
Will	118	.30		
Had	118	.34		
Are	117	.34		
will improve	118	.38		
Came	118	.39		
Takes	118		.55	
will be	118		.55	
Was	119		.67	.67
Are	118			.72
Was	118			.72
Became	118			.75
Sig.		.183	.062	.283

The hierarchical ordering of Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan confirms that only in the three sub-items of verb tense logic viz. **was**, **are**, and **became**, the sample population's performance reflects substantial use. In two sub-items, **takes** and **will be**, their performance is far from noticeable and in the rest of the sub-items tested, the performance is insignificant.

(d)Punctuation

The following tables and graph explain students' performance in the heading punctuation:

Table 4-10: scores of the population in the test(punctuation)

Punctuation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
period/capital	118	.68	.469	.043	.59	.76	1	1
semi colon	118	.76	.427	.039	.68	.84	1	1
Comma	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80	1	1
Colon	118	.76	.427	.039	.68	.84	1	1
dash and hyphen	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80	1	1
Total	590	.73	.445	.018	.69	.76	1	1

The sample population has acquired sufficient levels of competence as far as their use of punctuation in English is concerned. Students achievements regarding punctuation can be regarded as efficient. The results obtained neared 72%

The following graph vividly confirms the above finding:

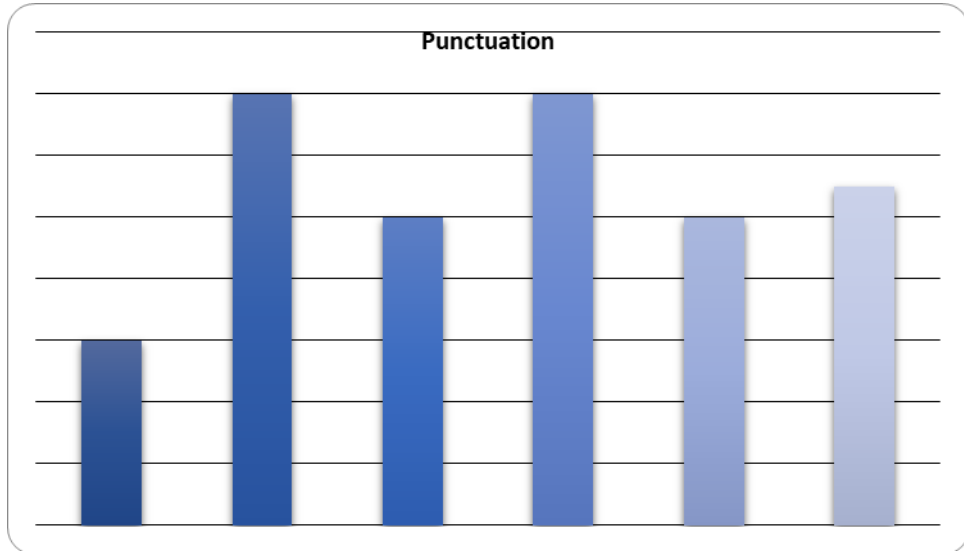


Figure (4-4) Performance Levels of Sample Population in Punctuation

The following table also confirms the above finding:

Table 4- 11: ANOVA for punctuation

Punctu ation	Sum of Squares	D f	Mea n Square	F	S ig.
Between n Groups	.593	4	.148	.7 48	.5 60
Within Groups	116.0 17	5 85	.198		
Total	116.6 10	5 89			

Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan:

Table 4-12: post-hoc homogeneous sub-sets of punctuation

Sub-items	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
period/capital	118	.68
Comma	118	.72
dash and hyphen	118	.72
semi colon	118	.76
Colon	118	.76
Sig.		.199

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

As far as punctuation is concerned, the sample population's performance in all the sub-items reflects better standards in writing. The percentages of the students' performance has touched **71.66%**

(e) Spelling

The following tables and graph illustrates students' performance in spelling heading:

Table 4-13: scores of the population in the test(spelling)

Spelling	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
					spelling when writing introduction	118		
spelling when writing conclusion	118	1.36	.722	.066	1.22	1.49	0	2
Total	236	1.04	.680	.044	.95	1.13	0	2

The following graph attests the finding given above.

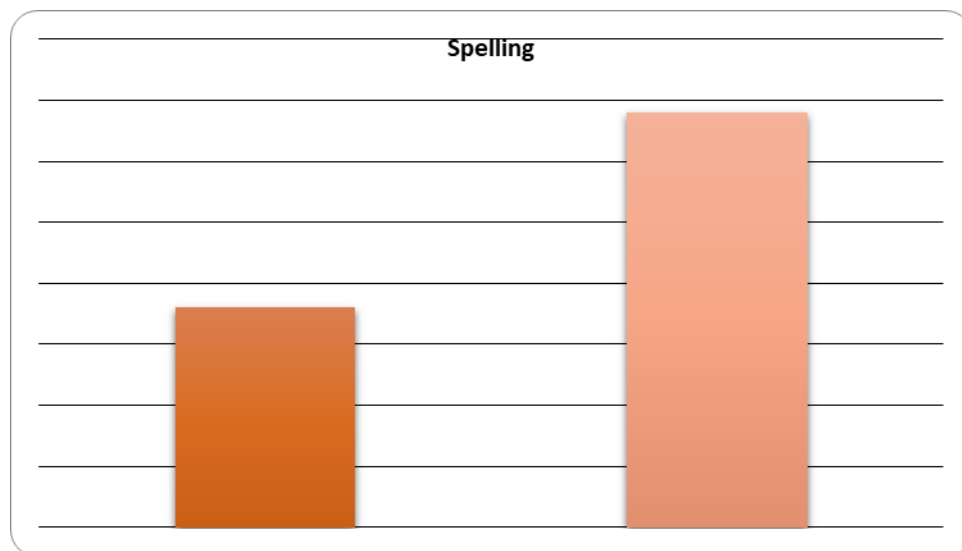


Figure (4-5) Performance Levels of Sample Population in Spelling

The ANOVA also testifies to the above finding.

Table 4-14: ANOVA for spelling

Spelling	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Si g.
Between Groups	23.835	1	23.835	65.753	.000
Within Groups	84.822	234	.362		
Total	108.657	235			

It is clear from the previous tables and graph(4.5) that the students' performance regarding spelling heading has touched **66.66%**. The sample population's use of spelling reflects adequacy as confirmed from the mean scores. The population excels in spelling when writing conclusions compared to spelling when writing introductions. This fact can be inferred from the following table.

