

Difficulties of Composition Writing among Secondary Schools Students in Sudan

Wasil Hassan M. A. Elaagip
Assistant Professor
Department of English Language
College of Arts & Humanities
University of Bahri - SUDAN

Abstract

This research aims at highlighting the benefits of writing composition among the secondary school students who study English as a second language. They need certain conditions to familiarize themselves with writing composition. This research includes all the experiments of linguists and their trial to find out useful materials for students to learn the second language in the correct order. It includes four parts—the first part discusses the objectives, significant problems, background questions and the methods used in building up this research. In part two, there is a review of the literature and many other ideas about composition and its roles in the field of language. Part three includes the methodology, discussion, results as well as analysis of the test. In part four, there is conclusion and recommendations.

Keywords: Writing composition, general language proficiency, vocabulary.

1.1. Historical Background:

The historical background of writing composition goes back to the history of rhetorical language. So, according to the history of language group of graduate students set up the historical background on the current theories so as to practice in writing composition and writing theories.

Despite the process of writing composition has been taught for a long period of time, the most challenging variety of writing for the students is that to force them to develop their writing ability in order to feel more confident about their writing.

Students sometimes find difficulties through writing composition such as lack of vocabulary and the ordering sentences in correct order. Therefore, this research would be an anticipation and exclamation for writing composition to facilitate the difficulties.

As far as, the discussion concern with writing composition it is known that students of secondary school could not be able to organize their ideas and thoughts; so they fail to write clearly and efficiently. Their attention should be focused on the meaningful concept and responsible application of logical and rhetorical language to the development of ideas.

We notice the strong relation between the four skills as complementary to each other or what is spoken is needed to be heard and what is written is needed to be read and vice versa.

Above all mentioned, unless the language of students is highly constructed, they would not be able to differentiate between the four skills. Equally important is the students would never become good in handwriting. Finally, there are different thoughts to write as there are different writers.

1.2.Statement of the Problem:

There are many problems and difficulties of students of secondary school when they write composition. For example: the absence of vocabulary and the ordering of sentence, the absence of motivation to write composition, disability to produce correct sentences and putting them together in grammatical order. Through this process students got confused and suspicious about their writing ability since they lack the self-confidence; they do not find the suitable words to use. Another problem students face through writing composition is that the use of the best structure or the structure that support the arguments that students need to make. Furthermore, students of the world of today pay less attention for the writing process because of high technology. Another problem is that students are unable to follow the correct steps to write their composition starting with step number one and so forth, such as, making out line and starting to extend it so that they could develop it as more acceptable composition as possible.

1.3.Assumptions of the Research:

According to some information about writing composition and as hypotheses of this research, the researcher supposes that students should know the most important steps they should follow and what the best style is and what is the appropriate use of language they should use to convey their messages through.

There are three essential ways to help students to develop their writing ability.

First, there should be more intensive reading so as to improve the standard of writing and acquiring set value of vocabulary as well as to build good constructive sentence, so that the shape of writing could be acceptable.

Second, students should have to bear in mind that the only way to be familiar with writing is to practice it. So, this practice could be in special note book designed for this purpose. Then write down all expressions and ideas that in his/her mind until it stops pouring and by the end of certain period they gradually or automatically improve their writing ability and writing composition. Therefore, they can be competent enough to write every topic rationally.

Lastly, students should prepare for their writing by gathering lots of information concerning their topic.

1.4.Research Questions:

To make logical argument there are many questions can be asked
Such as the following:

- 1- Why do students study composition?
- 2- What is the secret behind studying writing composition?
- 3- What is the purpose of composition?
- 4- How many types of composition and what kind of language used to produce it?
- 5- Does the outlines that made by the students seem logical {i.e. Is it possible to fit the quality of information used in the arguments?}

1.5. Objectives of the Research:

Writing is communicative method among all the students of the world today. So, there are however many objectives behind writing composition; first of all is to help students to know what are almost the important ways through which they can express their ideas and convey their messages to the others in term of communication.

This communication is assumed to be known as (S L I) Social Life Interaction; it includes many types of writing such as personal letter, job application, post cards essays and many other articles.

The above-mentioned ideas indicate two essential aims of writing; first is to develop general language proficiency through writing and second is to develop the skill of writing itself.

There are number of good reasons/purposes for bringing writing composition task into more central position; in the classroom for instance it could offer students opportunity to work in their own places and above all to think while they are writing or producing language. Second it is meant to give students a chance to retrace their steps and to check and correct what they have wrote before they are required to show it to another person. Third is to help students to develop their writing ability and to feel more confident about their writing as well as to develop their own understanding and to know how does language work and of what is linguistically possible. Fourth is to offer students permanent record so that they look back on what they have done to check and refresh their memory on what they have learnt.

