

English Language Department, Faculty of Education

Investigating coherence and cohesion in writing

English composition

Dr. Ahmed Hamid Mohammed Ahmed

Alzaiem Alazhari University

Abstract:

This study focused on investigating third level university students' coherence and cohesion in writing English composition, The case study of this research was the students of Alzaiem Alazhari University, University of Bahri, University of Khartoum and Omdurman Islamic University in order to reveal the obstacles encountered by Sudanese university EFL learners when writing English composition and their potential contribution to the pedagogical purposes. The problem of this study emerged from university students' inability to produce a coherent and cohesive text when comparing their performances in a pre-writing test and a post one. Sudanese university students suffered a lot and are still suffering from the problem of expressing their ideas, opinions, thoughts and feelings in a coherent and cohesive way when they come to write any piece of writing. It may be useful for both university EFL learners and English teachers; this study is significantly important because it helped teachers to make use of the feedback got from the field. The aim of this study was to find to which extent that the Sudanese university students could produce a coherent and cohesive text in writing composition. The more diverse the teaching techniques the better teaching writing results are. The study aimed at developing and managing the university EFL learners to

write competently, coherently, meaningfully and using the transitional words properly. Moreover it aimed to measure the students' competence in using cohesive devices and mechanics of writing, besides providing them with cues and remedial work in order to write more logically and in a well-sequenced way. A descriptive analytical approach was followed in conducting this study. The results obtained indicated the necessity of using remedial work when teaching composition to university EFL learners. It was found that free-writing tasks were more complicated and challenging for them. For many university students writing is considered as a daunting task and it needs careful planning and more information about the subject matter. The failure to write coherently and cohesively is a result of the students' inability to sequence the events chronologically and logically. It is quite impossible to have good learners gaining knowledge without offering them the sufficient opportunities of practicing writing. The study strongly recommended the necessity of teaching the university students the transitional words, tenses and providing them with more authentic materials and this would ease the situation for them to perform better when they write a composition. It also strongly recommended the importance of using the supplementary and remedial work when teaching the students how to write an English composition. The researcher would very much like seeing other scholars investigate the communicative approach on developing university EFL learners writing performance.

Investigating coherence and cohesion in writing English composition

دراسة التماسك والترابط البنيوي في كتابة التعبير بالانجليزية

د.أحمد حامد محمد أحمد - قسم اللغة الإنجليزية - كلية التربية - جامعة الزعيم الأزهري

مستخلص:

تناولت الدراسة مشكلة طلاب المستوى الثالث الجامعي وتحديدًا مشكلة التماسك البنيوي في كتابة موضوع الانشاء. أجريت هذه الدراسة على طلاب المستوى الثالث في جامعات الزعيم الأزهري وبحري و الخرطوم وام درمان الاسلاميه وذلك بغرض كشف العقبات (المشاكل) التي تواجه طلاب الجامعات السودانية عند كتابة موضوع انشاء أو مشاركتهم المحتملة في الأغراض التربوية. نبعت مشكلة الدراسة في عدم مقدرة الطلاب الجامعيين من كتابة نص مترابط ومتماسك وقد عانى الطلاب كثيرا بسبب مشكلة التعبير عن ارائهم وافكارهم واحاسيسهم بطريقة مترابطة ومتماسكة عند كتابة الإنشاء. تمثلت أهمية الدراسة في مساعدة الاساتذه للإستفادة من النتائج التمحصل عليها من هذه الدراسة. هدفت الدراسة لإيجاد طريقة تمكن طلاب الجامعات السودانية من كتابة نص مترابط ومتماسك . وذلك عن طريق مقارنة أداء الطلاب قبل وبعد اختبار التجربة وان التنوع في استخدام تقنيات التدريس هو الذي يؤدي إلى نتائج جيدة . كما هدفت الدراسة إلى تطوير وتوجيه مقدرات الطلاب وذلك بهدف الارتقاء بمستوى الكتابة عند الطلاب من ناحية الكفاءة والمضمون والتماسك عن طريق استخدام كلمات الربط بصورة جيدة. وتناولت الدراسة أيضا مسألة قياس كفاءة الطلاب في استخدام أدوات الربط وتقنية الكتابة بالإضافة إلى تزويد الطلاب بالنماذج والأعمال المجهزة مسبقا وذلك بغرض تقديم كتابة مبنية على اساس المنطق وتسلسل الافكار. واتبع البحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي. وقد توصلت الدراسة لعدد من النتائج اهمها ضرورة استخدام النماذج الجاهزة عند تدريس موضوعات الانشاء لطلاب الجامعات. وقد توصلت الدراسة إلى ان الواجبات الكتابية التي يتمتع فيها الطلاب بنوع من الحرية هي اكثر تعقيدا وتمثل تحديا للطلاب. تعتبر كتابة المواضيع الانشائية مهمة شاقة بالنسبة لكثير من الطلاب الجامعيين في هذا المستوى. كما انها تحتاج إلى تخطيط دقيق ومعلومات كثيرة عن الموضوع. وان الاخفاق في كتابة موضوع متماسك ومتربط ناتج عن عدم مقدرة الطلاب على ترتيب الاحداث ترتيبا منطقيا وزمانيا. وثبت انه من غير الممكن الحصول على طلاب متميزين بدون تقديم المعرفة والفرص الكافية لممارسة الكتابة. أوصت الدراسة بضرورة تدريس الطلاب الجامعيين أدوات الربط والأزمنة بالإضافة إلى تزويدهم بمواد ذات دقة عالية. وسيساعد ذلك على تقديم أداء أفضل عند كتابة موضوع انشاء. كما أوصت الدراسة أيضا بأهمية استخدام نماذج اضافية لمعالجة مشاكل الطلاب عند كتابة موضوع انشاء باللغة الانجليزية. تقترح الدراسة إجراء دراسة في منهجية التواصل لتطوير اداء الطلاب عند كتابة الإنشاء.