(f)Unity

For unity, the results and percentages are presented in the following tables and graph:

Table4-15: scores of the population in the test(unity)

Unity	Sub-items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
	1 supporting the topic sentence	118	.64	.481	.044	.56	.73	0	1
	2 supporting the topic sentence	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80	0	1
	3 supporting the topic sentence	118	.70	.459	.042	.62	.79	0	1
	4 supporting the topic sentence	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80	0	1
	Total	472	.70	.460	.021	.66	.74	0	1

Supporting Topic Sentence

■ Item 1 ■ Item 2 ■ Item 3 ■ Item 4 ■

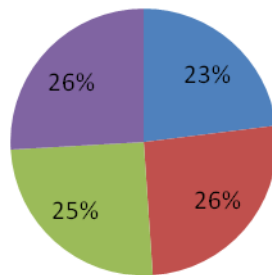


Figure (4-6) Distribution of Performance in the Different Items of Topic Sentence

The ANOVA also testifies to the above finding.

Table 4-16: ANOVA for unity

Unity	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.464	3	.155	.730	.535
Within Groups	99.212	68	.212		
Total	99.676	71			

Post-Hoc Homogeneous Duncan:

Table 4-17: post-hoc homogeneous sub-sets of unity

Sub-items	N	Subs et for alpha = 0.05
		1
1 supporting the topic sentence	118	.64
2 supporting the topic sentence	118	.70
3 supporting the topic sentence	118	.72
4 supporting the topic sentence	118	.72
Sig.		.252

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

It can be inferred from the above tables and graph(4.6) that the sample population displays its ability in the use of supporting the topic sentence in paragraph writing. This is evident from the mean scores obtained by the sample in all the four items testing their ability in the skill of unity in writing. The Post Hoc Homogenous Duncan also confirms the above

finding as it is seen that all the sub-items are clustered in the single subset scoring a significant score at 0.05 level. The overall results touched **68.54%**.

(g) Coherence

The following are the tables and graph which explain the students' performance regarding the heading coherence:

Table 4-18: scores of the population in the test (coherence)

COHERENCE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Coherence when rearranging the sentences	118	.72	.451	.041	.64	.80		1
Coherence when finding out the major connectors	118	1.36	.722	.066	1.22	1.49		2
Total	236	1.04	.680	.044	.95	1.13		2

The following graph tests the finding given above.

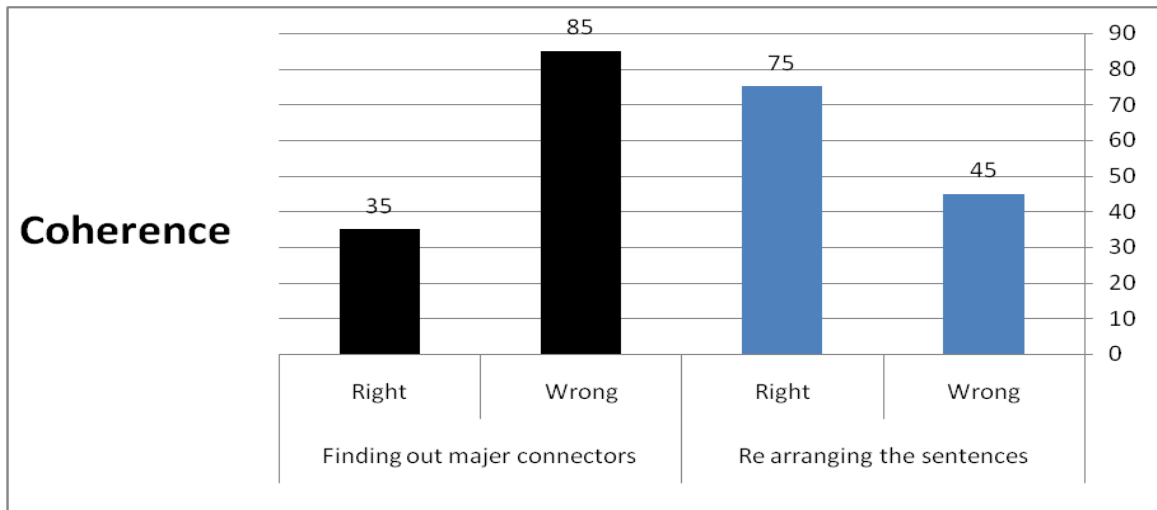


Figure (4-7) Performance Levels of Sample Population in Coherence

The ANOVA also testifies to the above finding.

TABLE 4-19: ANOVA for coherence

Coherence	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.835	1	23.835	6.5753	.0100
Within Groups	84.822	34	.362		
Total	108.657	35			

The previous tables and graph show the sample population's use of coherence reflects adequacy as confirmed from the mean scores. The population excels in coherence when rearranging the sentences compared to coherence when finding out the major connectors. Thus, the percentage of rearranging sentences is 75% whereas it is only 35% in finding out major connectors.(see **graph 4.7**). Totally the percentage has touched **66.66%**. This result resembles the students' performance in the heading of spelling.

(h) Cohesion

The following tables and graph illustrates students' performance in the heading cohesion:

Table 4-20: scores of the population in the test(cohesion)

Cohesion	Sub-items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
	from	118	.64	.481	.044	.56	.73	0	1
	which	118	.59	.493	.045	.50	.68	0	1
	he	118	.55	.500	.046	.46	.64	0	1
	at	118	.64	.483	.044	.55	.72	0	1
	first	118	.69	.466	.043	.60	.77	0	1
	when	118	.69	.466	.043	.60	.77	0	1
	but	118	.69	.466	.043	.60	.77	0	1
	so	118	.76	.427	.039	.68	.84	0	1
	he	118	.59	.493	.045	.50	.68	0	1
	Total	944	.64	.479	.016	.61	.67	0	1

This finding is supported in the following graph:

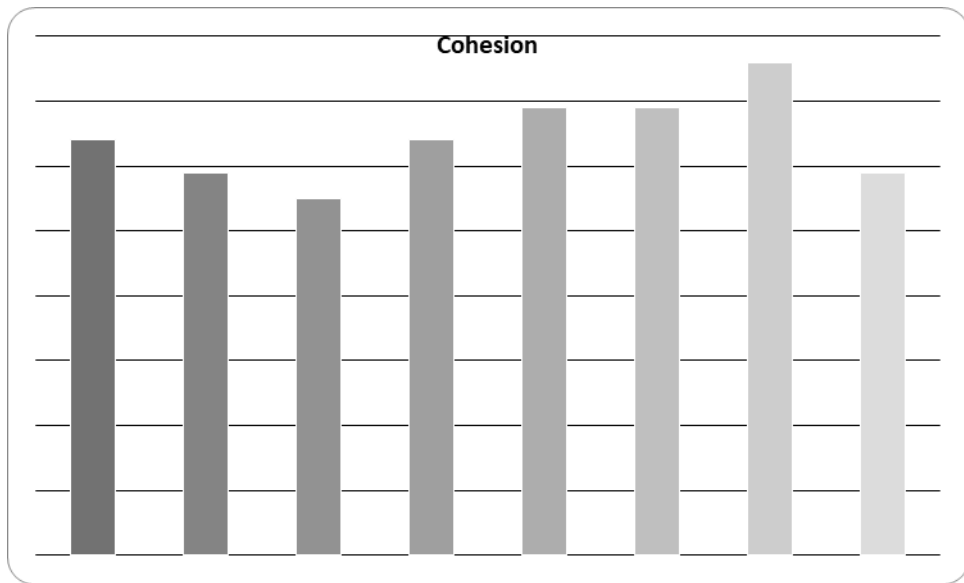


Figure (4-8) Performance Levels of Sample Population in Cohesion

The ANOVA for the sub-item 'Cohesion' reveals the above average levels of the sample population in this area.

TABLE4- 21: ANOVA for cohesion

Cohesion	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.729	7	.533	2.344	.022
Within Groups	212.678	36	.227		
Total	216.407	43			

In cohesion, the sample population has revealed its capacity at mediocre levels in the use of the sub-item *he* (.55) and above average levels in the use of all other sub-items (*he ,he, at first, from which, when, but, so*). This finding is confirmed in the following Duncan table where ‘**he**’ alone forms the first sub-set and all other items form a higher sub-set.

Table(4-22) post-hoc homogeneous sub-sets of cohesion

Sub-items	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
He	118	.55	
He	118	.59	
He	118	.59	
at first	118	.64	.64
from	118	.64	.64
which	118	.64	.64
When	118	.69	.69
But	118	.69	.69
So	118		.76
Sig.		.059	.067

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

(h) Academic Writing

The following are the results presented in tables and graph of the students' performance under the heading of academic writing:

Table 4- 23: Scores of the population in the test(academic writing)

Academic Writing	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
woman's clothes	119	71	.454	.042	.63	.80	0	1
Spectacles	118	68	.469	.043	.59	.76	0	1
TV	118	53	.501	.046	.44	.63	0	1
Boyfriend	118	30	.459	.042	.21	.38	0	1
Talking	118	42	.496	.046	.33	.51	0	1
Lies	118	55	.500	.046	.46	.64	0	1
Thought	118	55	.500	.046	.46	.64	0	1
stands for	118	30	.459	.042	.21	.38	0	1
went against	117	30	.460	.043	.21	.38	0	1
Showed	118	64	.483	.044	.55	.72	0	1
Faced	118	76	.427	.039	.68	.84	0	1
Total	1298	52	.500	.014	.50	.55	0	1

The findings in the above table are further corroborated vividly in the following graph:

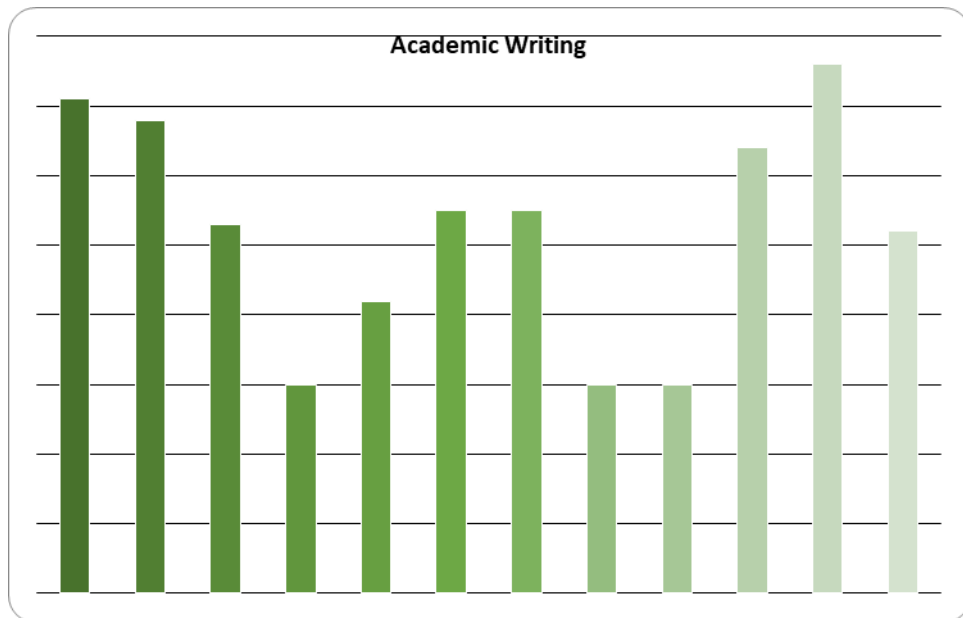


Figure (4-9) Performance Levels of Sample Population

The ANOVA for Academic Writing also confirms the above finding:

TABLE 4-24: ANOVA For Academic Writing

Academic Writing	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	sig.
Between Groups	34.782	10	3.478	15.486	.000
Within Groups	289.070	1287	.225		
Total	323.852	1297			

Post Hoc Homogeneous Duncan:

Table4-25 Post-Hoc Homogeneous Sub-Sets of Academic Writing

	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05				
		1	2	3	4	5
Boyfriend	118	.30				
stands for	118	.30				
went	117	.30				
against						
talking	118	.42	.4			
TV	118		2			
Lies	118		.5	.5		
thought	118		3	3		
showed	118		.5	.5	.5	
spectacles	118		5	5	5	
woman's	119		.5	.5	.5	
clothes	118		5	5	5	
Faced	118			.6	.6	.6
Sig.				4	4	4
					.6	.6
					8	8
						.7
						1
						.7
						6
						.0
		.059	.0	.1	.0	.0
			59	35	59	59

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

With respect to the heading academic writing, the sample population can be said to be average in its expression as evident from the scores shown in the above tables. Only four items out of eleven have a mean score of above .6 as seen in tables, which factor emphasizes that the sample population has a long way to go in achieving proper use of style in academic writings. The percentage of the students' performance in this heading is **51.51%**.

