Assessing the Quality of Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency in Expository Writing for EFL University Students

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Abstract

This study is concerned with assessing the quality of complexity, Accuracy and Fluency in expository writing. It aims at identifying and comparing:

1. The quality of writing expository composition for EFL university students at the department of English, colleges of Education for humanities at Tikrit and Baghdad\ Ibn - Rushd universities.

2. EFL university students' quality of writing expository composition in the light of the three principal dimensions: Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency at the two universities.

The aims are achieved by applying a diagnostic test to 185 undergraduate EFL students, in the third year, English Departments, Colleges of Education for humanities, at Tikrit and Baghdad Universities. The study has conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The results have revealed that EFL university students have a low quality

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of writing in the three specified dimensions: complexity, accuracy and fluency. In the light of the results, some conclusions and recommendations have been presented.

Keywords: Assessing, Quality, Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency, EFL university Students, Writing.

تقييم جودة التعقيد، الدقة والطلاقة في الكتابة التفسيرية لدى طلاب الجامعة في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية

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جامعة تكريت

الـمستخلص

تهتم هذه الدراسة بتقييم جودة التعقيد، الدقة والطلاقة في الكتابة التفسيرية. وتهدف الى تحديد ومقارنة:

1. جودة الكتابة التفسـيرية لدى طلاب الجامعة في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية \ قسـم اللغة الانكليزية في كلية التربية للعلوم الانسـانية \ جامعة تكريت وكلية التربية \ ابن رشد\ جامعة بغداد.

2. جودة الكتابة التفسيرية لدى طلاب الجامعة في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في ضـوء الابعاد الرئيسية الثلاثة: التعقيد، الدقة والطلاقة في كلا الجامعتين.

تم تحقيق الاهداف من خلال تطبيق الاختبار التشـخيصـي على 185 طالبا جامعيا في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية من طلاب المرحلة الثالثة، قسـم اللغة الانكليزية في كلية التربية للعلوم الانسـانية \ جامعة تكريت وكلية التربية \ ابن رشـد\ جامعة بغداد. أجريت الدراسـة خلال الفصـل الدراسـي الثاني من العام الدراسـي 2022-2023. وقد كشـفت النتائج ان طلاب الجامعة لديهم جودة كتابة منخفضـة في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في الابعاد الرئيسـية الثلاثـة: التعقيـد، الـدقـة والطلاقـة في كلا الجـامعتين. في ضـــوء النتـائج تم تقـديم بعض الاستنتاجات والتوصيات.

الكلمات الدالة: تقييم– جودة–تعقيد – الدقة – الطلاقة –طلاب الجامعة في اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة اجنبية – الكتابة التفسيرية).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Writing in English is considered the most difficult skill because of its complexity in syntactic, sematic, morphological and phonological aspects. "Writing is a complex process

that involves the mastery of multiple skills that contribute to the overall difficulty of writing for any language user" (Rao, 2017: 62).

It is a challenging task for both teachers and learners (Richards, 2008: 87). The majority of learners still struggle with one or more aspects of writing, achieving only a basic or below level of performance (Neumann, 2014:85). They typically produce sentences that are less syntactically complex, contain more grammatical errors, are shorter, have higher percentages of capitalization and spelling errors, and mostly are lower in overall quality than those of skilled native writers (Graham and Harris, 2005: 68).

Hapsari (2011: 42) argues that writing is generally known as the most difficult of the four skills. The difficulty is seen in generating and organizing ideas and the mastery of the different aspects of writing such as grammar, spelling, word choice, punctuation, and so on.

The quality of writing is not simply restricted to the learning of linguistic items and gaining mastery over different dimensions of performance. In essence, the way students produce language in both oral and written forms may have been affected by different factors (Nosratinia and Razavi, 2016: 21).

Researchers in the area of second/foreign language learning are now in agreement that FL proficiency, in general, and writing proficiency, in particular, are multicomponential in nature, and that their principal dimensions can be adequately, and comprehensively, captured by the notions of complexity, accuracy and fluency (Housen & Kuiken, 2009: 467).

