The Impact of Syntax Surgery Technique on EFL Intermediate School Students' Writing Skill

Lect. Jameelah Razook Khalaf (Ph.D.) [1]*

General Directorate of Salah al-Din Education/ Samarra Education Department

jameelahalsamarrai223@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims at finding out the impact of syntax surgery technique on EFL intermediate school students' writing skill. It is hypothesised that "there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of students' achievement of the first experimental group which is taught by Syntax Surgery technique and that of the control group which is taught by the prescribed method in writing post-test". To verify the hypothesis of this study and achieve its aim, a quasi-experimental 'Post-test – Equivalent-Group Design' is employed. Two groups are randomly selected from the second intermediate grade in Al-Zahra Intermediate School for Girls to represent the sample of the study which is (50) students, each group consists of (25) students. The two groups are equalized in terms of age, the academic level of their parents and level of achievement in English language for the previous year (2023-2024). Then the first experimental group is taught by Syntax Surgery technique, whereas the second

---

[1] ***Corresponding Author:** Jameelah Razook Khalaf, E-mail**: jameelahalsamarrai223@gmail.com

Affiliation: General Directorate of Salah al-Din Education - Iraq

experimental group is taught by the prescribed method. After achieving the validity of the test, a pilot study is conducted on 20 students. Then the two groups are subjected to the same post-test in writing composition. T-test for two independent samples has been used to analyse data statistically. The result has shown that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in writing post-test, in favour of the experimental group. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in the light of the results collected.

Key words: Impact, Syntax Surgery, Technique, Writing

تأثير تقنية جراحة بناء الجملة على مهارة الكتابة لدى طلبة المدارس المتوسطة، دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة اجنبية

م.د. جميله رزوق خلف

المديرية العامة لتربية صلاح الدين/قسم تربية سامراء

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى الكشف عن تأثير تقنية جراحة بناء الجملة على مهارة الكتابة لدى طالبات المدارس المتوسطة اللاتي يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية لغة اجنبية. وقد تم وضع الفرضية التالية: لا يوجد فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة (0,5) بين متوسط درجات تحصيل الطالبات في المجموعة التجريبية التي يتم تدريسها باستخدام "تقنية جراحة بناء الجملة ومتوسط درجات المجموعة الضابطة التي يتم تدريسها بالطريقة الاعتيادية المقررة في اختبار الكتابة البعدي. وللتحقق من فرضية الدراسة وتحقيق هدفها, تم اعتماد التصميم شبه التجريبي ب "الاختبار البعدي– للمجموعات المتكافئة" حيث تم اختيار مجموعتين بشكل عشوائي من الصف الثاني متوسط في متوسطة الزهراء للبنات لتمثيل عينة الدراسة والتي بلغ عددها (50) طالبة, بواقع (25) طالبة في كل مجموعة. تمت موازنة المجموعتين من حيث العمر, المستوى الاكاديمي لأولياء الأمور, ومستوى التحصيل في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية للعام السابق (2023–2024). بعد ذلك تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية الأولى باستخدام تقنية "جراحة بناء الجملة" ,بينما درست المجموعة الضابطة باستخدام الطريقة الاعتيادية المقررة, وبعد التأكد من صلاحية الاختبار تم اجراء دراسة استطلاعية على عينة مكونة من (20) طالبة, ثم خضعت المجموعتان للاختبار البعدي نفسه في مهارة الكتابة, وقد تم استخدام الاختبار (ت) لعينتين مستقلتين لتحليل البيانات احصائيا. واظهرت النتائج وجود فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين المجموعة

التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة في اختبار الكتابة البعدي لصالح المجموعة التجريبية. وفي ضوء النتائج التي تم

التوصل اليها، تم تقديم الاستنتاجات والتوصيات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تأثير، تقنية، جراحة بناء الجملة، الكتابة