(i) Organizing Essay

This is obviously evident from the following table:

Table 4-26: scores of the population in the test(organizing essay)

Organizing essay	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Adequate introduction	118	.59	.493	.045	.50	.68	0	1
Adequate conclusion	118	.64	.483	.044	.55	.72	0	1
Fact	118	.64	.483	.044	.55	.72	0	1
Inadequate	118	.34	.475	.044	.25	.43	0	1
good statement	118	.38	.488	.045	.29	.47	0	1
giving reasons	118	.38	.488	.045	.29	.47	0	1
Total	708	.49	.500	.019	.46	.53	0	1

The mean score of the population in all the items taken as an average falls below .5. In the matter of organizing essay, the sample population has not shown any evidence for its acumen in the domain of paragraph or essay development. This indicates that the sample population lacks capacity in the skill of organizing essay. The percentage of the students' performance was **48.61%**. This is further seen clearly in the ensuing graph.

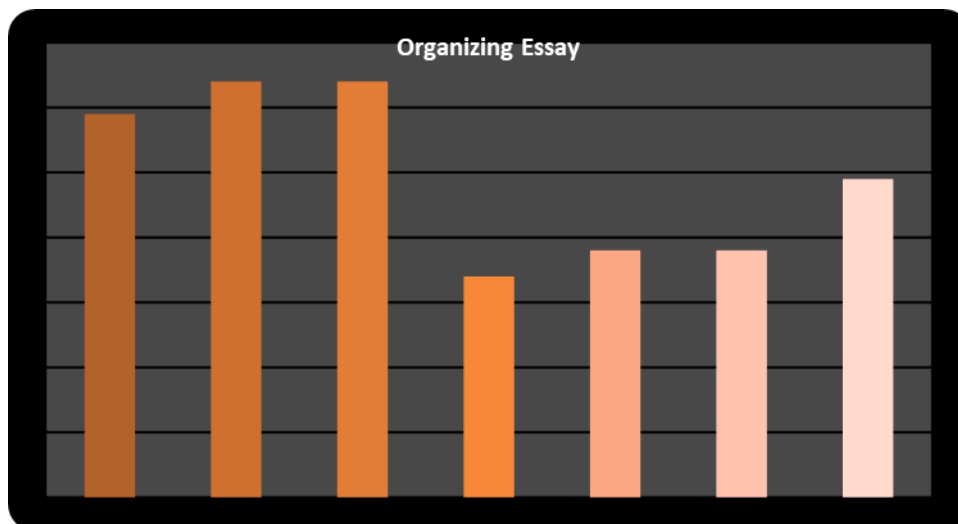


Figure (4-10) Performance Levels of Sample Population in Organizing Essay

The above fact is further corroborated in the table of ANOVA.

TABLE 4-27: ANOVA For Organizing Essay

Organizing essay	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.723	5	2.345	9.960	.000
Within Groups	165.254	702	.235		
Total	176.977	707			

Though the sample population lacks capacity in the skill of organizing essay, it is adept in providing adequate introduction and conclusion and presenting facts in essay-writing. This finding can be confirmed from the Duncan table given below.

Post Hoc Homogenous Duncan:

Table 4-28: Post-Hoc Homogeneous Sub-Sets Of Organizing Essay

	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Inadequate	118	.34	
good statement	118	.38	
giving reasons	118	.38	
adequate	118		.59
introduction	118		.64
adequate	118		.64
conclusion	118		.64
Fact	118		.64
Sig.		.53	.532
		2	

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

4.1.2 Results of Teachers' questionnaire

a) With Reference to Approaches

The following tables in the next page illustrates teachers' attitude with reference to approaches:

Table 4-29: Writing with Reference to Approaches

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	I apply product approach in teaching writing.	80% (8)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	I apply process approach in teaching writing.	20% (2)	40% (4)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3	I apply different approaches in teaching writing.	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4	I ask my students to do their exercises in pairs.	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (10)	0% (0)	0% (0)
5	I ask my students to do their exercises in groups.	0% (0)	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	0% (0)
6	I spend much time on brainstorming and outlining.	20% (2)	40% (4)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
7	I collect students' first draft to correct them at class.	0% (0)	80% (8)	0% (0)	20% (2)	0% (0)
8	I use rubric when correcting students' writings.	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	0% (0)
9	I appreciate the students' creative writings.	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	0% (0)

The tool was administered to the teachers at the time of their evaluating the MC items chosen for testing the sample population of 120 students. The results of this administration showed that the teachers have shown a positive attitude towards the selection of the items in the test for the sample. For example, **80%** of them apply product approach in teaching

writing; whereas, **60%** Of them apply process approach. The sample showed negative attitude towards asking students to do their exercises in groups. All participants prefer to ask their students work in pairs so the percentage was **100%**. The above table explains the whole results.

b) With Reference to Teaching Writing

Table4-30:Teaching Writing

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Teaching writing needs more effort than other skills of language.	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	Writing is an important means of communication.	40% (4)	60% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3	In general, communication through writing is limited.	0% (0)	20% (2)	40% (4)	0% (0)	20% (2)
4	Effective teaching writing activities should be preceded by oral preparation.	20% (2)	0% (0)	60% (6)	0% (0)	20% (2)
5	I ask my students to do more writing activities than what is in their syllabus.	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
6	The time allotted is not enough to teach writing.	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
7	I spend time more on oral preparation than on making students doing the activities.	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
8	Writing activities in the students' course are not enough	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)

The above table was the results obtained from the study sample. It includes 8 items. Teachers' attitude towards teaching writing varied from 20% to 60% in their choice of the option *always*, *often*, and *sometimes*

c) With reference to Grammar

Table4-31: Writing with reference to Grammar

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Students commit a lot of mistakes in grammar.	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	Grammatical mistakes make students' writing difficult to understand.	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)

The above table tests teachers' attitude regarding students' grammar mistakes. There were two items in this table. 60% of teachers assured that students *always* commit mistakes in grammar; 40% of the teachers assured that students *often* have problems in grammar. For the item two, 60% of teachers chose the option *always* ; for the options *often* and *sometimes* the percentage was 20% for each . This means that teachers' attitude regarding grammatical mistakes was positive.

d) With Reference to Vocabulary

Teachers showed positive attitude in the selection of the items related to vocabulary. The following table explains teachers' performance.