The current study conducts an in-depth analysis on English language learners' performance through an objective assessment to state the quality of writing according to three main dimensions: CAF by using Larsen-Freeman's model.

1.2 Aims of the study:

The study aims at identifying and comparing:

1. The quality of writing Expository composition for EFL university students at the Departments of English, Colleges of Education for Humanities in Tikrit and Baghdad\ Ibn Rushd Universities.
2. EFL university students' quality of writing Expository composition in the light of the three principal dimensions: CAF at the two universities.

1.3 Questions of the Study:

1. Are there statistically significant differences among the EFL university students' quality of writing Expository composition at the Departments of English, colleges of education at Tikrit and Baghdad universities?

2. Are there statistically significant differences among the EFL university students' quality of writing Expository composition in the light of the three principal dimensions: CAF, at the two universities?

1.4 Limits of the Study:

The current study is limited to third year EFL university students at the Departments of English, Colleges of Education for Humanities at Tikrit and Baghdad \ Ibn Rushd Universities during the academic year 2022- 2023. It is limited to expository writing.

1.5 Value of the Study:

1. It shows, for the purpose of analysis, a large number of indices for complexity, accuracy and fluency.

2. It shows when, where, why, and for whom the increase/decrease of writing development aspects will occur. As such, this study provides information on the development of writing skill in an Iraqi context.

3. It shows the relationship among other skills such as reading, listening, and speaking with writing.

 4. The investigation of such a topic is urgently needed, due to the continuity of ineffective practices of writing skill instructors when assessing, tracing the development, and teaching EFL learners, especially to those majoring in English.

 1.7 Procedures of the Study:

1. Choosing a sample from third year EFL university students in the Departments of English / College of Education for Humanities at Tikrit and Baghdad Universities.

2. Constructing a diagnostic test as a tool of the study.

3. Applying the diagnostic test on the selected sample of students.

4. Using the appropriate statistical means to analyze the collected data.

5. Discussing the results, giving conclusions and recommendations for the study.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 The Concept of Writing:
Writing is one of the four basic skills in language learning. As Archibald (2001: 156) states that writing is a multidimensional skill that requires knowledge and skills to perform it effectively. This represents the result of the exchange of knowledge, experience and cognitive aspects of the author's work. Therefore, it is considered as a complex skill.

The process of writing is taught in schools and colleges for the sake of developing individual learners and to improve their skills in the work place for the future, besides, it is a major cognitive challenge since it is considered as a test of memory, language, and thinking ability (Atwell, 1987: 10).

Moreover, writing cannot be separated from the acquisition of other EFL skills and writing is supposed to be an interesting task in which students can express their own ideas and interests on certain topic. For several factors, writing may be instead be a laborious and even dread exercise of attempting to place thoughts on paper while developing mastering of all the rules of writing such as spelling citation format and grammar (DeFazio et al, 2010: 34). According to Lombardo (2010: 41), there are at least three steps involved in the writing process:

Step one: prewriting, which means to think about a topic and organize the ideas.

Step two: writing, which means to use the ideas to write the first draft.

Step three: revising, which means to improve what have been written.

From the four language skills, writing is categorized as one of the productive skills along with speaking since they involve producing language rather than receiving it. These two skills are basically different in various ways (Atwell, 1987: 10). It is slightly different from speaking in term of communication context. Speaking is always intended for face-to-face communication among the audience present, while writing is always used by the writers to express and communicate their ideas to the readers who are actually separated by both time and space distances (Raimes, 1994:35).

Writing provides an important mean to personal self-expression (Mc Arthur, et al, 2008: 1). This skill is considered as an important part since it is a priority to language teaching and learning that is why teachers gave more importance to such skill during the past few years in order to improve the level of their students.

Writing expresses social relationships which exist due to the individuals' creation via discourse, but these relationships are not only discourse (Hyland (2003: 69).