1.6. Significance of the Research:

No doubt the process of writing is considered as the most important step among the three other skills, but it is not as difficult as many students thought. One of the significant is to offer students considerable opportunity in increasing their vocabulary and to refine their knowledge of grammar and to develop their understanding on how things are well expressed and how well their messages are understood by others.

1.7. Methodology of the Study:

According to the information that the researcher used in this project, he actually relied on analytical and descriptive methods. These two essential methods are used in producing this research so as to offer the researcher more chance to analyze and describe all what is concerning with the target topic.

In addition to that I will use questionnaire among students of secondary school so as to find exactly the areas of difficulties.

2.1. Literature Review:

The skill of writing well in the second language is important and needs special attention. Therefore, writing is of course, not an easy, but it is less difficult than many students and their teachers imagined. Thus, it plays vital role in communication.

Students however will understand the purpose of writing as I mention in the first part. Furthermore, they could be able to adapt all of them and even to invent new activity if they are looking to the nature of the writing itself.

Many people actually have different thought about writing process as means of communication. The study of writing in the twentieth century tends to concentrate on the spoken language; writing language on the other hand was thought by some people to be spoken language put into written form but in fact in away or another they contributed to each other as complimentary. According to many linguists from De Sassure through to Chomsky for what seemed like good reason at that time; they neglected the written mode in favor of the spoken language, this however is contributed to the fact that writing was for long time neglected area in language learning.

Furthermore, the assumption is that writing has put the spoken language into spoken form is only true for activities like taking down dictations or transcribing tape. Anyway there are more assumption I made and significant I map out in part one and thus it can help students to follow the best way in writing their composition rationally and readable.

2.2. Definition of Composition:

The term composition can be defined according to linguistic point of view as the ability of writing simple English in good, clear hand writing without making many mistakes of spelling, vocabulary and punctuation. Furthermore, writing involves encoding of message that we translate our thoughts into language and language into written marks.

When we write, we use something called graphic symbols which are letters and its combination that represent the sound that we make when we speak. Therefore, we can say writing is the arts of these symbols.

Students always arrange the symbols according to certain rules or conventions in order to form words and arrange words to rules to form sentences. Thus, writing is a complex group of abilities and not as easy as spoken or uttering words because it is controlled by certain regulations.

2.3. Speaking vs. Writing:

Someone might wonder why it is not enough to teach students how to speak English adequately. It is really learning to write is not just natural extension of learning to speak or in another meaning they are not identical. One example is that, student learnt to speak his/her first language at home where as most of students had to be taught at schools and institutes how to write the same language, and this is the difference between the two processes. Many adults and native speakers found writing difficult, but how to write the same language and this is the difference between the two processes. Many adults and native speakers found writing difficult, but the two processes are not identical as in the following:

Speaking

- Speech is universal. Everyone learns to write acquire native language in the first year of life
- Spoken language has dialect variation.
- Speakers use their voices (pitch, stress and rhythm) and bodies' gestures and facial expression to convey ideas.
- Speakers use pauses intonation.
- Speakers pronounce letters.
- Speaking is always spontaneously and planned.
- Speakers speak to listener who is right there.
- Speaking is usually informal repetitive speech
- Speaking solves the problem of the society in terms of communication.

Writing

- Written language generally demands standard form of grammar, syntax and vocabulary.
- Writer relies on the words and the page to express their meanings.
- Writer uses punctuation.
- Writer spells letters.
- Most of writers take time and make plans, they can go back and change what they have written.
- Writer has only one choice to convey information and capture the readers' attention.
- Writing is more formal and compact.
- In writing, more complex sentences are used.
- Writing allows students to transcend time (when we leave note for someone to pickup it) or space (to send a letter).

In addition to the previous differences, writing system may assist groups of people to communicate as in the case of Chinese where different dialect is maturely unintelligible in spoken form but share common written form.

Furthermore, the spelling system of almost of all languages that uses the alphabetic writing system is based on how words are spoken. But only partly students can trace not only the historical background of words but also their relation to each other, in spite of difference in their pronunciation such as anxious-anxiety, receipt-reception etc.

Another definition of composition in terms of writing is the way in which someone or something is composed, or the mixture of ingredients. Also, it could be defined as spatial property resulting from the arrangement of parts in relation to each other and to the whole harmonious composition is essential work of the art.