Table4-32:Writing with reference to Vocabulary

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Spelling constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	Vocabulary is also difficult for the students when I read their' writings.	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3	Students' vocabulary is too elementary and sounds informal.	40% (4)	40% (4)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)

The above table explains the participants' performance regarding vocabulary. From **40%** to **60%** of teachers assured that the students **always** have problems in **vocabulary**; **40%** of teachers assured that students **often** have problems in vocabulary ;**20%** of teachers assured that students' vocabulary **sometimes** sounds informal.

e) With reference to Style

Table4-33: Writing with reference to Style

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Students use inappropriate style when they are asked to write their assignments.	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	Students' writings sound informal.	0% (0)	40% (4)	60% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3	Students are aware of the degree of formality.	20% (2)	40% (4)	0% (0)	40% (4)	0% (0)

The previous table illustrates teachers' attitude regarding students writing style. **60%** of teachers assured that the students **sometimes** have problems in **style**. From **20%** to **40%** of teachers assured that students **often** have problems in **style**.

f) With Reference to Coherence and cohesion

Table4-34: Writing with reference to Coherence and cohesion

S. No.	Items	Always	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Punctuation is also problematic when I read the students' writings.	80% (8)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2	Cohesion constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.	0% (0)	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3	Coherence constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.	0% (0)	80% (8)	20% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4	The beginning and the layout of the students' writings are appropriate.	0% (0)	0% (0)	80% (8)	20% (2)	0% (0)
5	The order and the use of paragraphs are appropriate.	0% (0)	40% (4)	0% (0)	60% (6)	0% (0)

The above table illustrates teachers' attitude regarding students coherence and cohesion in writing. **80%** of teachers assured that the students **always** have problems in **coherence** especially with punctuation; from **20%** to **80%** of teachers assured that students **often** have problems in **coherence**. Also From **20%** to **80%** of teachers assured that students **sometimes** have problems in **coherence** and **cohesion**. For the option **rarely**, the percentage was from **20%** to **60%**.

Finally, The total results of this administration showed that the teachers have shown a positive attitude towards the selection of the items in the test for the sample.

4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

To start with, the first hypothesis, as stated below, was taken for consideration and testing:

- 1- Despite their low level of English language proficiency, Libyan learners of English at fourth year of university level are not absolute beginners with respect to their exposure to academic writing. However their overall competence in this field of the study is expected to be relatively weak.

The score obtained by the representative sample population under each of the heading was tabulated as follows:

Table (4- 35) Scores obtained by the Sample Population in the Test

No .	Heading	No. of Items	To Responses	Tot al Score	Perfo rmance
1	SV	12	1440	755	52.4
2	Word Order	7	840	535	63.69
3	Verb Tense	11	1320	675	51.13
4	Punctuation	5	600	430	71.66
5	Spelling	2	240	160	66.66
6	Unity	4	480	329	68.54
7	Coherence	2	240	160	66.66
8	Cohesion	8	960	616	64.16
9	Academic	11	1320	680	51.51
10	Organizing	6	720	350	48.61
Total		6788	8120	469	57.75

It can be safely considered that the sample population has relative strength in the matter of academic writing only when its score crosses **80%** in a proficiency test of the type administered to it. It is seen from the table that the performance percentage of only one heading has touched about **72%**, the remaining five headings has crossed **60%**, three **50%** and only one

nearing **50%**. This can be graphically represented in the following stack graph which vividly explains that the performance level of the sample population has crossed the half-way mark and come to touch the **60%** level. In the table, we can see that the overall performance percentage the group is **57.34%**.

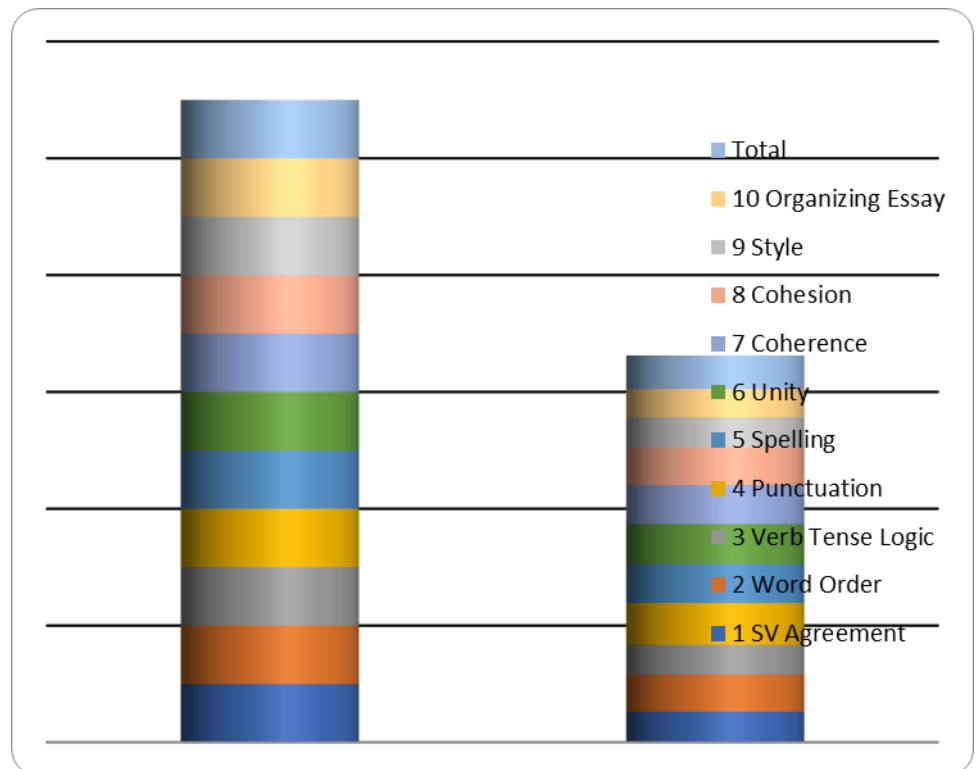


Figure (4- 11) Performance Levels of Sample Population

Thus, from the scores obtained by the sample population, we cannot infer that the overall competence of the group is relatively strong. On the one hand, the group has moderate levels of competence in such areas as punctuation, unity, coherence, spelling, cohesion and word order. The group has also neared moderate levels of competence in Subject – Verb Agreement, Style and Verb – Tense Logic. It lacks sufficient competence in the organization of essay. However, the group has shown a great promise that given proper and adequate exposure, it can fare well in the domain of academic writing.