The purpose of writing depends on who the target readers are. According to Lombardo (2010: 85), there are five purposes of writing:

1. Is to inform, which is giving the fact as objective as possible.
2. Is to explain, which is explaining how something works and why something happened.
3. Is to persuade, which is convincing the readers to be in the same perspective with the writer.
4. Is to entertain, which is entertaining the readers with the enjoyable writing.
5. Is to describe, which is revealing something about a subject as detailed as possible.

2.2 Types of Writing Style:

There are four types of writing, they are:

2.2.1 Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing is "a text that gives information about particular person, place, or thing". It functions to communicate a deeper meaning through the description. It paints a picture with words (Wardani, 2014:2).

There are two types of descriptive: Subjective descriptive and Objective descriptive. Subjective descriptive is when the writers use their personal feelings and reactions by using expressive language as they describe in order to create certain feelings of the reader. On the other hand, objective descriptive is describing something objectively, accurately, and as thoroughly as possible as the writers report what they see, hear, and so on (Santi, 2002: 265).

2.2.2 Narrative Writing

Narrative text is a piece of text which tells a story and attracts the reader or listener of the information given in narrative essay (Anderson and Anderson ,1997:17). Narrative text also deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis or turning points of kind, which in turn find a resolution (Gutierrez et al., (2015:45).

According to Joyce and Feez (2000:23), there are two types of narrative essays which are divided into nonfiction and fiction. Nonfiction is a kind of narrative writing that tells the true story. It is often used to recount a person's life story, important historical event, or new stories. Meanwhile, fiction is a kind of narrative that tells the untrue story. The story made up by the writer such as short story, comics, novels, etc. The main purpose of this fiction is to amuse, or sometimes to teach moral lessons.

2.2.3 Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing is the way in which the author tries to convince readers that a particular idea or opinion on a particular topic is valid. This type of writing is a one-dimensional process, it is one of the strategies used to support an individual opinion or a particular situation (Donovan, 2009: 48).

The writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct (Abdallah, 2015:55).

2.2.4 Expository Writing

Expository writing is one of the most common types of writing, its' main purpose is to explain. It is a subject-oriented writing style, in which authors focus on telling you about a given topic or subject without voicing their personal opinions. These types of essays or articles furnish you with relevant facts and figures but do not include their opinions (Abdallah, 2015:56).

Expository writing encompasses a wide range of essay variations, such as problem and solving or cause and effect relationships, the comparison and contrast essays, facts, the statistical information or examples and the "how to" or process essay (Donovan, 2009: 48).

2.3 Quality of Writing (CAF)

Skehan (2009:510) states that CAF are important since it open up our insights into the cognitive processes that FL learners are engaged while learning foreign language in general, and FL writing, in particular. Lambert and Kormos (2014:9) believe that CAF is important theoretically and empirically since decision-making can be achieved by using it.

Norris & Ortega (2009: 555) states that CAF should be inconsistently defined and operationalized in a way to produce validated and consistent results which are replicable across different studies. One important distinction should be made, moreover, between the writing proficiency and the writing quality. While the former involves rating scale to language learners ability in writing components such as grammar, organization, and mechanics, the later involves in CAF. Consequently, CAF can deliver "a full of language development in FL writing". CAF has three components as presented below:

A. Complexity:

Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005:139) define complexity "as the extent to which learners produce elaborated language". According to Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998:69) complexity is "a wide variety of both basic and sophisticated structures and words are available to the learner".

Housen and Kuiken (2009:463) state that "complexity is the most complex, ambiguous, and least understood dimension of the CAF". It is usually viewed as being the most controversial of the three proficiency measures. Complexity has been generally defined as the use of more challenging and difficult language.

B. Accuracy:

Accuracy is usually regarded as the simplest construct of CAF and refers to the degree of conformity to certain language usage norms, primarily in the areas of lexicon and grammar (Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998:4).

Skehan and Foster (1999:96) define accuracy as "the ability to avoid error in performance, possibly reflecting higher levels of control in the language, as well as a conservative orientation, that is, avoidance of challenging structures that might provoke error".