These definitions to some extent differ from each other according to the situation that is used. It is based on two main units, they are: sentence and paragraph. The purpose of the paragraph is to make the process of reading and understanding easy and to enable the reader to deal with context separately and at the same time joins the meaning together as unification.

2.4. Vocabulary and Composition:

When we read passages or listen with our students, we are teaching vocabulary. Most of students and their concept of vocabulary are dominated by the dictionary meaning of words. But according to the linguists Bachman and Palmer who propose that vocabulary is language ability that cover multiple areas of knowledge and strategic competence. So, vocabulary ability involves more than knowing a lot of lexical meaning.

The way students listen to the radio-record to develop their own learning system is to read newspapers, magazines then pick up all the unfamiliar words and then transcribe it and look up it in the English-English dictionary. Therefore, vocabulary is considered as the essential element in the process of communicating with each other since it has connection with words and meaning.

2.4.1. Vocabulary and Words Relation:

In fact, the main concern of vocabulary is words which could be described as making friendship with words. Therefore, we need to know what the forms of words are. Linguistically words could be defined as groups of letters or sounds that express particular meaning. But, further definition says words are the microcosm of human consciences (Vogotsky). So, the coining of new words would never stop, nor does the question of words. Even in our first language we are continually learning new words and its meaning. Take an example quoted for description of wine, where familiar words are being used and adapted to express very specific meaning: a deep rich red in color.

Lush and soft aroma with plums and blackberry, the oak is plentiful and adds vanilla to the mix attractive black paper under current.

If students did not familiarize him/her self with wine terminology, he/she may find the text is heavy destiny and complex. For example, student may familiarize him/her self with hush and plush, but uncertainas to what they mean or how they defer in the meaning in this context. Some words in such context are entirely predicted while some others are ignored.

2.4.2. When Vocabulary is Problematic:

Vocabulary is problematic in such context is compounded, when students need to produce language or write it in terms of composition. So, they need to find the right words to use in order to suit the intended meaning so as to avoid frustrating and store more words to avoid limited

During learning of vocabulary in the second language, the learner must make correct connection between the form and meaning of language. For example, words like mouthful and grapy, including the discrimination of the meaning of the words that are closely related such as lush and plush in the passage.

Another point is that when producing language students should using the correct form of words to the meaning that is intended for example, in such composition words like nose and

noise, for such there is different between the form and meaning. To avoid such challenges, the learner needs to acquire critical mass of words to use in both understanding and producing language. By the time they can remember words and could be able to recall them as well.

2.4.3. Words with Sentence in Composition:

In sentence, words are play different roles in the context. they either to fall into one of eight different word classes, there are: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions and determiners.

In terms of meaning that associated with these words and words classes they have been divided into two main groups; words like and, for they mainly contributed to what is called grammatical structure of the sentence also is called some time the grammatical words (function words) and they are generally prepositions, conjunctions, determiners and pronouns on the other hand there are content words. those carry a high information load; contain usually of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

Another thing that disturbs students in their writing is compounding or the combination of two or more independent words such as. second-hand, paper-back, word- processes and so on.

2.4.4. How Vocabulary is Important:

Without grammar little can be conveyed. but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed according to the linguist David Wilkins. So, he found out for the students it would be better to learn words and expressions than to learn grammar in order to develop their standard why; because one can say little with grammar but, almost anything with words.

The communicative value of vocabulary is to recognize and represent in phrase book or dictionary and that provides more communicative mileage than the grammar in a very short time.

Furthermore, the recognition of meaning words is making potential of words meant that vocabulary became learning objective in its own right.

The vocabulary acquisition is the largest and important task that facing the language learner. Therefore, in composition they are related to each other. Since vocabulary is most largely collection of items, while grammar is system of rules. yet these rules can generate numbers of sentences. Therefore, the knowledge of grammar is considered to be more productive. since grammar multiple while vocabulary add.

From cutting edges intermediate, and their strong emphasis on vocabulary is particular focus on useful words and phrase. Therefore, it is important to know lots of words and it is meaning and the best way to help students to know this is to categories and labialized it.

Grammar always. deals with the parts of speech. words usage and syntax so composition in writing is the arts of organizing ideas in clear effective way to make an argument, like describing something or telling story or giving report.

2.5. The Constructive Sentence in Composition:

Sentence is basic units of language analysis and grammar is essential descriptive of how sentences in language are formed (i. e. writing/spelling), so the sentence must be put in the correct order.