Background

The researcher has experienced teaching at university and secondary schools for ten years, he taught many different writing courses, during this period he noticed that the students of both levels considered that writing is a boring, tough and a daunting task. Learning a foreign language writing skills takes time and dedication. There are many reasons that may help to convince that the Sudanese university EFL learners to take the plunge especially if such persuasion is needed. Some reasons are practical, some aspiration, some intellectual and others are sentimental.

Knowing a language means knowing how to produce and understand the sentences of that language with particular meanings. Nowadays writing skill is becoming one of the best means of communication through which (where) many people can convey their ideas, opinions, suggestions, demands and basic needs.

L.G. Alexander (1967:34) claimed That many students are plunged into a composition work long before they ready for it. The teacher may decide that it is the time his/her students attempt to write a composition, so he / she sets a short narrative or descriptive piece and hopes for the best.

Writing skill can be best developed through carefully controlled and graded comprehension or précis exercises.

As mentioned by H.G. Widdowson (1971:56) writing is a much slower process than either speaking or reading. In writing free composition a learner has to make up his own thoughts. Outside the lessons penmanship is the first kind of writing exercises that reader can use.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The students of universities and general levels considered that writing is not an interesting activity especially if you ask them to write on a limited topic. Few of them can write but the great majority claim that writing is a quite difficult and boring task. Su-

danese universities EFL learners are completely suffering from the problem of ignoring the fundamentals of writing of a composition when writing. Some students might have difficulty with writing because of poor orientation to task, attention problems, behavioral resistance and discouragement as a result of history failure with writing or other underlying problems.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims at the following:

1. Developing and managing university EFL learners to write a composition coherently and cohesively.
2. Measuring the university EFL learners' ability in using the transitional words and mechanics of writing.

1.3 Questions of the study

1. How do the universities EFL students write a unified, coherent and cohesive composition?
2. How are the students' abilities measured in using the transitional words?

1.4 Hypotheses of study

1. Sudanese University EFL learners' compositions lack unity, coherence and cohesion.
2. University EFL learners are unable to use the transitional words to connect their ideas when writing.

1.5 Significance of the study

Writing is one of the most significant language four basic skills for EFL learners and for all language other learners. Mastering learning English language writing skills will help to motivate you as a foreign language learner in your study and to succeed in your career.

University students are supposed to be well equipped with knowledge and skills. Mastering writing skills is a cornerstone for the students' success in their university studies.