After testing the first hypothesis, the second hypothesis is as follows:

- 2- Libyan learners' performance in writing reflects misuse of writing vocabulary, grammar, style, mechanics, cohesion, unity and coherence.

In order to test this hypothesis, the scores obtained by the sample population were analyzed under separate headings. showed that the teachers have shown a positive attitude towards the selection of the items in the test for the sample. For example, From **60%** to **80 %** of teachers assured that the students always have problems in *punctuation, grammar, spelling* and *vocabulary*. Also *coherence* and *cohesion* constituted a great problem for the students according to teachers' responses.

The third hypothesis of the study is as follows:

- 3- Teachers of writing in Libya may not apply more than one approach when teaching writing. Therefore, most teachers are expected to apply a product approach in teaching academic writing .

To test this hypothesis, nine items were presented to teachers teaching the sample population. (Writing with reference to approach – **9** items)

Thus, teachers showed a positive attitude towards the selection of the questionnaire items especially with the options *always, often, sometimes* and *rarely*. The percentage ranged from **20%** to **60%**. Thus, the percentage of the use of the approaches in teaching writing were as follows: For applying product approach, **80%** of teachers chose **always** ; for the process approach **40%** of them chose **often**, and for applying different approaches **60%** of teachers chose **always**. (see table 29,)

The fourth hypothesis states as follows:

4. Teachers of writing may not use different methods and strategies and hence the paragraph essay development is wrongly stated.

To test this hypothesis, **8** items were presented to teachers, teaching the students of fourth year at the Faculty of Education in Al-Megeb University and the Faculty of Education in Tripoli University during the academic year 2012/2013 . The results obtained from the study sample showed that teachers' attitude towards teaching writing varied from **20%** to **60%** in their choice of the option *always*, *often*, and *sometimes* . For the other two options: *rarely* and *never* teachers showed negative attitude thus the percentage was **0%** (see table 4-30)

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Findings, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

5.0 Summary

This study investigated the problems that face EFL students in the field of the academic writing at university level as well as teachers, teaching writing skills for the sample chosen in this study. The aim of the study was to seek answers to the following questions:

- 1-** What is the competence of Libyan learners of English in handling the written discourse?
- 2-** What is more necessary for Libyan learners of English to be aware of to improve their writing: vocabulary, grammar, style, mechanics, cohesion, unity and coherence.
- 3-** Do teachers of English use a particular approach or a mixture of two (i.e. product process approach)?
- 4-** What strategies and techniques do teachers of writing utilize in teaching writing?

A sample of 120 students and 10 teachers of faculty of education was chosen from two different universities, namely: Al-Mergeb University and Tripoli University. A test for the students and a questionnaire for the teachers were used as data collection instruments. For data analysis, descriptive statistical analysis by means of T-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was adopted.

5.1 Findings

In the light of the results obtained from this study , the following findings are suggested:

- 1- It is noticeable in this study that the fourth year university students of English at Almergeb University and Tripoli University face problems with both paragraph and essay writing.
- 2- Students' background of English language especially in writing is relatively weak. Most of the students' problems are attributed to L1 transfer and overgeneralization.
- 3- Mother tongue interference is always noticeable in the students' performance in the written production; for instance, students think in Arabic then they transfer their ideas to English.
- 4- The sample population of the students lacks capacity in the skill of organizing the essay.
- 5- Students have moderate levels of competence in such areas as punctuation, unity, coherence, spelling, cohesion and word order.
- 6- They also neared moderate levels of competence in Subject – Verb Agreement, Style and Verb – Tense Logic.
- 7- They lack sufficient competence in the organization of essay
- 8- It is noticeable from the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire that 80% of them apply product approach in teaching writing. Teachers should vary their techniques and apply different approaches in teaching writing skills. For example a combination of more than one approach will help students use their individual writing processes in order to construct an academic text or suitable genre.

- 9- The sample population of the teachers have shown a positive attitude towards the selection of the items in the test for the sample. For example, between 60% to 80 % of teachers assured that the students always have problems in *coherence, cohesion, punctuation, grammar, spelling* and *vocabulary*.
- 10- It is also noticeable that 60% of teachers assured that they sometimes use oral preparations before starting writing activities for the students. It is known that writing skills can be difficult for EFL to accomplish and it needs oral preparations.
- 11- Teachers should include listening, speaking, reading skills. This simply because the integration of the language four skills helps students promote the overall language competence.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the results obtained from this study, the following points are recommended:

- 1- Teachers should provide students with guidelines, strategies, and practice in teaching writing in order to prepare them for academic demands.
- 2- Teachers should also decrease the use of Arabic in classrooms; and exposing the students to supplementary materials, such as, posters, flash cards, journals, short stories and magazines. This will make writing classes more meaningful.
- 3- Although the writing product is an expression of one's individuality and personality, it is necessary for teachers to remember that writing is a social endeavor , a way of communicating with others.
- 4- Teachers of English should provide students with guidelines, strategies, and practice in writing in order to prepare their students for the academic demands. If teachers make clear how prewriting activities, outline strategies for the drafting and revising processes,

this will be beneficial for the students in writing paragraphs and essays.