Although, sentences are neither the smallest nor the largest units in language, they are more tightly constructed than the other larger elements so that it could be easily understood.

2.5.1. What is Sentence?

Students through writing form great value of combining words into sentence. Therefore, sentence can be defined as the arrangement of word forms to show their mutual relations in the sentence. But in the popular view of defining sentence is series of words in speech or writing forming the grammatically complete expression of a single thought. But it is well known for all linguists that sentence starts with capital letter and ends with full stop. To

concentrate on our writing composition by using sentence, it should be linked with what is called thought.

Another definition by Webster is that sentence is group of words that express an assertion, question, commands, wish or exclamation.

Accordingly, students gather their thoughts and arrange what type of sentence that fit their intention.

2.5.2. Historical Background of the Sentence:

In the traditional strategies, sentence is defined as the study of syntax and their relationship within it. Syntax is defined as the study of construction of the sentence. In turn is defined as the maximal unit of syntax or the largest unit over which is constructional relation hold. There is a same relation in the form and the meaning. In fact, students are in need of grammatical rules, words, vocabulary in order to build up paragraph, so these terms are related to each other. Whenever we find written text, it therefore consists of sentence that has been build up from words. It is needed to check in the traditional grammar, to find the identification of words of sentences and its description is like Latin and Greek. So, they use to categories and analyze sentences into smaller units, and taken to be the best type of grammar.

Sentence in the equivalent to the Latin and Greek it is descriptive rather than prescriptive, yet there are some differences.

The skilled writers are artistic with language. So, they know how to manipulate words and structures (sentences) both to say what they have to say to the best effect and to evoke the response they want from the reader.

2.5.3. Classification of Sentence:

Sentence can be classified by structure function. Therefore, students always use sentences in writing composition for certain function and with particular structures.

There are four basic structures of sentence: simple, compound, complex and compound complex.

First: simple sentence; this type of sentence consists of single independent clause, like: The big day arrive early.

Second: compound sentence; this type of sentence consists of two or more independent clauses joint with comma and coordinating such as: We went to the market yesterday, but we did not buy anything.

Third: complex sentence; this type of sentence consists of one independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses, for example: Your boa constrictor was the culprit that ate my mice.

Fourth and finally is the compound complex sentence. This type of sentence consists of independent and subordinate clause, but what is important for students is that to make up well formed whatever piece of writing so that it could be suitable to the function of the sentence.

These functions are generally discussed in term of declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory.

2.6. Previous Studies:

There are many thoughts and opinions upon writing composition and writing process as there are many writers. They discussed and described but in brief summarize the result in paragraphs. The previous writer however to some extent used different ways in their conclusion and discussion.

First Study:

The first study is undertaken by Riluzole and Martine et al 1993; they argued that the result of the discussion should be related to hypotheses of the research or the previous result upon which the study was based. They also argued that the discussion should be written in the past tense and partly in the present tense and the result will present the past.

Result:

Mediated text is useful drafting techniques for ESL and basic writer as well. It would be beneficial for many students in their writing. To some extent it could be considered as guidance for students to write their composition.

Second Study:

Cody in 1996 argues that the basic writer should develop his own voices rather than just to imitate the others. This expression is however is considered as hypotheses for this study.

Result:

Cody urges reject the idea of imitating others. He also argues that writing approach helps students to become aware of audience and purpose. So, students can work from the expressive to the linear modes using academic without betraying their own discourse.

Third Study:

Collins in 1995 argues that writing development is natural and facilitate of development.

Discussion:

Debeau Grande and Olson refute the linguistic premise that restricted speech. They conducted a pilot project in which students will be assigned to create narrative sentences in writing. Then one week later in speech and again in writing etc.

Result:

Students through this technique will enable to discover topics so that they can to write in it.

3.1. Analysis and Discussion:

This part is connected with practical inquiries to map out the importance of writing composition in the field of language as skill so it will include analysis, results and discussion of the research.

3.2. Methodology:

The researcher used the analytical and descriptive method. He collects data and gathering information by testing students with certain type of composition. Therefore, the descriptive and analytical methods are considered the main sources of writing this research. So, the researcher could be able to analyze and describe through this method and investigate the areas of difficulties in this research. This data and information has been collected through test among students of secondary school students and the sample has been taken randomly for the whole class of the third year. This test approves that there is no development in the writing process as skill, the issue which cause for making the process of writing itself difficult.

Another thing that the reader detected is that some information has been brought from theoretical and analytical work, by the experiment of others and their opinions toward writing composition in the process of learning language.