1.6 Limits of the study

This study is limited to investigate coherence and cohesion in English as a foreign language learners' composition writing, targeting both teachers and EFL learners at the tertiary levels namely the 3rd level students of the Faculty of Education, Alzaiem Alazhari University, University of Khartoum, Omdurman Islamic University and University of Bahri who majored in English language, in the academic year (2021-2022).

1.7 Method of the study

In order to carry out this research to achieve, its objectives and to answer its questions, the researcher adopts the descriptive and analytical approach.

1.7.1 The Subject

a-University English language teachers.

b-University students.

1.7.2 Instruments

The researcher is going to collect data by using the following tools:

a-Questionnaire for English language teachers.

1.7.3 Procedure

The researcher is going to collect data by:

- a. Distributing the questionnaire to the English teachers and collecting them back.
- b. Analyzing and explaining the results.

Coherence and Cohesion:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the coherence and cohesion of writing composition of the English language foreign learners' further analyzing these errors and categorizing them to what category do they belong. Jack Richard (1974:9) when are studies the standard works on the teaching method of modern language it comes as surprise to find how cursorily the authors deal with the question of learners errors and their correction, distracting

but inevitable by products of the process of learning a language about which their teacher should make a little fuss as possible.

Coherence means the semantic relationship (Halliday and Ruqaiya – (1976:148) – The semantic relationships refers to the following (1) Reference (2) substitution and ellipsis (3) conjunction (4) lexical coherence of a text.

Ruqaiya (1976:46) Mentioned that much of the work of learning a foreign language consists in learning to make the right predictions , if the student coming into school with the first language other than English finds difficulty in using English to learn with , This is likely to be in part because he has not yet learned to expect in English or to use the context in a predictive way the school itself provides a good example of what in modern Jargon could be called an interface between the context of situation and the context of culture . Cohesion: Halliday – Ruqayia (1976:4) mentioned that the concept of cohesion is a semantic one. It refers to the relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that defines it as a text. Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other on the sentence that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up and the two elements, the presupposing and presupposed, are there by at least potentially integrated into a text, that is to say that cohesion is part of the system of a language. The potential for cohesion lies in the systematic resources of reference, ellipsis and so on those are built into the language itself.

According to Widdowson (1978:12) discourse analysis is an umbrella term for those studies within applied linguistics which focus units/ stretches of language beyond the sentence level.

Choosing a subject

Hodges and Whitten(1979:384) say whether you have assigned a subject for an essay or must choose one, you should ask your-

self what you know about it, for writer write best about what they know best. That is to say those writers often write properly whenever they get enough exposure to the environment they live in.

Limiting the subject

Hodges (1979:385) mentions that one way of reducing the general category of the topic is to increasingly restricted one topic, that means the more restricted the category the more specific the idea.

Collecting ideas about your topic

1. List making: lists of ideas to include in an essay help you as a writer to accomplish a task. You can list your ideas but without regard to their order in the essay. The most important thing is to organize your ideas in order of importance.
2. Asking who, what, why, where, when and how:

Develop a working plan or rough outline

By preparing a rough outline that shows the pattern in which you will develop your ideas as well as the sequence in which you will arrange them.

Sequence choice: the choice of sequence according to Hodges (1979: 401) depends on the subject and the purpose of your essay, spatial sequence is used in description in order to create an exact and orderly picture that enables the audience to recreate the scene details move from left to right.

Writing and revising the first draft

Every writer when comes to write an essay or a composition he/she should write then revise what is written. Revising the first draft is considered as preliminary sketch of a composition under construction (not yet constructed). **Writing and revising the second draft**

In editing Redfield, analyzes his work, checking matters of content, organization, sentence structure, paragraph unity and

diction. At this point he is still more interested in revising that is to say he is rethinking the scope and shape of his ideas and how they relate to the thesis in another word he is more interested in revising than proofreading.

Sentence sense:

Sheila & Graham(1983:1) as you have learned to speak and write, you have become aware of what a sentence is, but to develop this awareness fully you must know the basic parts of a sentence and how they can be put together in a clear and varied patterns.

Exactness

Graham (1983:205) explains that a person can't write clearly and accurately unless he/she has built up a vocabulary of words to express

The things He/she feels or thinks, so having a considerable stock of words will help the learner to learn in a fast way, and write easily without any difficulties.

