



المؤتمر العلمي السنوي الرابع والعشرون الموسوم
(مؤتمر كلية التربية الأساسية في مجال العلوم الانسانية والتربوية والنفسية)
والمنعقد تحت شعار
(العلوم الإنسانية أساس لبناء الإنسانية ونهضة الحضارة في التربية والتعليم)
للمدة 14-13 /5/ 2024

Investigating Syntactic Errors Made By Iraqi EFL Learners In Composition Writing

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Abstract:

The present study aimed to investigate syntactic errors made by EFL learners in composition writing". To achieve the aim of the study, it was assumed that there was no statistically significant differences between the experimental group (which studies writing using the assembly technique (GW and TBT) and that of the control group (which studies writing according to the traditional method).

The present study is limited to the second-year College students of English Department, College of Basic Education for the academic year 2023-2024. An eight weeks experiment will be conducted by using -posttest experimental design. Both (the experimental and control groups) were exposed to pre and posttests.

Conclusions, recommendations are put forward.

Key words: Errors , composition , writing



1.1 The Problem of the Study and its Significance

Writing plays a vital role as a skill in teaching and learning a foreign language. It allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas and make them visible and concrete, encourages thinking and learning, motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection. When thought is written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, added to, rearranged, and changed.

The basis of TEFL curriculum in Iraq focuses on the four skills, which are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of these skills has different strategies and techniques for application inside classroom; for example, the writing skill can be done through answering questions, completing sentences, writing compositions, writing essays, paraphrasing sentences, dictation and summary writing .

However, writing is considered to be one of the most difficult skills learners are expected to master. The skill to write appropriately and effectively is a difficult task that most EFL learners face in spite of the years they spent on learning and developing this skill. Writing is complex and multifaceted in nature; therefore, learners usually produce writing samples that are shorter, less coherent and less refined. They have difficulty in organizing text, generating ideas and applying meta-cognitive skills (Mayer, R. 1998).

Chaplen. (1970:7) express that much of the difficulty of writing stems from the large number of constraints that must be satisfied at the same time. In expressing an idea the learner must consider at least four structural levels: overall text structure, paragraph structure, sentence structure (syntax), and word structure. Clearly the attempt to coordinate all these requirements is a staggering job.

Salih (2007:2) states that many Iraqi students find difficulty to write a piece of composition. She also mentions that EFL learners face many difficulties in handling writing composition when they communicate using written forms. They make a lot of mistakes in different aspects of composition.



Therefore, writing as a significant language skill should be developed at an early learning of the foreign language and it requires skill in sentence-combining and a knowledge of organization of the whole composition including the English alphabet mechanics of writing, sentence structures, grammatical and lexical connectors to create an affective paragraph and to understand the relationship between sounds and written symbols (Richards and Renandya, 2002:303) Writing requires from the writer to demonstrate a control of several variables at once. At the sentence level, this includes control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary and spelling. specification of genre to be taught is based on the classification used by many systemic functional linguists, especially in application to classroom teaching of English. Also, GW and TBT facilitates clear links to the student purposes for writing beyond the writing in the classroom.

Finally, the significance of the problem lies in the fact that it tackles writing which is considered one of the major skills needed by EFL learners which is neglected either by EFL teachers or textbooks designers in Iraq specifically, and GBA which is used, hopefully, for making writing easier and more pleasurable for ESL as well as EFL learners.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The study aims at investigating errors made by Iraqi EFL learners in composition writing.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

It is hypothesized that there are no statistically significant differences between the performance mean score of the experimental group (taught writing by using new techniques) and that of the control group (taught composition writing according to the method stated in the *Teacher's Guide*) in the writing posttest.

1.4 Limits of the Study

1. This study is limited to second stage / English department / college of basic education .
2. College year 2023 / 2024 .
3. Using GW and TBT e as a training tool.
4. Five sub skills of writing: content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics.