- 5- The form as well as the meaning should be taught simultaneously .This will help the students to achieve accurate agreement.
- 6- The learners should be always encouraged to produce creative writing in which they can have a chance of expressing themselves and achieving accurate and meaningful paragraphs.
- 7- Teachers should help their students in the organization feature of writing, such as, paragraphing, using appropriate discourse markers.
- 8- Teachers should help students to bring into a class various types of outside materials and pointing out their discourse features.
- 9- They should also help students to summarize these outside materials brought to class and showing the students the different styles used by the writers of such authentic materials.
- 10- They should also encourage students to use English in both speech and writing.
- 11- Communicating activities as well as grammar solving activities should be suggested as effective techniques in the writing class. For example, Problem solving activities encourage students to talk together to find out a solution to a problems or tasks.
- 12- Teachers may also help their students to read an essay and recognize the connectors used by the writer in the text. Such exercise helps students to be aware of the cohesive devices in the paragraphs.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following are some further study suggestions:

- 1- This study paves the way to a number of researches that might be worth of investigation. For example, this analysis of the Libyan written discourse can be applied to other area of study as spoken discourse.
- 2- In addition to this point, a bigger number of participants from different faculties might give clearer results.
- 3- Another point of view is that this study can be conducted on students from other discipline or on other levels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (A) Students' Test

This is a PhD thesis on **Investigating Libyan EFL University Students' Paragraph and Essay Writing Problems**. Please answer the following questions very carefully. Your answer will be corrected and analyzed as a part of the PhD thesis. You are not asked to write your name on the answer sheet. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1- Grammar

a) Subject- verb agreement

Read these paragraphs on the legal arguments about cloning and look for errors in subject-verb agreement. Cross out the incorrect verb forms and write your correction above them. There are **13** errors in total. All these verbs are in active or passive tense.

are

Some people feel that scientific experiments is protected by the first Amendment to the United States Constitution. This amendment protect the right of freedom of speech. A legal scholar from the University of Chicago argue that this is a realistic constitutional claim. He maintain that the founding fathers were concerned with scientific and academic freedom, and the members of the Supreme Court today also has a high regard for it.

Arguments in favor of depending research rights by using the first Amendment is complex. One of the many legal scholars involved say that rising questions that challenges and explores cultural norms are exactly the kind of research the founding fathers wanted to encourage.

According to legal scholars, the government can restrict research only if the studies in question threatens national security or public health. While releasing smallpox into the air to see how it spreads are clearly threaten and could be banned, conducting stem cell experiments do not present a clear danger to public health or security.

(Reason to write –Advanced Page 17) Mary R.Colonna/Judith E.Gilbert)Oxford UP2006

b) Word order

Arrange the following words in the proper order. Be careful of capitalization, full stop, exclamation mark and question mark.

1- sent-the-camp-to- the –both- girls- were

.....
.....
.....
.....

2- fishermen- there –many- whose rising -are-are- debts

.....
.....
.....

3- remember- summer when we- do -went- you- that -to -
france

.....
.....
.....

4- remember- where –grew I- up-house- the

.....
.....
.....
5- have –we –nearly- out –bread- of-run

.....
.....
.....
6- is- capital -tripoli -city -libya –of

.....
.....
.....
7- nice- is a- what – weather- it

c) **Verb tense logic**

Read the following article about the new Disneyland planned for Hong Kong. If the verb in bold print are in the correct tense, put a check (✓) above them. If the verbs are not in the correct tense, cross them out and write the correct tense.

In 1999 the Walt Disney Company and the Hong Kong Government **agreed** to build a new theme park in the Hong Kong district of Penny Pay. They hope it **was** ready to open in about six years. Discussions **are** long and difficult. It **takes** both sides 13 months to come to agreement.

Hong Kong Disneyland **will improve** Hong Kong's tourist industry. For example, 1.4 million more tourist **came** to Hong Kong each year. if the theme park is built. In addition, there **will be** more jobs. Right now Hong Kong **had** a high unemployment rate . This **will** surely **get** better. √Most Hong Kong residents **are** glad that the Disney Company characters **became** official residents of Hong Kong. The Disney Company **was** happy to be close to the huge Chinese market. The mood of the Hong Kong and at Disney is one of great expectations!

Reason to write by Judy L. miller Robert F. Cohen Oxford UP2001page 107

d) Run-on sentence

The following sentences are run-on sentences. Rewrite them as complete sentences by adding the conjunctions (in addition, otherwise, however, therefore)

1. I am busy with work I am studying.....
.....
.....

2. Almost everyone in her neighborhood speaks her language she does not have to use English
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3. Credit cards are convenient they are also dangerous.
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4. I did not have experience I tried to get a job.

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5. My lucky number is seven my favorite color is red.

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(Effective Academic Writing 2, page 21.)

2- Punctuation

- Punctuation the following using a comma, semicolon, colon, dash and hyphen or period. Check for proper capitalization.

1. I went to the store with my friend Rachel. we bought milk.

.....
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.....

13- sue was an excellent employee, she got a promotion.

.....
.....
.....

14- because the company performed well last quarter its stock rose several points.

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.....

4. the problem has two possible solutions give students extra activities, or another method.

.....
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.....

5 -Forecasting Toe and Joan will be in charge of researching fourth quarter production.

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3- Unity

Read the following topic sentences . Put a check (\checkmark)next to each sentence below that supports the topic sentence.

1- There are several reasons why online courses are increasing in popularity.

----a- Online courses are flexible in terms of time.

----b- Online courses have been available since the1999s.

-----c- Online courses are more convenient for students who live far away from the campus.

2- Childhood diabetes has many possible causes.

----a- Obesity is a major cause of diabetes.

----b- Children who eat much sugar can get diabetes.

-----c- Children with diabetes need constant medical care .

3- The best way to reduce traffic in our city is to build a metro subway system.

-----a- Pollution is very bad in our city.

----b- Widening the freeways has not solved the problem of traffic.

-----c- A metro subway system would encourage people to take public transportation.

4- The world of dinosaurs is very familiar to the general population.

----a- Scientists believe that the birds of today are descended from dinosaurs.

----b- Every year, new movies and TV shows about dinosaurs are produced.

----c- Children study dinosaurs and play with dinosaurs toys from an early age.

Effective academic writing 2 Page 10

4-Coherence

a) Read the sentences from a narrative paragraph. Some of the sentences are out of order. Number the sentences from 1-10 to show logical time order.

----a- My family hugged me and cried because I had been gone to so long.

-----b- I will never forget one day when I had to travel alone on the subway.

----c- I was pregnant, and I had to go to an appointment at the hospital.

----d- When my appointment ended, I got on the subway to go home.

-----e- That was why my surroundings looked unfamiliar.

- -----f- My appointment was at 1:00 p.m.

-----g- Suddenly I looked up and did not know where I was.

- ---h- I was exhausted and fell asleep on my way home.

-----i- Then I realized that I had fallen asleep.

-----j- It took me five more hours to get back to my home.

See Effective academic writing 2 Page 14

b) Read the paragraph then find out the major connectors that make the paragraph more coherent and logic.