Unity and logical sentence structure

Errors in unity or logic are numerous and different that is impossible to illustrate sometimes the instructor marks them with (k) indicating the sentence is awkward and need to be entirely rewritten.

Assessing writing performance

In the assessment of written performance of the Sudanese EFL learners presented by Ali Ahmed and Abdelrahim Mugaddam(The world journal of English language-2013) The findings of their studies suggest that the writing proficiency of Sudanese University Students was poor. The students lack the skill required for communicative writing. This resulted in writing which was neither comprehensible nor informative.

. Muhammed Albasheer (2013) claimed that his results showed that the English of the subjects is ill-formed in the sense that

the students have not yet identified the various linguistic rules required for transformations asked by the given tasks. That the subjects should be given adequate exposure to the target language (English) to minimize the possibility of committing such errors, further the students should also be given opportunities to practice their English in both receptive and productive forms because their present chance is not enough for adequate mastery of the target language .

Taiseer Mohammed (2008) her study entitled as an analysis of common grammatical errors of students in writing said that the students' errors help the teacher to identify the problematic areas of headline language at different levels of instructions. They will be able to infer the nature of learners' knowledge at given stage..

Previous research has shown ESL/EFL students experience serious difficulties in the composing process. One of these difficulties is how to produce a well-connected and coherent piece of writing. In order to help students to understand the importance of producing a unified and solid piece of writing, many researchers conducted studies in this respect. Abdullah in his study entitled as assessment of written performance (2000) for example found that the Sudanese University students were not able to make correct use of written discourse properties which eventually reduce the overall writing quality. He also found that the average students' writing was characterized by a variety of coherence breaks. This made their writing appear not understandable. He added that the students were not able to use cohesive devices despite the instruction they received on English for six years. To overcome this problem, the findings of the related studies suggest explicit instruction in the use of cohesive devices. Castro(2004) suggests that second language with shared socio-cultural background utilize similar and textual resources in writing. As for Neunner (1987) said that both good and poor students made the same use

of cohesive devices, there were no significant differences in the students' use of these items. It is well-known that good students are more successful than poor students in achieving the goals of writing.

Studies on writing strategies

Among these studies is the study conducted by Alobed(1991) entitled as writing strategies, He showed that significant differences in writing quantity and quality among the students who write with pre-writing activities and those who write without activities .But it is obvious that any pre-writing activity can result in good writing quality.

Studies on writing competence

In his survey entitled as writing competence Maria(2001) found that Bulgarian EFL learners fail to write because they lack conscious knowledge about the complexity of writing as cognitive task. As for Ahmed (2010) the source of the difficulties that the Sudanese students encounter in writing is due to their poor writing background, mother tongue interference and strategies that students adopt in writing. Fallah Zadeh and Shokpour(2007) reported that part of the problem the Iranian students experience in writing refers to the classes and methods of teaching and to the students' low knowledge of vocabulary and lack of motivation. Another study in this regard is by Ezza(2010) who reported that English department in the Arabic universities adopted approaches and materials dated back to 1940s and 1950s.

Writing hindrance and challenges

In his PhD thesis Dr. Melouk (2014-3) in his study entitled as writing hindrance and challenges he claimed that students spend five to seven years learning upon entering the university system. However, these students struggle with learning fluent English as well as lack of the ability to express themselves through strong and critical writing skills. He concluded that data analyses re-

vealed that EFL students encountered many writing challenges, particularly those related to the language proficiency.

Writing problems and strategies

Fawzia(2014) In her study entitled as writing problems and strategies, she said that the aim of her paper is to identify and investigate the gaps in English language teaching and learning that exist between post-basic schools and universities in Sultanate of Oman. The gaps were examined in relation to the problems that school and university language learners encounter in English and to the strategies they follow to overcome these problems. The examined problems concerned with writing a correct English sentence, putting the ideas together in a coherent way' choosing the right vocabulary to express ideas and having ideas about suggested topics and deciding how to start an essay or a paragraph.

The importance of writing tasks

Zahid and Muhammed Umer(2013-7)In their study entitled as the importance of writing tasks. Their study is considered as a comprehensive investigation to identify the importance of writing tasks, major areas of difficulty in academic writing, the factors causing these difficulties and the corrective measures in the Saudi EFL academic context. It attempted to identify gender based differences for the above mentioned factors and results of independent samples. The findings reported that these particular Saudi EFL learners have serious problems in their academic writing due to their weaknesses in using the appropriate lexical items, organization of ideas and grammar.