C. Fluency:

Dobao (2012:47) interprets fluency as the "length of the text" and it is a person's general language proficiency. For Polio (2001:105), the definition of writing fluency should not be concerned with how fast a writer can write, but rather how close the writing is to that produced by a native speaker, or "how native-like the writing sounds". Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998:14), states that fluency means, "More words and more structures are accessed in a limited time, whereas a lack of fluency means that only a few words or structures are accessed".

2.4 Larsen-Freeman's Model for Measuring CAF:

There are not many studies focusing on CAF. It was first used by Larsen-Freeman in 2006. Participant's writing performances have been scored by Larsen-Freeman (2006:610) profile based on T-unit.

T-units are usually employed for analyzing written and spoken discourse because it has been proven that T-units are strongly correlated to language proficiency (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005; Wolfe-Quintero, et al, 1998). "A T-unit is an independent clause and any associated dependent clauses, that are attached to or embedded within it." (Larsen-Freeman, 2006:597).

Accordingly, writing accuracy has been measured by means of the proportion of the error-free T-units to the total T-units (EFT/T), the mean length of error-free T-units (MLEFT) was taken into account as a measure of writing fluency, and, lastly, the researcher calculate writing complexity through the total number of clauses divided by the total number of T-units (C/T) (Larsen-Freeman, 2006:597).

3. Previous Studies:

3.1 Tai (2015):

This study aims to explore L2 writing development (as measured by syntactic complexity, accuracy and fluency) in a class by examining authentic texts from the class. The sample includes 19 participants (5 males and 14 females). By using a diagnostic test, the findings revealed that the participants improved their accuracy and fluency but not complexity, suggesting that students was beneficial from L2 writing improvement to some extent. Possible accounts for accuracy and fluency improvement

include preference for Standard English, assessment criteria of the course, and practice effects. Further pedagogical implications were provided in response to the findings.

3.2 Nosratinia and Razavi (2016):

This study aims to inspect the relationship between EFL learners' creativity, on one hand, and writing complexity, writing accuracy and writing fluency on the other hand. Within a sample of 185 adult Iranian EFL learners (30 males and 155 females), an achievement test was applied to find the relationship, the findings indicated that there are significant correlations between participants' creativity and writing accuracy, creativity and writing fluency and creativity and writing complexity, Moreover, running three linear regressions revealed that creativity can predict 70.1% of participants' writing accuracy 60% of their writing fluency and 47.5% of their writing complexity.

3.3 Ahmadi and Zahed (2017):

This study aimed to investigate the effects of two types of paragraphs on EFL learners' writing production. It addressed the issue of how three aspects of language production (i.e. CAF) vary among two types of paragraphs (i.e. paragraphs of chronology and cause-effect) written by EFL learners, by using an achievement test to the sample of 30 intermediate level learners of English (13 males and 17 females), the results revealed that EFL learners performed significantly better in paragraphs of chronology than the paragraphs of cause-effect in terms of fluency and accuracy.However, the analysis of complexity measures showed that there was no significant difference between the two types of paragraphs.

4. Discussion of the Previous Studies:

Tai's (2015) has revealed that the participants improved their accuracy and fluency but not complexity, suggesting that a CLIL class was beneficial for L2 writing improvement to some extent. Possible accounts for accuracy and fluency improvement include preference for Standard English, assessment criteria of the course, and practice effects. Further pedagogical implications were provided in response to the findings.

Nosratinia and Razavi's (2016) have showed that there are significant correlations between participants' creativity and writing accuracy, creativity and writing fluency and creativity and writing complexity. The results revealed that creativity can predict 70.1% of participants' writing accuracy, 60% of their writing fluency and 47.50% of their writing complexity.

Ahmadi and Zahed's (2017) have revealed that EFL learners performed significantly better in paragraphs of chronology than the paragraphs of cause-effect in terms of fluency and accuracy. However, the analysis of complexity measures showed that there was no significant difference between the two types of paragraphs.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

5.1 Research Design

According to Cohen (2014:156) quantitative research is defined as a social research that employs empirical methods and empirical statements. The researcher used a descriptive quantitative method to conduct this research, the descriptive way is a method that connects with data in the form of the word (Ary, 2010: 474).