1.Introduction

Writing is one of the most important language skills. Orally, students can express themselves and communicate their ideas and feeling through using language. They can use gestures or body language to show the meaning. In writing, it is difficult to communicate ideas to others in correct language. There is no sign or body language that make the meaning clear and hence the task becomes more difficult. One of the most important reasons that make students have difficulties in writing compositions is the lack of knowledge of English syntax. It is noticed that most EFL school students at the intermediate grade face difficulty in writing composition and many of them are unable to write a correct grammatical sentence. They may begin the sentence with a verb, like Arabic language. This motivates the researcher to select a technique, i.e, Syntax Surgery technique (SS) that helps students write a sentence (which is one of the main compositional elements) in an appropriate way and to teach them the basic components of an English sentence to avoid transfer into the native language. Therefore, it is hoped that this technique will benefit them to write and express themselves and reflect what they feel and want to say correctly so that readers can grasp the idea of their pieces of writing.

This study aims at finding out the impact of Syntax Surgery technique on EFL intermediate school students' writing skill. It is hypothesized that "there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of students' achievement of the first experimental group which is taught by Syntax Surgery technique and that of the control group which is taught by the prescribed method in writing post-test".

This study is supposed to be valuable to the EFL learners since it assists them to comprehend the relationships between parts of a sentence that are probably difficult to understand. Writing sentences in an appropriate way is vital for accomplishing the composition. It is also valuable for teachers to instruct their students how to write a composition in a appropriate way by following the steps of this technique. Curriculum designers may get benefit of this study by suggesting this technique in the Teacher Guide and advise teachers to follow the steps of applying this technique.

This study is limited to employing the SS technique in teaching the topics of compositions found in the textbook, "English for Iraq", in particular the Activity Book (AB), prepared by Terry O'Neill, Peter Snow and Paul Drury of the second intermediate grade in Alzahar intermediate school for girls in the city of Samarra during the academic year (2024-2025).

2. Literature Review & Previous Studies

2.1 Concept of Syntax Surgery

Syntax surgery is a technique that assists students understand the relationships between parts of a sentence that could be difficult to comprehend (Beers, 2003; Herrell, 1998). Because English syntax is often different from the word order found in students' native languages, English language learners sometimes face difficulty in understanding sentences they read or confuse word order while writing or speaking in English (Baltra, 1998).

This technique includes writing a sentence on a sentence strip and then snipping the sentence apart to reorganize it into more comprehensible pieces. Students are more likely to comprehend and remember the English syntax rules when they are later asked to employ them because they actually see the pieces of the sentence being moved. Students are likely to have more confidence in their use of English by using syntax surgery, which can also assist them better understand of the aspects of speaking and writing that make their English difficult for others to understand (Jesness, 2004). In her explanation of output theory, Swain (1993) points at this improvement of the written and spoken product as vital to the growth of fluency.

2.1.1 Procedures of Applying Syntax Surgery in the Classroom

Adrian and Rosa (2012) state that the first step in implementing SS in the classroom is modelling. The teacher models this technique in the classroom first. Modelling is the most important thing because it draws students' attention to this technique. In this stage, the teacher models the technique in front of his students and clarifies why, what and when the technique is employed. The second procedure is practising the technique with students, whereas the third step is to scaffold the technique and the teacher monitors. The last step is implementing the technique by the students independently.

Herrell and Jordan (2012) point out the steps of implementing SS in detail, as illustrated in the following:

1-Identify a sentence that causes difficulty. It could be a sentence that a student has spoken where the first language word order is different from with the English word order, or it could be a complex sentence faced in reading that causes confusion.

2- Write the sentence and begin the "surgery". After you write the sentence on a sentence strip, reread it aloud with the students included in the speaking, reading or even writing activity. For instance, if the problematic sentence that was written by the student says, "She was wearing a sweater green," the teacher takes a pair of scissors and cut the sentence apart in places of difficulty. The cut would be before the words *sweater* and *green.*

3- Rearrange the words in the proper English order on the chalk rail or in a pocket chart. Put "She was wearing a green sweater" on the chart, then read the sentence using the correct English word order and say, "This is how we say it in English". Assert again the students' knowledge of their native language through rebuilding the same sentence in the original order and state, "This would be the right order of the words in the native language", but it is said this way in English. Then reassemble the sentence in the original order to reinforce the students' understanding of their native language. Before the teacher

explains the word order difference as clearly as possible, the students read the correct sentence with him/her.