My hometown is famous for several amazing natural features. First, it is noted for the Wheaton River, which is very wide and beautiful. On either side of this river, which is 175 feet wide, are many willow* trees which have long branches that can move gracefully in the wind. In autumn the leaves of these trees fall and cover the riverbanks like golden snow. Second, on the other side of the town is Wheaton Hill, which is unusual

because it is very steep. Even though it is steep, climbing this hill is not dangerous, because there are some firm rocks along the sides that can be used as stairs. There are no trees around this hill, so it stands clearly against the sky and can be seen from many miles away. The third amazing feature is the Big Old Tree. This tree stands two hundred feet tall and is probably about six hundred years old. These three landmarks are truly amazing and make my hometown a famous place.

5-Cohesion

This is the first part of a story- but the narrative lacks cohesion. Each idea is written in a short, isolated sentence which does not connect to the sentence before or after it. Rewrite each one as a single sentence; sometimes it will be necessary to add a connected word. Divide those six sentences into four paragraphs. (words : from which, he, he, At first, but, when, but, So, he...)

1- Mick and Keith were two bed-ridden old men. Mick and Keith were sharing a room in an old people's home.

2- Mick had the bed next to the window. Mick used to describe in loving detail to his friend the children playing in the sunshine, the dogs running in the park and any really nasty street fights.

3- Keith loved the descriptions. Keith soon became sick with jealousy.

4- This went on for years. One night Mick was very ill. Mick called out, "Please, Keith, ring for the nurse. I don't think I'll last the night."

5- His friend reached for the alarm. His friend thought, "If he dies, I'll get the bed next to the window".

6- He ignored the calls. He pretended to be asleep.

Your narrative will start like this:

Mick and Keith were two bed-ridden old men sharing a room in an old people's home.

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(**Advanced writing Oxford UP 1999 By Hugh Cory**)

6-Style

A) Make the underlined words in these sentences **formal** or **informal**, as instructed.

1- She works in a shop that sells women's clothes.
(formal)

2- I have got some new spectacles. Do you like them?
(informal)

3- Did you see that documentary about Wales on TV last night? (informal)

4- Have you met Aisha's new boyfriend?
(informal).....

5- I spent the morning talking with the Director. (
formal).....

B) Use vocabulary from the following box to make these sentences a more formal academic style.

encountered, triggered, resides, conceived, contradicted, denotes, revealed
--

1- We believe the information **lies** in archives that must not be opened until 2050.

2- He **thought up** his history while still a young man.

3- Each of the signs in the phonetic alphabet **stands** for a sound rather than a letter.

4- This study **went against** what was previously held to be true and so **started** a great deal of discussion among specialists in the field.

5- This study **showed** that 70% of the students **faced** problems in grammar.

(See English vocabulary in Use Unit82.4) Advanced By
Michael McCarthy 2002 Cambridge UP)

7-Essay organization

a) Write an introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph about the following topic.

Note: The thesis statement tells the reader what the essay is going to be about the topic of the essay, and it also tells the reader how the author thinks or feels about the topic. The conclusion should begin by restating your thesis. Then summarize the main ideas and discuss your opinion about them. Mind spelling mistakes.

1- Topic: Schools in our country (primary , preparatory, secondary)

Introduction

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Conclusion

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**b) Decide if the following are good thesis statements .
Write 'F' for fact , 'I' for an inadequate thesis statement , or 'T'
for a good thesis statement . Give reason for each.**

.....1- In the past ten years ,the crime rate in the United
states has gone down ,but the prison population has increased.

.....
.....

.....2- Long prison sentences are important .

.....
.....

.....3- Now I am going to tell you about criminals and prison .

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.....

.....4- Harsh punishment for criminals will discourage people from turning to life of crime.

.....

.....

(Reason to Write- Advanced)

Appendix (B) Teachers' Questionnaire

This is a PhD thesis on **Investigating Libyan EFL University Students' Paragraph and Essay Writing Problems** .Please read each of the following statement and put a tick in the box right to the alternative that would best represent your opinion.

Personal data:

1- Sex male female

2- Qualification:.....
.....

3- Years of
experience:.....
.....

1-Teaching writing needs more effort than other skills of language.

Always often sometimes rarely never

2-Writing is an important means of communication.

Always often sometimes rarely never

3-In general, communication through writing is limited.

Always often sometimes rarely never

4-Effective teaching writing activities should be preceded by oral preparation.

Always often sometimes rarely never

5-I ask my students to do more writing activities than what is in their syllabus.

Always often sometimes rarely never

6-The time allotted is not enough to teach writing.

Always often sometimes rarely never

7-I spend time more on oral preparation than on making students doing the activities.

Always often sometimes rarely never

8-Writing activities in the students' course are not enough.

Always often sometimes rarely never

9-Students commit a lot of mistakes in grammar

Always often sometimes rarely never

10-Grammatical mistakes make students' writing difficult to understand.

Always often sometimes rarely never

11-Spelling constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.

Always often sometimes rarely never

12-Vocabulary is also difficult for the students when I read their writings.

Always often sometimes rarely never

13- Students' vocabulary is too elementary and sounds informal.

14-Students use inappropriate style when they are asked to write their assignments.

Always often sometimes rarely never

15-Students' writings sound informal.

Always often sometimes rarely never

16- Students are aware of the degree of formality.

Always often sometimes rarely never

17-Punctuation is also problematic when I read the students' writings.

Always often sometimes rarely never

18-Cohesion constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.

Always often sometimes rarely never

19-Coherence constitutes great problems when I read the students' writings.

Always often sometimes rarely
never

20-The beginning and the layout of the students' writings are appropriate.

Always often sometimes rarely never

21-The order and the use of paragraphs are appropriate.

Always often sometimes rarely never

22-I apply product approach in teaching writing.

Always often sometimes rarely never

23-I apply process approach in teaching writing.

Always often sometimes rarely never

24-I apply different approaches in teaching writing.

Always often sometimes rarely never

25- I ask my students to do their exercises in pairs.

Always often sometimes rarely never

26-I ask my students to do their exercises in groups.

Always often sometimes rarely never

27-I spend much time on brainstorming and outlining.

Always often sometimes rarely never

28-I collect students' first draft to correct them at class.

Always often sometimes rarely never

29-I use rubric when correcting students' writings.

Always often sometimes rarely never

30- I appreciate the students' creative writings.

Always

often

sometimes

rarely

never