5.2 Population and Sample:

Creswell, etal (2012: 142) describes population as "a group of individuals who have the same characteristic. For example, all teachers would make up the population of teachers, and all high school administrators in a school district would comprise the population of administrators. As these examples illustrate, populations can be small or large. Within this target population, researchers then select a sample for study". The population in the present study is 335 Third-year college students (males and females) Department of English College of Education for Humanities \ Universities of Tikrit and Baghdad for the Academic Year 2022-2023.

A sample is a number of individuals, objects or events selected for a study from a population, usually in such a way that they represent the large group from which they are selected (Ary, etal., 2010: 148). The sample of the present study is 185 Third-stage students (male and female) who are randomly selected from Tikrit and Baghdad for the Academic Year 2022-2023.

5.3 Test Construction:

Aljuboory (2014:47) defines a test as a tool that is best used for gathering information about students' performance and achievement in a given course of study. It is method or procedure for measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a particular aspect of life.

The diagnostic test is a valuable technique that can be employed to help both teacher and student. A diagnostic test can be given to students at any time to assess their current knowledge and mastery of English language (Aljuboory, 2014:47).

In order to achieve the aims of this study, a diagnostic test has been constructed. The test questions are constructed to find out EFL university students' quality of writing: CAF in writing English language compositions namely expository writing.

The test includes two subjective questions. Both questions assess EFL students' performance in expository writing. These topics have been chosen from a book entitled "Students' Handbook for Writing and Learning, 2006 by Sebranek, etal. (See Appendix A).

5.4 Validity and Reliability of the Test:

McNamara (2000:138) defines validity as "the relationship between evidence from test performance and the inferences about candidate's capacity to perform in the criteria that are drawn from the evidence". There are two types of validity: Face validity and construct validity. The final form of the test is given to a jury of instructors and specialists in the English language teaching and Linguistics in order to ensure its face validity. The jurors

have approved the appropriateness of the test and their modification has been taken into consideration.

Reliability is an important character of a good test. It is the extent to which test scores are consistent" Alderson (1995:294). By using Alpha- Cronbach formula, the coefficient is found to be 0.81, which is considered acceptable.

5.5 Pilot Administration of the Research Instrument:

A pilot study is a method by which a research instrument is introduced to a small sample prior to reach its final administration. In conducting any analysis, it is a fundamental step. It indicates whether there are any shortcomings or defects that need to be inspected and changed prior to the instrument's results. The time required for the application of a test is also measured (Madsen, 1983:109).

The research instrument in the current study has been administrated to a sample of thirty students who are chosen randomly. The feedback indicates that the questions are clear. The time required for the student to answer the two questions ranges between 80 to 90 minutes.

5.6 Scoring Scheme:

Scoring means applying a numerical scale to measure responses. Scoring provides a valuable feedback concerning students' achievement and teachers' attitudes (Genesee and Upshur, 1996:208).The test consists of two questions.

In order to score the two compositions objectively, the scoring committee (the researcher and Assist Prof. Hadeel Kamil) has conducted an in –depth analysis on the EFL university students' writing through an objective assessment. They used Polio (1997) guideline to determine T-units, in the first place, then, used the Profile of LarsenFreeman (2006) in order to determine the scores of CAF.

5.7 Item Analysis

The procedure of test item analysis according to (Olivia and Gordon, 2012: 15) refers to "checking responses constructed by all students for each item included in the test. There are two measures to be calculated for objective test items:

5.7.1 Difficulty Level

The difficulty level is specified as the ratio of the students who replied correctly to each item (Rosas, 2000:3). It just reflects the percentage of learners who respond correctly to the object. The items of this test are considered acceptable since they range from 0.41 to 0.54 which indicates the suitability of items.