1.5 Value of the Study

It is hoped that this study is valuable in the following ways:



1. It helps our students to understand complete sets of information that allow them to develop their composition writing.
2. It can be beneficial for the teachers of how to sum up a text, and how to condense information; he/she will similarly enhance their writing ability in general.
3. It can be beneficial for the Directorate General of Curricula in the Ministry of higher Education in developing the curricula of teaching English which are followed by Iraqi teachers.
4. It may also help designers to discover the difficulties in teaching compositing writing in order to overcome them when designing textbooks.
5. It could be also beneficial for future researchers in the field of ELT.

1.6. Procedures of the Study

In order to verify the hypothesis and to fulfil the aim of the present study, the following procedures are followed:

1. Selecting a representative sample from the population of the study.
2. Choosing a suitable experimental design.
3. Describing the activities selected for material presentation for the experimental group.
4. Constructing and validating a test used as a tool of investigation.
5. Setting a special scoring scheme to ensure the accuracy of scoring.

1.6 Definition of Basic Terms

The following section highlights key terms that are used in this study and provides detailed explanations to enhance their meaning.

1.6.1 Composition

Rivers (1981:294) defines composition as "the conveying of information or expression of original ideas in a consecutive way in the new language".

1.6.2 Writing

Richards and Schmidts (2002:592), writing is a strategy, procedure and decision –making employed by writers as they write. Writing is viewed as the result of complex processes of planning, drafting, reviewing, and revising and some approaches to the teaching of first and second language writing teach students to use these processes

1.6.3 Errors

It is more formal and when people have errors, it is because the lack the proper knowledge and poor grammar and spelling. It is a grammar you haven't learned yet or vocabulary you haven't learned the nuance of yet



Chapter Two: Theoretical background

2.0 Introductory Note:

For a number of years, the teaching writing skill was neglected in language classrooms (Nunan,1991:116). It could be argued that in learning a foreign language, the initial stages of language learning should be devoted almost entirely to write learning by considering the importance those learners attach to the task of building and maintaining an adequate writing. This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, the researcher tries to shed light on the influence of different language learning theories and approaches to the teaching writing .The second section on the other hand, deals with errors that are made by students.

2.1. Teaching and Learning writing

2.1.1. Writing Teaching: between Theory and Practice

For much of its history, language teaching has been obsessed with a search for the right method. It was felt that somewhere or other, there was a method which would work for all learners in all contexts. Recently, it has been realized that there was never and probably will never be a method for all, and the focus in recent years has been on the development of classroom tasks and activities which are consonant with what we know about processes of second language acquisition, and which are also in keeping with the dynamics of the classroom itself (Nunan, 1991:228).

Many language learning methods have influenced the teaching of vocabulary. In Grammar-Translation method, for instance, beside grammar, reading and listening, writing was emphasized. Learners are told to memorize lists of native language equivalents for foreign language words (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:12). According to this method, the aim is providing the learners with a wide literary vocabulary and training them to extract the meaning from texts in the new language by translation into the native language (Rivers, 1981:29). In Direct method, vocabulary is emphasized over grammar. Learners practise vocabulary by using new lexical items in complete sentences, rather than memorizing word lists or translating them into the learners' native language. Instead, the teacher introduces a new lexical item or phrase, and demonstrates its meaning through the use of pictures or pantomime (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:25).

To the audio-linguists, acquisition of basic grammatical patterns of the language should strongly be emphasized. They also believe that if learners are able to internalize these basic patterns, building a large vocabulary can



come later (Nunan, 1991:117). That is why vocabulary is contextualized within dialogues, i.e. new lexical items and structures are presented through dialogues. These dialogues are learned through imitation and repetition (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:44).

The Silent Way, on the other hand, a prominent humanistic method, believes in the importance of the inner state of the learner in the learning process (Nunan, 1991:238). Hence, the main characteristic of this method is that the learner himself solves the problems he is confronted with: the teacher remains silent (van Els et al., 1986:278). Moreover, “the innovative nature of the classroom activities is organized, the indirect role the teacher is required in directing and monitoring learner performance, the responsibility placed upon learners to figure out and test their hypotheses about how the language works, and the materials used to elicit and practice language” (Richards and Rodgers, 2003:88). According to the Silent Way, writing is somewhat restricted. Learners work with wall pictures, word charts, and books to further expand their vocabularies and facility with the language

(Larsen-Freeman, 1986:64).