4-Practise more sentences with the similar pattern. For additional practice, write some sentences with the similar word pattern on sentence strips and have the students read them along with you.

5-Time the lesson. Avoid using this lesson in a way that hinders communication with the student. If the student's message was clear, respond to it modelling the correct English syntax. Write the student's sentence down and then come back to it later to use the SS technique to aid refinement of the student's English. Be aware of other students who might find the explanation helpful and use the opportunity to teach multiple students at a time.

These steps are implemented inside the classroom while teaching the topics of writing in the AB , "English for Iraq" of the 2nd intermediate grade.

2.1.2 Advantages of Syntax Surgery Technique

Adrian & Rosa (2018) state many advantages of using syntax surgery:

1-It assists the learners understand English structure so that learners are able to understand the text.

2- It also has some advantages to the other skills. In SS technique, learners cut the sentence and rearrange it into more understandable part in order that they can notice the pieces of the sentence being moved. That process will make learners more likely to comprehend and retain the English syntax rules when called on to use them in future.

3- This technique helps the students to be more confident in their use of English. Since students have known the rules of English syntax, they are able to apply it in their writing or speaking and avoid the elements that make their speaking or writing hard for others to comprehend.

4- Other advantages are learners' understanding is supported by using several ways to reinforce the English syntax. Students are able to see and hear the differences of the word order in English or separate the ideas within complex sentences.

2.2 Writing Skill

Writhing is the cognitive processing of creating ideas, thinking about how to convey them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be obvious to readers (Nunan, 1989). According to Flower & Hayes (1981), writing is a complex process that consists of planning, language generation, and text structuring. Writing composition with sentences that are free from grammatical errors is essential for conveying the idea of the text.

Abbot (2007) confirms *" a clear thinking could not be written clearly without using words according to definite rules"* (P.6). Some other difficulties of writing are mentioned by some scholars. For instance, Elaf & Manal (2023) states that if students do not learn writing, they will encounter a trouble in fulfilling clearness which is the goal of any exercise related to writing. As a result, students are capable of comprehending language. Fareeq & Sozdar (2023) mention some other difficulties like choosing a suitable teaching method is crucial in teaching the students writing as well as some other factors such as selecting appropriate vocabulary and grammar and how the thoughts are organised. All these factors, according to them, influence the overall writing quality. Similarly, Noor and & Madeha (2024) agreed that there are some factors to consider in writing like choosing an appropriate teaching method. They add some other factors like engaging the students in writing tasks, taking a look at the prior writing task and providing feedback to their written tasks.

Choosing an appropriate technique is crucial in teaching writing and the technique employed in this study is hoped to be beneficial to young learners in the 2nd intermediate grade. The type of composition found in the textbook of the 2nd intermediate grade, "English for Iraq", in particular AB is somewhat guided composition. The topic is given and followed either with a set of questions or a set of key words that help them

write about the topic. Sometimes a set of pictures is given and sometime a model text is given asking learners to write about similar topic following the model text.

Hyland (2003) explains that composition is the structured act of creating written text that is coherent and purposeful. It includes combining linguistic competence, content knowledge, and organizational technique. In order to write composition effectively, Hyland (2003) confirms that learners should master the following components:

a-Content Development: relevance, clarity and depth of concepts

b-Language Use: vocabulary appropriateness, tone and sentence variety

c-Organization: Logical paragraph progression and use of transitions

d-Audience Awareness: Adapting tone and form to the intended reader

e-Grammar and Mechanics: correctness in syntax, spelling and punctuation

2.2.1 The Writing Process

According to Grave (1983) and Graham et al. (2012), writing is ideally taught through a "*process-oriented approach*", that consists of the following:

a-Prewriting: generating ideas and planning.

b-Drafting: transferring ideas and concepts into text.

c-Revising: enhancing content and structure.

d-Editing: correcting and editing grammatical errors and mechanics.

e-Publishing: the final product is getting ready for presentation.