5.7.2 Discrimination Power

   Discrimination power means " calculating the degree to which a particular item's results correspond with the results of the entire test' (Alderson, 1995:80).   The test item discrimination power was found to have a range of 0.34- 0.55 which is acceptable.

5.8 Final Administration of the Test

   The test has been finally administered after calculating its validity, reliability and pilot administration. The test has been conducted during the second semester of the academic year (2022-2023). Each university department has been examined by the researcher herself. The students are asked to answer the questions. The time needed to show the students' quality of writing is about 80-90 minutes. The final administration of the test has been conducted on the 4th of April 2022 at Tikrit University while at Baghdad University it has been conducted on 10th April, 2022.

6.   Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

6.1 Results Related to the First Aim:

6.1.1 Comparison between the Theoretical Mean and Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition at the Two Universities

   To verify the first aim, the mean scores of the students' writing the expository composition are 14.57 and the theoretical mean is 50 with a standard deviation of 11.58, respectively. The T-test formula for one sample is used. The calculated t-value is 41.59, which is found to be higher than the tabulated t-value, which is 1.972 at the 0.05 level of significance when the degree of freedom is 184, as shown in Table 1.

   The results in table 1 indicate that there are statistically significant differences between the theoretical mean and students' quality of writing the expository composition at the two universities in favor of the theoretical mean. Thus, according to these results, the students of the two universities showed a significant weakness in the quality of writing expository composition. So, the first aim is accepted.

Table 1

The Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and One Sample T-Value of the Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition at the Two Universities

Group	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD.	Theoretical Mean Score	T-Value		DF	Level of Significance
Expository Writing	185	14.57	11.58	50	Calculated	Tabulated	184	0.05
					41.59	1.972		

6.1.2 Comparison between the Mean Scores of EFL University Students' Quality of Writing the Expository Composition at Tikrit and Baghdad Universities

To compare between the EFL university students' quality of writing expository composition at the two universities, all mean scores are obtained and compared. Statistics show that the mean scores of the Tikrit university are 13.28 and that of the Baghdad university are 15.66 with a standard deviation of 9.51, 13.03 respectively. By using the t-test formula for two independent samples, the calculated t-value is found to be 1.391, while the tabulated t-value is found to be 1.972 at the degree of freedom 183 and level of significance 0.05. This means that there is no significant difference between the two universities in the quality of writing the expository composition as shown in table 2.

Table 2
The Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Two Independent Sample T-Value of the Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition at the Two Universities

Groups	No. of students	Mean	SD.	T-Value		DF	Level of Significance
				Calculated	Tabulated		
Tikrit	85	13.28	9.51	Calculated	Tabulated	183	0.05
Baghdad	100	15.66	13.03	1.391	1.972		

6.2 Results Related to the Second Aim:

6.2.1 Comparison Among EFL University Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition in the Three Principal Dimensions: CAF at Tikrit University

To find out whether there are statistically significant differences among the EFL university students' quality of writing expository composition in the light of the three principal dimensions: CAF at Tikrit university, the one-way analysis of variance is used, as shown in the following table:

Table 3

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Among EFL Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition in the light of the Three Principal dimensions at Tikrit University

Variables	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F-value		Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated	
Between Groups	6521.542	2	3260.771	124.395	3.03	0.05

Within Groups	6605.686	252	26.213			
Total	13127.228	254				

Table 3 shows that the calculated F-value 124.395 is higher than the tabulated F-value 3.03 at the 0.05 level of significance and DF = 2, 252. This indicates that there are significant differences among EFL students in the term the quality of writing expository composition in the light of the three principal dimensions at Tikrit university.

According to table 4, the comparisons of means show that the mean scores in the term of expository composition among EFL Tikrit university students at the three principal dimensions: CAF, Complexity 1.5174, Accuracy 0.2292, and Fluency 11.5429, with harmonic mean sample size = 85.000. This means indicates that there is a significant difference among EFL Tikrit university students' quality of writing expository compositions at the three principal dimensions and in favor for Fluency. The second aim is accepted.