Students problems with cohesion and coherence in writing essay

Abdal hamid (2010) in his study entitled as coherence and cohesion problems in essay writing. The current study focuses on the organizational problems that Egyptian student teachers of English encounter when they write an English essay. In particular, the current study aims at investigating students' cohesion and

coherence problems in EFL essay writing design was used including a questionnaire and a semi-structured in-depth interview.

Data Analyses and Discussions

Table 4.1 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devi- ation	Re- spons- es	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reali- ty Of 0.05	Value
1	4.65	.566	Strong- ly agree	76	30.679	109	.001	Func- tion	Strongly agree
			Agree	31					
			Unsure	2					
			Dis- agree	1					
			Strong- ly Dis- agree	-					

Statement 1 which states that the unity of paragraph happens when all the supporting sentences support one main idea, according to the statistical analysis that the teachers response is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of the phrase is positive. The value of the (T.test) is(30.679) and the degree of freedom is (109) added to that the value of the probability is 001 that means the agreement of respondents on this statement. The std error is .566. The percentage of strongly agree is 69% , the percentage of agree is 28% and total percentage of the phrase is 97.2%. This statement was intended to elicit the teachers' opinions about the occurrence of the unity of the paragraph when using the supporting sentences and whether these sentences support the coherence and cohesion of the text or paragraph or not. From the statistical analysis it can be said that this statement goes in line with the study hypothesis that Sudanese university EFL learners writing lacks unity of paragraph, cohesion and coherence.

Table 4.2 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	Respon- ses	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
2	4.38	.778	Strongly agree	53	18.630	109	.001	Func- tion	Strong- ly agree
			Agree	52					
			Unsure	1					
			Disagree	4					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

Statement number 2 which says that using the transitional words properly indicates that the student is aware of their usage with reference to the table above and the statistical analysis which shows that the teachers response is either strongly agree or agree that is to say that the general trust of the statement is positive and the value of the (T.test) is (18.630) and the value of the probability is .001. The (std) of this statement is .778 at the level of significance .001. The percentage of those who are strongly agree is 48% , those who agree is 47% and the total percentage of the phrase percentage is 95%. It can be elicited from the above table that the great majority of the teachers agree that using the transitional words properly means that the students are capable of how to use the connective words properly to connect their ideas logically and meaningfully.

Table 4.3 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devi- ation	Responses	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
3	4.46	.713	Strongly agree	58	21.541	109	.001	Function	Strong- ly agree
			Agree	49					
			Unsure	2					
			Disagree	1					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

Item 3 which reads that the transitional words help students to link sentences logically according to the table above that transitional words help EFL learners to link the English sentences properly and accurately this is based on the statistical analysis which shows that the majority of the respondents response is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of the phrase is positive because the (T. Test) is (21.541). The std of this item is .713 at the level of significance .001. The percentage of the respondents who are strongly agree is 52%, those who are agree is 44% and the total percentage of the phrase is 97%. This statement was intended to elicit that transitional words help Sudanese university EFL learners to write and link their ideas logically and meaningfully.

Table 4.4 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devi- ation	Respons- es	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
4	4.17	.662.	Strongly agree	33	18.589	109	.001.	Function	Agree
			Agree	65					
			Unsure	10					
			Disagree	2					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

Item number four which states that using synonyms can create sentence coherence. With reference to this table that using similar words can create sentence coherence or will be meaningful for the university EFL learners this agrees with the statistical analysis which indicates that the great majority of the respondents responses is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of the statement is positive.

The (T. Test) of the above mentioned is (18.589) with .662 std at the level of significance .001. The percentage of those who strongly agree is 33% , those who agree is 59% and the total percentage of the phrase is 89%. From the statistical analysis it can be concluded that the great majority of teachers prefer using synonymy that can help students to understand much more sentences and creates sentence coherence that is to say coherence can be taught through using synonyms in classes therefore students can acquire more words and more meanings and this of course will result in a better performance.