Unlike the Silent Way, Suggestopedia is primarily an attempt to give full scope to all cognitive learning abilities by eliminating all affective impediments (van Els et al., 1986:278), i.e., the learning process occurs in a classroom in which learners are as comfortable as possible, that is, ideally easy chairs, soft lighting and music. writing in this method is emphasized and there are many claims about the success of the method which often focus on the large number of lexical items that can be acquired

(Larsen-Freeman, 1986:83).

The method which takes its principles from the counseling-learning approach and considers the learner as a whole person and the teacher as a language counselor is called Community Language Learning Method. The primary aim of this method is to create a genuinely warm and supportive community among the learners and gradually to move them from complete dependence on the teacher to complete autonomy, i.e., for learners to be relaxed enough and confident enough to exploit fully the opportunities which present themselves, the teacher has to ensure that there is a large degree of cohesiveness and trust built up among the members of the group (Nunan, 1991:236). In this method, learners feel responsible as a group for the learning tasks they have been set. This method also relies heavily on learning



activities in which group communication is essential (van Els et al., 1986:278).

Total Physical Response method is an example of a new general approach to foreign language learning which has been named “the comprehensive approach”. This method can be described as an elaborate methodology erected on principles supposedly derived from insights of the first language acquisition (Nunan, 1991:244). In the language learning process, the teacher acts as a nonverbal model, presents some actions, then he/she asks the learners to perform these actions. According to this method, a lexical item and its meaning in the target language can often be conveyed and taught through actions (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:117).

The status of writing has considerably been enhanced as a result of the development of the Communicative Approach to language teaching. Adherents of the Communicative Approach acknowledge that structures and vocabulary are important (Nunan, 1991:117). In addition to that, the main principle of this approach is that there can be no fluency without a solid vocabulary base and vocabulary correctness is more important than grammatical accuracy (Laufer, 1986:72). Yule (2003:194) states that this approach is characterized by lessons organized around concepts such as “asking for things” in different social contexts.

In the language teaching process, “the most obvious characteristic of the Communicative Approach is that almost everything is done with a communicative intention. Learners use the language through communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks”. Moreover, “these activities are carried out by learners in small groups. Small numbers of learners interacting are favored in order to maximize the time allotted to each learner for learning to negotiate meaning” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:132).

2.1.2. The Importance of writing Learning

Writing is arguably the most important area of foreign language learning. Since the teaching and learning of writing have never aroused the same degree of interest within language teaching as have such issues as grammatical competence, contrastive analysis, reading which received considerable attention from scholars and teachers (Richards, 1987:176), it is curious to reflect that so little importance has been given to writing in modern language teaching. In fact, the behaviourist/structural model has, in its different ways, consistently under-played vocabulary (Morgan and Rinvolucii, 1988:3).



Vocabulary, as the stock or repertoire of words each one has, is essential to communicate with other people and to express thoughts, ideas, feelings, etc. Vocabulary can be defined as a set of lexemes or lexical items including single words, compound words, and idioms. A word, on the other hand, is a combination of sounds acting as a stimulus to bring into attention the experience to which it has become attached by use (Allen, 1965:209).

Words help in organizing the world of experience, for words are used to refer to the things and ideas in our environment and the interrelations among them. Words also refer to or indicate relations (between, therefore), actions (read, play), nonphysical entities (democracy, justice), and qualities (beauty, big) (Hafner, 1977:95).

Many people go through life with a very limited supply of words, which they use in both speaking and writing. Consequently, their talking and writing are colourless, often boring, and sometimes not clearly understandable. This is often the result of the repeated use of a few words, and in general, the lack of an adequate supply of usable words.