Table 4

Comparisons of Means Among Three Principal Dimensions: CAF in writing Expository Composition at Tikrit University (Scheffe[a])

Groups	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		Means	
		1	2
Complexity	85	1.5174	
Accuracy	85	0.2292	
Fluency	85		11.5429
Sig.		0.262	1.000
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.			
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 85.000.			

6.2.2 Comparison Among EFL University Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition in the Three Principal dimensions: CAF at Baghdad University

In order to show the comparison among EFL students' quality of writing expository compositions in the light of the three principal dimensions: CAF at Baghdad university, the one-way analysis of variance is used, as shown in the following table:

Table 5

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Among EFL Students' Quality of Writing Expository Composition in the light of the Three Principal dimensions at Baghdad University

Variables	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F-value		Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated	
Between Groups	10895.834	2	5447.917	113.633	3.03	0.05
Within Groups	14239.094	297	47.943			
Total	25134.928	299				

Table 5 shows that the calculated F-value 113.633 is higher than the tabulated F-value 3.03 at the 0.05 level of significance and DF = 2, 297. This indicates that there are significant differences among university students' quality of writing narrative composition in the light of the three principals at Baghdad University.

According to table 6, the comparisons of means show that the mean scores in the term of expository composition among EFL Baghdad university students at the three principal dimensions: CAF, Complexity 1.9127Accuracy 0.0716, and Fluency 13.6766, with harmonic mean sample size=100.000.This means that there is a significant difference between EFL Baghdad university students' quality of writing expository composition at the three principal dimensions: CAF and in favor for Fluency. So, the second aim is accepted.

Table 6
Comparisons of Means Among the Three Principal Dimensions: CAF in writing Expository Composition at Baghdad University (Scheffe[a])

Groups	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		Means	
		1	2
Complexity	100	1.9127	
Accuracy	100	0.0716	
Fluency	100		13.6766
Sig.		0.173	1.000
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.			
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 100.000.			

7. Discussion of the Results:

Participants' writing performances, in terms of CAF measures, are scored by Larsen-Freeman (2006) profile based on T-units.

The first aim is accepted, which illustrates that the EFL university students show weaknesses in the quality of writing expository compositions at the two universities: Tikrit and Baghdad.

Results of the fifth aim show the comparison between EFL university students' quality of writing expository compositions in the light of the three principal dimensions: CAF at Tikrit and Baghdad universities. Most students have poor quality of writing expository composition, but higher average scores in their fluency.

EFL students at Baghdad university have higher average scores in fluency than those at Tikrit university, while their accuracy and complexity are in the same level in writing expository compositions.

8. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusions

1. CAF can highlight the main factors in developing writing among EFL students and teachers.

2. EFL students need to take more responsibility for their own English language learning. They, themselves, know their own needs. They should try to use their preferred ways of learning and to meet those needs through their own efforts both inside and outside the classroom.

3. Quality of writing gives EFL teachers and researchers the information required to humanize the process of writing instruction.

4. CAF have been used both as performance descriptors for the written assessment of language learners as well as indicators of students' proficiency underlying their performance; they have also been used for measuring progress in language learning .

5. CAF gives more focus in improving students' writing skills.

8.2 Recommendations

The recommendations suggested in light of the favorable findings of the study:

1. Material developers should pay attention to the difference in the emerging patterns of CAF features across different types of paragraph writing.

2. They can devote supplementary parts and activities in the books for introducing the paragraph types in which learners show lower patterns of CAF features in students' performances.

3. Develop a positive attitude in EFL teachers toward the development of students' writing skills. Teachers should pay attention to students' writing.

4. Teacher educators should make teachers aware of the emerging difference in the CAF features of students' performances across different types of paragraph writing .

5. In writing courses, teachers can plan to devote the sufficient amount of time required to present different types of paragraphs.

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Appendix - A -

The Test

Write a composition of 150 to 250 words about the following themes:
1. Crocodiles are becoming endangered and they are necessary to the balance of nature. (Problem and Solving).
2. The cause of lower level of students in Language learning nowadays. (Cause and Effect).