2.3 Previous Studies

In literature, the SS technique is employed by different researchers to see its impact on different language skills or other areas of language. For instance, a. thesis is conducted by Damai (2018) to find out the effect of employing SS technique towards reading comprehension in descriptive text at the second semester of the tenth grade of SMK Gajah

Mada Bandar Lampung in the academic year (2016-2017). Quasi experimental design, pretest and post-test design is employed. The results show that there is a significant influence of employing SS towards students' reading comprehension in descriptive texts. The study of Hind A. and Raad K. (2020) is conducted to find out the effect of SS on the achievement of secondary school students in English grammar. The sample of this study is the 5th preparatory grade students at Somyia Secondary School for the academic year (2019-2020). The experimental design, pretest -post-test is employed. The results indicate the superiority of the experimental group that is taught by SS technique over the control group that is taught by the prescribed method. What makes this study different from the previous ones is the sample and the experimental design. The sample is the students at the second intermediate grade, as compared to higher grade students. The experimental design in this study is ' Post-test – Equivalent-Group ' whereas pretest-post-test design is used in the previous studies. In addition, writing skill has not been investigated yet.

3. Procedures

3.1 Experimental Design

Best and Kahan (2006) define the experimental design as the layout of the steps that help the researcher test hypotheses by drawing beneficial conclusions related to the relationships between independent and dependent variables. The experimental design that applied in this study is called "The Post-test – Equivalent-Group Design" (Best and Kahan ,2006, P.179). This design includes: selecting both groups (control and experimental) randomly, applying the independent variable to the experimental group only, teaching both groups the same teaching material (writing in AB of the 2nd intermediate grade), then subjecting the same post-test to both groups. Thus, the experimental group is taught writing by the independent variable which is SS technique, but the control group is taught the same instructional material by the prescribed method. See table (1).

Table (1)

The Experimental Design of the Study

Experimental group	Independent variable Syntax surgery technique	Post-test
Control group	Prescribed Method	Post-test

3.2 Population and Sampling

The population of the study is the students of the second intermediate grade in the city of Samarra (258) students. The sample is the second intermediate grade students in Al-Zahra Intermediate School for Girls during the academic year (2024-2025). The students are grouped into two sections: (A) and (B). They are randomly selected to be the control and experimental groups. Section (A) is an experimental group and it consists of thirty-seven students while section (B) represents the control group and it consists of thirty-six students. Three students are excluded from both sections as repeaters to avoid past experience, whereas twenty students are employed for the purpose of the pilot study. Thus, the total number of the involved sample is fifty students. See table (2).

Table (2)

The Population and Sample of the Study

Group of students	**No. of students before exclusion**	**No. of repeaters (excluded students)**	**No. of sample Students**	**No. of pilot student**
Experimental	37	2	25	10
Control	36	1	25	10
Total	73	3	50	20

Students in experimental and control groups are equalized in terms of the academic level of their parents, age and level of achievement in English language for previous year (2023-2024).

3.3 Students' Instruction

In this study, students' instructions are the topics in AB of the textbook "English for Iraq", second intermediate grade. See table (3). The students are required to write about these topics with some guided information to help them accomplish the task. Sometimes pictures are given to stimulate students' imagination to write a story. The instructions are taught to both control and experimental groups. The experiment begins at 15th of October and end at 1st of December,2024 (the first course of the academic year, 2024-2025). The experimental and the control groups are taught by the researcher. Two lessons a week are devoted for teaching writing.

Table (3)

Content Analysis of the Activity Book

Unit 1		
No. of Lesson	**The title of the topic**	**Page**
4 (Part 2)	An interview with "How long have you….?"	10
7	A story about your most embarrassing moment	17
Unit 2		
No. of Lesson	**The title of the topic**	**Page**
3	In a restaurant	26
7	A letter to a sick friend	35
8	A limerick for your school magazine	36
Unit 3		
No. of Lesson	**The title of the topic**	**Page**

2	A timetable through looking at pictures	42
4	Write a story through looking at pictures	47
6	Write a composition by imitating a model.	50
7	Why people should do sport.	53
Unit 4		
No. of Lesson	**The title of the topic**	**Page**
Extra Activities	Changes in your town since five years ago.	65
	Changes in your life since you started a new sport or hoppy.	65
Ex 3	Getting and sending messages and information	67