Hence, the possession of a wide vocabulary gives one an advantage in expression. A broad vocabulary is essential for using language as a vehicle for the communication of meaning. Further, a rich, colourful, concise vocabulary helps to make both talking and writing interesting (Greene and Petty, 1959: 148). Thus, the school must at all times emphasize the development of the size and the proper use of the vocabulary which each learner uses in his activities.

Lindstromberg (1985:235) presents the assumption that learning many thousands of words is a manageable job: first, people generally learn ordered groups quicker and better than they learn random groups; second, the words of English are, to a great extent, grouped into families (or arrays) big and small; third, this grouping can be seen in terms of meaning areas which are internally ordered through semantic relations, such as antonymy (hot-cold, dead-alive), synonymy (hid-conceal, beautiful-pretty), inclusion of one meaning by another (flower-rose), etc.

In that case, vocabulary learning is a related process; it could be described as making friends with the words of the target language (Morgan and Rinvoluceri, 1988:6). In this sense, a word in isolation from a text is not in isolation in the web of the learner's thinking and feeling. Each word is a world: so the researcher tries to ask the learners to explore this world by associating words together.



Rivers (1981:463) believes that writing can not be given much time to teach; it can be presented, explained, included in all kinds of language activities, but it must be learned by the individuals. Thus,

The vocabulary we understand and the vocabulary we can use varies in nature and quantity from one person to another even in our native language. As language teachers, we must arouse interest in words and a certain excitement in personal development in this area, i.e., motivation to learn ways of expressing meanings that are important to the individual learner, even if not to others in the group. We can help our learners by giving those ideas on how to learn vocabulary and some guidance on what to learn.

As a matter of fact, the learner must come to the realization that a word in a second language is rarely precisely equivalent in meaning to a word in the first language.

2.2 The Importance and Nature of Writing

Writing is an important form of communication in day-to-day life (Zemach & Islam, 2005: iv). Today, the skill of writing is essential for everyone though it was formerly considered primarily as the domain of the well-educated Harmer, Jeremy. (200:65). identifies several ways showing why writing is important in our lives.

1. As a contribution to the development of a person, no matter what that person's background and talents... Writing is a highly complex act that demands the analysis and synthesis of many levels of thinking.
2. Writing develops initiative. In reading, everything is provided. In writing, the learner must supply everything: the right relationship between sounds and letters, the order of the letters and their form on the page, the topic, information, questions, answers, order.
3. Writing develops courage. At no point is the learner more vulnerable than in writing.
4. Writing, more than any other subject, can lead to personal breakthroughs in learning.
5. Writing can contribute to reading from the first day of school. Writing, some say, is active, whereas reading is passive.
6. Writing contributes strongly to reading comprehension as children grow older. The ability to revise writing for greater power and economy is one of the higher forms of reading.

Morocco and Soven (1990: 845- 846) add that writing is a more faceted activity than listening, speaking or reading. Studies have indicated



that writing enhances memory, aids reading comprehension, stimulates invention, deepens the capacity to form relationships between ideas, and sharpens critical thinking. Furthermore, because writing is integrative, involving cognitive, affective, and behavioral faculties, it is an active and creative learning mode.

In EFL, writing has become more important and “teaching language as a system of communication rather than as an object of study” (ibid: 1) has become more recognized. In light of this, the former view of the purpose of writing as mere reinforcement of pattern drill has been abandoned. The process of learning to write in another language also implies that the learner needs to know something about the structure and vocabulary of the language

2,3 The Difficulties of Writing Skill

Language learning is the acquisition of a set of skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Crystal (1997: 180), writing and speech are viewed as an alternative ‘equal’ system of linguistic expressions. Their functions are usually said to complete each other; furthermore, speech and writing cannot substitute each other without serious disservice being done. Further support comes from Al-Mutawa and Kailani (1989: 125) when they assert that writing “is equated with speech since both are concerned with conveying information”.