Table 4.5 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	Re- sponses	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
5	4.05	.822	Strongly agree	32	13.453	109	.001	Func- tion	Agree
			Agree	60					
			Unsure	10					
			Disagree	8					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

As for the statement number five which says that English foreign language learners sometimes get confused when using the transitional words according to the table above readings most of the respondents response is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of phrase is positive. With reference to the statistical analysis it can noticed that the (T. Test) is (13.453) and the std is .822 at the level of the significance .001. Regarding table 5 the percentage of those strongly agree is 29%, those are agree 54% and the whole percentage of the phrase is 83%. This Statement was intended to elicit that teachers opinion regarding the students inability to produce a text with accurate transitional words from the above table analysis it observed that university students have confusion when they use the transitional words in writing English composition.

Table 4.6 Writing coherently and cohesively

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. De- viation	Re- sponses	Num- ber of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
6	4.11	.894	Strong- ly agree	39	12.800	109	.001	Function	Agree
			Agree	52					
			Unsure	9					
			Dis- agree	10					
			Strong- ly Dis- agree	-					

Item 6 which states that constructing a coherent paragraph is a difficult task for the students according to the table above statistical analysis the great majority of the teachers responses is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of the phrase is positive. The (T.test) of the statement is(12.800) and its std is .894 at the level of the significance .001. As for table 6 the percentage of those strongly agree is 35%, those who agree is 47% and the whole percentage of the phrase is 82%. This statement(6) is intended to realize that whether the students of the university 3rd level are capable of constructing a coherent paragraph or not.

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devi- ation	Re- sponses	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
7	3.96	.995	Strong- ly agree	34	10.160	109	.001.	Func- tion	Agree
			Agree	52					
			Unsure	13					
			Dis- agree	9					
			Strong- ly Dis- agree	2					

Table 4.7 Writing coherently and cohesively

Item number 7 which states that Sudanese learners of English as a foreign language ignore the transitional words for linking ideas, according to the table readings and the statistical analysis that respondents response is either strongly agree or agree and the general trust of the phrase is positive more over the (T. Test) of the phrase is (10.160) and std of the statement is .995 at the level of significance .001. The percentage of those who strongly agree is 30% and the total percentage of the phrase is 78%. This statement is intended to elicit the teachers' views concerning the students' ignorance of the transitional words and how they can

use them to link their sentences more properly and accurately.

Table 4.8

Using transitional words

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. De- via- tion	Responses	Num- ber of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
8	4.62	.488	Strongly agree	68	34.774	109	.001	Func- tion	Strongly agree
			Agree	42					
			Unsure	-					
			Disagree	-					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

Item number 8 which states that giving enough to writing practice is advisable, with reference to the above table readings that most of the respondents responses are either strongly agree or agree that is to say giving or devoting enough time to practice will help students to strengthen their writing performance. The general trust of this item is highly positive. The (T. Test) of the phrase is (34.774) and the std of the phrase is .488 with .001 as level of significance. The percentage of the respondents who strongly agree is 61%, those who agree is 38% point something and the total percentage of this phrase is 100%. From the above table it is observed that most teachers agreed that giving the students enough time to do more writing exercises will be much better and beneficial for the university students more over it will develop their level but the fact is that teachers should be more engaged in this or they can make regular follow up.

Table 4.9

Using transitional words

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	Respons- es	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
9	4.27	728.	Strongly agree	45	18.328	109	.001.	Function	Strong- ly agree
			Agree	53					
			Unsure	9					
			Disagree	3					
			Strongly Disagree	-					

The statement number 9 which says that the mastery of the authentic written materials enable the students to write properly, according to the table above demonstrates that the statistical analysis shows that the great majority of the respondents responses are either strongly agree or agree that is to say that general trust of phrase is highly positive furthermore the (T.Test) of the phrase is 18.328 and its std is .728 with .001 as level of significance. The percentage of those who strongly agree is 40.90%, for those who agree is 48.18% and the total percentage of the statement is 89%. Statement no 9 is intended to elicit that the mastery of authentic written materials enables the Sudanese university EFL learners to perform better in writing English composition

Using transitional words

Test Value =3									
State- ment	Mean	Std. De- viation	Re- spons- es	Number of Item	T	Df	Sig	reality Of 0.05	Value
10	4.36	.586.	Strong- ly agree	46	24.398	109	.001.	Function	Strongly agree
			Agree	58					
			Unsure	6					
			Dis- agree	-					
			Strong- ly Dis- agree	-					

Item number 10 which states that giving the students a pre-writing activity as prompt is necessary when teaching composition. With reference to the table above that the statistical analysis shows that a great number of the respondents' responses are either strongly or agree that is to say the general trust of the phrase is positive.