3.2.1. Subject:

The sample of this research took place in one of Khartoum state secondary schools. The test is given to all students at third level; class of about 37students; of an average (17-21) years old and the test included all of them. The aim of this test is to identify the areas of difficulties that students face when they are going to write composition. These areas are considered by the researcher is the most sensitive areas among all the types of skills in the field of language learning and developing skills.

The test took place among the students of the third class because they some extent are acquainted with some principles of writing. The students at least know number of words in their mind and the equivalent amount of Arabic words; this is in concern with vocabulary.

3.2.2. Instrument:

The researcher used applied style so as to familiarize students with the point of the weakness since we know students always seeking about helping so that they can summarize their linguistic data that concerning the matters of the usage. So, they need to use the dictionary so that they can develop their vocabulary that is needed in the writing process.

3.2.3. Procedure:

The research is investigated through test and examination. Both methods are used so as to enable the researcher discover whether students' language is highly constructed or not. The test took place among the students of the third class. The students at least know number of words in their mind and the equivalent amount of Arabic words. The test was made during the first two lessons before the breakfast; very simple language is used.

3.3. Result and Discussion:

With consideration to the table below, it approves that some areas are much influential to the writing of students that made errors.

Number of students	subject	Correct	%	Incorrect	%
37	Sentence Order	25	68 %	12	12 %
37	Spelling Mistake	4	16 %	33	84 %
37	Disability to express ideas	13	35 %	24	65 %
37	Grammatical Mistake	3	9 %	34	91 %
37	Use of Tense	31	84 %	6	16 %
37	Use of Nouns and Verbs	22	60 %	15	40 %

In brief, students should be responsible for all regulations and techniques which produce full and complete quality of writing.

The importance of vocabulary here is to help students to write and express different ideas within one topic in the composition.

In fact compositions are built up with paragraphs and paragraphs are built up with sentence. Sentences are made up of clauses and phrases clauses and phrases are built up with words at each level there are rules of grammar, vocabulary and punctuation. These areas should be considered as the main areas of difficulties in writing process.

In the table number 4 only out of 37 students answered correct and the rest of the students fail to write with grammatical rules; so this is about 91 percent in the class.

Therefore, we need to help them to write correctly with grammatical rules, so, they need to practice more and more so as to familiarize them with writing and to learn the rule of the second language using the materials that needed. This material can guide and help them to develop their composition. By using these rules, they build strong writing. Therefore, composition will only be good if it contains good materials.

This sentence order to some extent good and the result is about 25 out of 37 are answer correct, this is equivalent 68 and only 12 are mistaken.

Secondly, the quality of their writing must be shown clearly especially how the new language is used in communication.

Finally, students must always try as far as possible to use simple language to be easier for the reader.

Another thing is important which is the using of tenses. Some students used past tense instead of present tense. So, in the table is about 84 of the students are fallen in adapting the rules of grammar.

In ordering sentences, appropriate sequence of sentences is needed by giving students an outline, so as to provide them with most or all of the composition. Another possibility is that students can write composition by developing the ideas.

Students learn to write by imposing too many conditions. So, they must recognize that the goal of instruction is to guide students to be self-sufficient and teachers must be sensitive to the details of the various difficulties students may have in their hand-writing, spelling, punctuation and ordering sentences.

4.1. Summary:

Writing is considered as communicative purpose among people. In order to improve the ability of writing, the students require acquainting themselves with rules of grammar to form sentences.

First of all, there are many details in the first part and it has been discussed already in terms of proposal and the significant and importance of the research in addition to the assumption and hypotheses as well as question of the research.

In part two, the researcher brought number of definition for composition and approved to with some example. Another thing researcher made is the review of the literature by gathering all ideas of linguists and their thoughts about the term composition in the learning process.

Finally, in part three, the researcher described the method that is used in producing this research and the ways of collecting data.

The important points used in part three are the analysis and the result that shown in the table, this table represents the standard of all students who sat for the test (writing composition).

4.2. Conclusion:

Writing in general is probably the least important of the four skills for many students. They like to listen, read and speak in English. Therefore, their need for writing is more likely for purposes to help students learn; write new word and rules of the foreign language.

4.3. Recommendations:

In spite of the importance of writing among students in the writing process, but still many problems and difficulties stand.

- 1- Familiar students with the writing process.
- 2- Students should be motivated toward second language so that they can acquire many words and vocabulary.
- 3- English language in considered international language therefore, it should be studied from young age.
- 4- Discuss all the problematic areas students fallen in.

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