Writing as a significant language skill should be developed at an early stage of learning the foreign language and it requires skill in sentence-combining and a knowledge of the organization of the whole composition including the English alphabet, mechanics of writing, sentence structures, grammatical and lexical connectors to create an effective paragraph and to understand the relationship between sounds and written symbols (ibid.). Byrne (1986:2) mentions that “writing is the production of a sequence arranged in particular order and linked together in certain ways”.

Writing requires the writer to demonstrate control of several variables at once. At the sentence level, this includes control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary and spelling. Successful writing involves mastering the mechanics of letter formation, obeying conventions of spelling and pronunciation and using the grammatical system to convey one’s intended meaning (Nunan, 1991: 6).

ibid (1977:25) believe that the most difficult problem which many students face and suffer when they write is connected with the form and content of the language. Many Iraqi learners find it difficult to write a piece of composition.



To express themselves, they need the ability to arrange the information in a suitable order, and the power to express it clearly, satisfactorily and effectively.

It has been well documented by Yasseen (1966), Al-Karkhi (1999), and Al-Jubouri (2001) that EFL learners face many difficulties in handling writing composition when they communicate using written forms. They make a lot of mistakes in different aspects of composition.

Al-Jumaily (1977: 6) holds the view that “the learner's performance on writing composition at the intermediate stage is below the level that is needed”. He states that “there is no systematic approach in their textbooks to teach guided composition” (ibid.). This state of affairs necessitates the search for, and the experimentation with, new techniques that have proven effective. One of the techniques that the researcher suggests for remedying learners' weaknesses and improving their learning of composition is group work or task based technique which is described by Knott and Mutunga (1995:199) as "getting learners to talk and think".

The group work technique or task based technique (henceforth GWT) enables teachers to create a group, generate interest, and organize activities which focus on deeper learning through discussion , reflection and problem – solving inquiry (ibid.:216) .

Cramer (1994: 34) states that it is a good idea for many kinds of composition to let the learners work in small or large groups. This small or large grouping lends itself to a good exchange of information and discussion and a lot of peer help.

The significance of the study lies in the fact that it tackles the errors writing which is considered one of the major difficulties that students faced in their writing, task based technique and the GWT which are used, hopefully, for making writing easier and more pleasurable for the ESL as well as EFL learners.

Chapter Three: Methodology of the study

3.0 An Introductory Note

This chapter discusses the experimental work that has been carried out for the purpose of discussing and finding out whether there is an enhancement of the students' writing ability by using the GW and TBT in writing composition.



3.1 The Experimental Design

Selecting an experimental design is one of the most important decisions that an experimenter makes (Van Dalen, 1973:267). It is necessary to choose an appropriate design to determine whether the obtained results will be valid, objective and accurate. In order to achieve the aim of the study the experimental design selected is the non-equivalent post-test control group design.

This design incorporates an experimental and control group, but participants are not randomly selected. Each group is tested prior to some treatment / manipulation stage (the pre-test phase) and after the treatment/manipulation stage (the post-test phase). The experimental group receives the actual manipulation, whereas the control group does not; this would constitute the independent variable. The actual measure(s) taken at the pre- and post-test stages (for both groups) would constitute the dependent variable. The two groups could then be compared on their difference between the post-manipulation measures. This design is called non-equivalent groups because it allows the researcher to select the separate samples for experimental and control group on a non-random (see Table 1).

Table (1) The Experimental Design

Experimental group	Independent variable (group work or task based technique)	Post- test
Control group	Traditional method	Post – test

(Campbell and Stanley, 1963: 25)

The two groups are measured on the independent variable. The first group (the experimental group) was taught essay writing by using GW, and the second group (control group) was taught composition writing by the method stated in the *Teacher's Guide* only .

The scores on the post – test of the two groups are then compared and if the experimental group's scores are found out to be significantly different from those of the control one, the difference is attributed to the independent variable.

3.2 The Population

A population refers to the larger group from which a sample is selected for study . Population refers to the group under the study with some specific characteristics which is certainly related to the interest of researcher. This group may comprise people, objects, material or even the documents as the requirements of the study. The population may be all the individuals of a



particular type or a more restricted part of that group like all public school teachers, all male secondary school teachers, etc. In the present study, the population is the second grade students/scientific research at the college of basic education during the academic year 2023-2024.