The (T.Test) of the phrase is (24.398) and the phrase std is .586 at the level of significance .001. Regarding the table above the percentage of those who strongly agree is 41.81%, those who agree percentage is 52.7% and the total percentage of the phrase is 94%. Statement no 10 is intended to get the teachers opinions about the necessity of giving the students pre-writing activity as prompt to develop their writing skills in teaching writing English composition.

2 Students' performance in writing

200 students of the third level were subjected to two tests; the tests were a pre-writing test and a post writing test. The targeted groups were chosen from four Sudanese universities to represent

the other Sudan universities. 200 students were selected from Alzaiem Alzhari university, Khartoum university, University of Bahri and Omdurman Islamic university, Faculties of education English language department.

50 students were selected from each faculty. They were given a free writing test as a pre-test and experimental writing test as a post test

4.3 Analysis of the two groups' performance in writing

The purpose of these two tests is to investigate the students' writing coherence and cohesion to make sure whether their writing is meaningful or not and well-sequenced or not this is by comparing them. The Analysis includes the following

1. Fluency which means to translate one's thought into written words. The testees should become more proficient at writing down words and sentences into a composition of gradually length.
2. Fluency includes misspelling, poor wording, capitalization and punctuation.
3. Content is the second factor to be considered in students' writing performance. It has the following features:
 - a- Composition organization
 - b- Cohesion and coherence
 - c- Accuracy which includes introduction, body and conclusion.

Omdurman Islamic University

Axis	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. ((2-tailed	reality Of 0.05
Exam	post test	15.5400	3.28391	9.998	98	001.	Function
	pre test	9.0000	3.25764				

Table1.4.2

It is observed that from the above table that the third level students of Omdurman Islamic university, faculty of education, English language department. Regarding the statistical analysis results of both controlled and experimental groups in performing the two writing tests, in the pre-writing test(controlled test) students' performance is less than their performance in the post-test(experimental test) that it can be noticed clearly in the above table mean of the two tests which shows that 15.5400 as a mean for the experimental group and 9.0000 as a mean for the controlled group. The std of the experimental group is 3.28391 and the std of the controlled group is 3.25764. From the table above one can notice that std of the experimental group is higher than std of the controlled group. The (T.Test) of the two tests is 9.998 with 98 as degree of freedom and at .001 as level of significance. The two tests were corrected from 20. The pass and fail percentage of the two groups is like that for the post-test the pass percentage is 100%. As for the pre-test the pass percentage is 38% , the fail percentage is 62% and number of the students who failed is 31 students.

Most of students' marks in the post test ranging between 20,19,17,15 and 14, on the other hand most of the students' marks in the pre-test ranging between 3, 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 marks. According to the statistical analysis it observed that the students' performance in the post-test is far better than their performance in pre-test, in other words that the pre-planning and remedial work often help students a lot when writing any kind or piece of writing.

University of Bahri

Axis	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	reality Of 0.05
Exam	post test	15.3800	2.47345	11.607	98	.001	Function
	pre test	7.9400	3.79801				

Table 2.4.2

The above table shows the statistical analysis results of the 3rd level students of the University of Khartoum Bahri (formerly the university of Juba), faculty of education, English language department. From the above table the mean of the pre-test is 7.9400 and the mean of the post-test is 15.3800. The std of the post-test is 2.47345 and the pre-test std is 3.79801. The (T.Test) of the two tests is 11.607, its degree of freedom is 98 at the level of significance .001 with 0.05 as a reality of function. With reference to the above table it observed that the students' performance in the post-test is better than their performance in the pre-test according to the mean of the above table. These two test were checked from 20. Regarding the pass and fail of experimental group no one fails and the percentage is 100%. The great majority of students' grades are hovering around 13,14,15,16,17,18,19 and 20. The controlled group pass percentage is 56%, the fail percentage is 44% and the number of the failures is 21 students. In the pre-test the failed students marks are ranging between 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 marks. With reference to the statistical analysis of the above table illustrations it can clearly noticed that the 3rd level students of the university of Bahri who majored in English language that their performance in the post-test is much better than their performance in pre-test, that is to say that the remedial work benefits the university EFL students a lot when they come to any kind of writing. This test is intended to know that whether the students are benefited by the remedial work or not that com-

paring their performance in the two tests the controlled and the experimental one.