3.3 The Sample

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. In the present research, the research sample is selected from second stage / English department.

3.4 Factors Jeopardizing Internal and External Validity

The extraneous variables jeopardizing internal and external validity have been determined in order to avoid confounding the results of the study. The researcher tried to manipulate and control the influence of these variables. The most salient variables that could influence the experiment are the following:

3.4.1 Retroactive History

In respect to this factor, nothing unusual has happened during the period of the experiment.

3.4.2 Experimental Mortality

The experiment did not face the effect of such factor during the period of the experiment except for non – attendance of some of the sample subjects which is considered a natural state because it rarely occurred in both groups.

3.4.3 Selection Bias

The sample selection procedures are considered as one of the most important variables that can affect experimental research. This variable was controlled by the random selection of the groups. The researcher equated the groups statistically in the students' age achievement in English in the mid-year examination scores, the pre – test scores, and the parents' education level.

3.4.4 Maturation

Maturation refers to the process, within the respondents operating as a function of the passage of time, including growing older, growing more tired and the like (Campbell and Stanley, 1963: 5).

The experiment lasted about two months. It started on 26th of February and ended on 27th of April, 2023. This period is not so long that the students' responses might be attributed to the change which occurred with the passage of time.



3.4.5 The Classroom Environment

This experiment was carried out in English department / college of basic education from which the two groups, the experimental group and the control one have been selected, which means including students' of the same capabilities and classroom environment, such as heating, lightening, size, noise effect, and number of desks. So, by this, the researcher controlled this variable also.

3.4.6 Time Allotted

Three lessons a week were allotted to teach each group and the time allotted for each lesson was 45 minutes. This was fixed in the timetable.

3.4.7 The Teacher

The researcher himself taught the two groups, the experimental and the control, so that he could control the variable of the teacher's bias to the traditional method of teaching, as the researcher has discussed subjects of the experiment before carrying out the experiment and during it with the actual teacher of the classes.

3.4.8 Experiment Application

The application of the experiment started on the 26th of February, 2023.. Finally, and on the 27th of April, 2023, the post – test was administered. Throughout the time of experiment, students were taught writing composition from units 4-8 of the textbook (writing in paragraph) for second cstage by using GW and task based technique procedures to teach the experimental group and traditional to teach the control group.

3.4.9 Instructional Material

As stated previously, 5th grade secondary school students were chosen to be the sample of the experiment. The material has been taken from *writing in paragraph* (Students and Activity Books), units 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and other resources that include some material that suits the experiment. The same material was adopted for the experimental and control groups.

3.4.10 Behavioral Objectives

The general goals of this experiment were set according to the nature of teaching procedures through applying GW and task based technique. The researcher constructed three behavioral objectives to be achieved at the end of the experiment regarding procedures of using GW and TBT (preparation, modeling and reinforcing, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing, and revising). These objectives were then submitted to a number of experts as references specialized in linguistics, literature and ELT ,



to know their opinions about the reliability of forming these objectives and their relevance to the procedures of GW and TBT. In the light of their opinions, a slight change occurred in forming these objectives. These behavioral objectives were formulated as follows:

1. To have students acquire an understanding of the purpose and structure of composition writing.
2. To have students use that knowledge to compose composition, both as a group and individually.

3.4.11 Instruments of the Study

To assess the degree of success of the experiment, the instrument comprises a written test. A subjective test was constructed to measure the students' ability to write an essay in English. The test consists only from one question and the number of words required from students suits the time of a lesson. post-test were written in six topics to the jury members to select for the posttest. The test was designed to suit the material of the experiment, where the students were asked to write an a piece of composition that includes three paragraphs by using their own words. Hence, a good test must be valid, reliable and usable.