University of Khartoum

Axis	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	reality Of 0.05
Exam	post test	16.0000	2.64961	11.877	98	.001	Function
	pre test	9.0800	3.15478				

Table 3.4.2

The above table illustrates the statistical analysis results of the University of Khartoum, faculty of education, English language department 3rd level students. It is observed that from the statistical analysis that the mean of the post test for the students of the University of Khartoum is 16.000 and for the pre-test is 9.0800. The (T.Test) of the two tests is 11.877 with .001 as a level of significance (2-tailed) of the controlled and the experimental tests. The std of the post-test is 2.64961 and for the pre-test is 3.15478 with 0.05 as a reality of function. Regarding the statistical analyses it can be observed that the students performance in the post-test is much better than their performance in the pre-test that according to the above table results. The two tests were checked from 20. Regarding the pass and fail percentage of the experimental group no student fails at the exam and their percentage is 100%. The students grades are hovering around 15,16,17,18,19 and 20. As for the pass and fail percentage in the pre-test for the students of the university of Khartoum for those who passed the percentage is 42% and those who failed is 58%. The students grades were hovering around 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9. With reference to the above table illustrations it is observed that the students of the university of Khartoum performance in the post-test is much better than their performance in the pre-test and that is clear from the table and the calculations of the percentage that fore mentioned. In accordance with the statistical

analyses and the calculations above it is observed that the University EFL learners students benefit a lot if they are exposed to pre-planning and remedial work.

Alzaiem Alazhari University

Axis	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. ((2-tailed	reality Of 0.05
Exam	post test	16.0800	2.59387	12.977	98	.001.	Function
	pre test	7.4400	3.92875				

Table 4.4.2

The above table shows that the statistical analysis results of Alza'eem Alzhari University, faculty of education, English language department 3rd level students. It is showed that from the statistical analysis that the mean of the post-test for experimental group is 16.0800 and the mean of the controlled group for the pre-test is 7.4400. The (T.Test) for the both groups is 12.977 with 98 as a degree of freedom and .001 as (2-tailed) as a level of significance. The std of the experimental group test is 2.59387 and for the controlled group test is 7.4400. Regarding the students performance in two tests it can be observed that the students achievement is much better in the post-test than their in pre-test the two tests were checked from 20 marks. Regarding the fail and pass percentage of the experimental group no one fails at the exam and their pass percentage is 100%. The grades they obtained in the post-test are ranging between 12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19 and 20. There are 22 students failed at the pre-test and their percentage is 44% and 28 students passed and their percentage is 56%. Regarding the above table and the statistical analysis it can be observed that Alzaeem Alzhari university students achievement in the post-test is much better than their achievement in the pre-test and that is clearly seen from the above table and the pass and fail percentage of the two groups. The students are greatly benefiting from the remedial work offered that is to the pre-planning

and remedial work are helping students a lot to write more confidently, with coherence and cohesion. Looking at the table above it can be said that the students of the experimental group scores are higher than the students of controlled group therefore it can be said that the university students who majored in English are indeed in need of providing them with remedial work.

4.4 Analyzing the Students' Errors in the pre-test and the post-test

The researcher analyzed and compared the performance of the students in writing English composition of the four Sudanese universities according to the table of the statistical analysis of that students committed more errors in the controlled writing than in the experimental writing. The statistical analyses reveal that some of the students in controlled writing test do not produce or write a coherent and cohesive text at all.

Results and Recommendations:

Teachers have to make brainstorming when teaching writing English composition.

Teachers should provide the university EFL learners with remedial work and urging them about the necessity of using it.

Teachers should explain and differentiate for their students between Arabic and English writing systems differences in order to have a better background.

Some of English language teachers do not give enough time to teach writing for this reason the students will not be able to achieve better results in writing.

Some teachers do not provide the students with authentic writing materials in order to help them to write with a minimum amount of errors.

Some teachers and tutors do not review the students' written work and this will lead to a bad written performance.

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