3.5 Validity of the Test

Validity is perhaps the most complex concept in the test evaluation. It refers to the degree of success with which a technique or other instrument measures what it claims to measure (Iodo, 1981: 87). According to Zumbo and Ruha (2009:76), validity is an integrated evaluative judgement of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or other modes of assessment. Validity, then, is a unified concept on the collection of multiple and diverse types of evidence. In the present study, the researcher is concerned with applying four main types of validity: face validity and, construct validity.

3.5.1 Face Validity and Content Validity

Face validity refers to researchers' subjective assessments of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instrument as to whether the items in the instrument appear to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear (Ayodele, 2012:392). Drost (2009:116) adds that face validity is a subjective judgment on the operationalization of a construct. For instance, one might look at a measure of reading ability, read through the paragraphs, and decide that it seems like a good measure of reading ability. Even though



subjective judgment is needed throughout the research process, the aforementioned method of validation is not very convincing to others as a valid judgment.

To ensure the face validity of the test, it was exposed to a jury of thirteen members who were asked to give their agreement, modification or any additional points concerning the tests. It is necessary to note that the pre-test and post - test are judged valid by all the jury members, which means 100% agreement.

Content validity refers to the representativeness of the sample of question included in the research instruments (Takona, 2002:148). Content validity is a theoretical concept which focuses on the extent to which the instrument of measurement shows evidence of fairly and comprehensive coverage of the domain of items that it purports to cover (Ayodele, 2012:392). Content validity is also ascertained by conducting a content analysis of the prescribed textbook.

3.6 The Achievement Test:

It is necessary for each educational research to have suitable instruments for collecting the needed data. Achievement tests are used to measure the extent of learner progress toward the achievement of the instructional objectives of a specific study as well as evaluate the effectiveness of instruction (Harris, 1969: 3).

According to Davies et al. (1997: 2), an achievement test is an instrument designed to measure what a person has learned within or up to a given time.

The researcher has constructed a composition writing achievement test which is used as a posttest for both the experimental group and the control one. The aim of this test is to investigate the effect of using group work and task based technique as a new technique on the learners' achievement in to develop the ability of learners in writing.

Chapter Four: Results, Conclusion and Recommendations

4.0 An Introductory Note:

This chapter introduces an analysis of the data and presentation of the results of the present study.

4.1 The Result:

At the end of the experiment and in order to realize the aim of the study; i.e. to scientifically determine the effect of using GWT and task based technique for teaching composition, and test its null hypothesis, the researcher has statistically analyzed the data obtained through administering

the composition writing test to the study subjects. It should be noted that this analysis is undertaken to determine whether there is any significant difference between the scores of the experimental group and those of the control group in the test.

4.1.1 Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Posttest Scores:

The result obtained from the application of the posttest on both groups shows that the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the composition writing achievement test are 34.02 and 29.30 respectively, which means that the performance of the experimental group subjects in composition writing is better than that of the control group subjects.

The t-test formula for two independent samples has been used to determine whether the difference between the two groups is significant or not. The result of applying this formula has revealed that in the GC posttest the computed t-value is 1.200, whereas the tabulated t-value is 1.99. This comparison indicates that there is a significant difference between the two groups at 0.05 level of significance under 82 degrees of freedom (see Table 7). This also indicates that the null hypothesis of the study which states that there is significant difference between those who are taught composition writing through using the GWT and task based and those who are taught composition through using the conventional method is accepted.

Table 1
t-Test statistics of the Learners' Scores in the Posttest

Group	N	\bar{X}	S ²	df	t-value		Level of significance
					CTV	TTV	
Experimental	56	34.02	20.867	82	1.200	1.99	0.05
Control	43	29.30	14.841				

4.2 Results

Building upon the result of the study, it is found out that there is an significant difference between the experimental and the control groups, although the achievement of the experimental subjects is slightly higher than that of the control ones. This can be interpreted to mean that, within the limits of this study, teaching composition writing through GWT and task based technique has improved the writing ability of second graders. In other words,



GWT is proven to be effective to use in teaching the writing activity in general and composition in particular.

Another in statistical finding which is arrived at, not from the statistical manipulation of the data, but from the researcher's own observation throughout thier experiment, is that the use of GWT and task based technique has motivated the learners, aroused their interest and increased their participation in the composition writing activities.

The favorable finding of this study may be attributed to several reasons. The first group of reasons concerns classroom management. GWT and task based technique in a large class did not make noise and this can be helped. During group activity, the teacher can control all the language used. When using GWT the teacher has control over what learners do in group work than in normal class. GWT or task based technique did not require more time. It might not require more staff which may not be possible if the learners are not fixed by traditional or financial constraints. Besides, it did not need more flexible and suitable space and particular seating arrangements.

Another set of reasons relates to the difficulty of the writing activity itself, and especially composition writing for EFL learners. EFL learners of all levels face many difficulties and make many errors in writing English composition. This can also be explained by the individuality of the writing process, and the opinion that not all writing exercises lend themselves to group activity. However, this disagrees with what was confirmed by Raphael et al. (1988) that expository writing programme improved the ability of the learners to compose and comprehend informational text.

The last set of reasons behind the ineffectiveness of group work or task based technique may be attributed to the learners themselves. Since the learners in this study are still beginners in their EFL learning, this may constitute an obstacle that hinders benefiting from group work. Moreover, those learners are not accustomed to GWT, and the demands of traditional school create difficulties for learners in dealing with unfamiliar autonomy and responsibilities.

4.3 Conclusions:

In the light of the empirical evidence revealed in this study and in relation to the researcher's own observations during the experiment, the following conclusions are drawn:



1. Teaching writing composition through the use of group work or task based technique have a facilitative effect on developing the writing ability of learners.
2. Time allotted for the writing activity in the syllabus is not enough compared with other activities. Moreover, the writing skill is almost neglected by all participants in TEFL, especially textbook designers and teachers.
3. Send stage students need more practice in writing English composition including punctuation, spelling, grammar and vocabulary because their background knowledge in handling the writing subskills is so bad.
4. Writing is an individual rather than a group activity, i.e., it requires an independent involvement on the part of the learner which is not available in GWT.
5. Taking the learners' psychological factors into consideration, using GWT in teaching GC motivates the learners and creates an atmosphere of enjoyment and interest that encourages them to work more on the activities of GC by breaking the regular routine..
6. GWT and task based technique gives learners the experience they need for social development.

4.4 Recommendations:

In the light of the finding of this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Teachers of English at intermediate schools need to think of utilizing a variety of teaching techniques to improve the teaching of GC particularly and writing skills generally.
2. Since GC exercises involved in the prescribed textbook for second intermediate grade are few in number, they should be increased and varied.
3. It is useful to suggest designing a manual that deals with all types of GC as well as the handwriting rules, to accompany the textbook for all the three grades of the intermediate stage.
4. Students in the Departments of English in teacher training institutes and colleges of education should be trained in the use of various teaching techniques for developing all language skills in general and writing in particular.
5. Teachers of English need to be involved in in-service training courses to keep them up-to-date with the recent innovations in the field of language teaching.



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التحقيق في الأخطاء النحوية التي ارتكبتها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في

كتابة التكوين

أ.د. بلال علي برهان

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مستخلص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى التحقق من الاخطاء التي تحصل من قبل متعلمو اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في كتابة الانشاء ولتحقيق هذا الهدف وضعت فرضية والتي تنص على عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المجموعة التجريبية التي تدرس كتابة الانشاء باستخدام تقنية التعلم بالمجموعة او عن طريق تقنية المسندة الى المهمة والمجموعة الضابطة التي تدرس كتابة الانشاء باستخدام الطريقة التقليدية تم اجراء التجربة على طلبة المرحلة الثانية في كلية التربية الاساسية / الجامعة المستنصرية خلال الفصل الدراسي الاول لعام الدراسي 2023/ 2024 . استغرقت فترة التجربة ثمانية اسابيع مع استخدام الاختبار البعدي تم وضع النتائج والتوصيات