3.4 Construction of the Post-test

The researcher takes into consideration the content and behavioural objectives of the instructional material when constructing the achievement test. The post-test consists of four questions, scored out of fifty marks. See table (4). The first question consists of a sequence of seven pictures. The explanation of the first two pictures is provided to help students guess the meaning and the story of the next five pictures. Thus, two marks are allotted for picture. So the total is 10 marks. The second question is also scored out of ten marks. A profile of an athlete is provided and students are required to write a profile of a different athlete following the same given model and have to answer five questions. The third question is scored out of ten marks. It is a draft of a letter and it has ten mistakes related to tense, wrong word, spelling and punctuation. One mark is allotted to each item. The fourth question is scored out of twenty marks. Students have to write about a topic having three paragraphs and they should follow the instructions. See appendix (A).

Table (4)

The Specifications of the Contents and Behaviours of Post-Test

No. of Question	Contents	Behaviours	No.of Items	Score
1	A set of pictures showing a story	Explain the story	5	10
2	A model of a profile of an athlete	Write answers to questions of a similar profile	5	10
3	A draft having ten mistakes	Find out the wrong word	10	10
4	A topic about "getting and sending messages and information"	Generate three paragraphs about this topic	3	20
The total score				50

3.5 Scoring Schema of Writing post-test

Students' answers are scored out of 50 marks. Considering Q1, Q2, Two marks are allotted for the very good answer in terms of satisfying answer and written in a language that is clear from errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. The good answer is given one mark if the answer is satisfying, but written in weak language. Zero is given for the weak answer that is neither satisfying nor written in a good language. Considering Q3, one mark is allotted for the right answer and zero for incorrect one. Whereas Q4, the correct answer ranges from five to one mark, as shown in table (5).

Table (5)
The Scale of Assessing Question Four

Criteria	Qualities	Scores
Idea	Very good	5
	Good	3
	Weak	1
Organization	Very good	5
	Good	3
	Weak	1
Vocabulay	Very good	5
	Good	3
	Weak	1
Grammar and Punctuations	Very good	5
	Good	3
	Weak	1

3.6 Test Validity

Validity is one of the vital features of every measurement instrument as Ary et al. (1979, P. 196) stress and they define validity as "the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure".

Content validity and face validity are essential features of an achievement test. Face validity has been achieved by exposing the test to jury members in ELT and linguistics. Content validity has been achieved by constructing a table of specification of content and behaviour which ensures content analysis. See table (4). Furthermore, similar topics to those involved in the textbook "English for Iraq" , AB as well as the behavioural objectives included in this book are taken into consideration when constructing the test.

3.7 The Pilot Administration of the Post-test

Many objectives are supposed to be obtained through the use of the pilot administration:

- Examining the clearness of the test items

- Finding the test reliability.

The test is given to a sample of twenty students randomly selected from second intermediate grade students (Al-Zahra Intermediate Secondary School for Girls) during the academic year (2024-2025) in the city of Samarra on the 15th of October. Results show that the questions and items of the test are obvious to the students and the time needed to respond to the questions of the test ranges between (45 -55) minutes. This means that the average length of the time is (50) minutes.

Then item analysis has been done to provide information about the difficulty level and discrimination power of each item in the post- test. It is found that the difficulty level of each item ranges between (0.42- 0.70) and discrimination power of each item ranges between (0.44-0.68) which means that they are statistically accepted.

3.8 Test Reliability

Bachman and Palmer (2000, P.19) point out that reliability is "the extent to which a measuring device is consistent in measuring whatever it measures". The reliability of the writing test has been achieved by employing Alpha Cronbach formula and the reliability coefficient of this test is found to be (0.84) which is statistically accepted.

3.9 Final Administration of the Test

The experiment has been started at the 15th of October and ended at the 1st of December. That is, it lasted for one month and a half. At the end of the experiment, the two groups are subjected to the same writing post-test. It has been administered on the 1st of December,2024. The researcher has asked the examinees to read the questions and instructions carefully, then write down their responses within the limited time (50) minutes.

4. Analysis of Data and Discussion of Results

4.1 Comparison between the Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups in Writing Post-test

T-test for two independent samples is used to verify the hypothesis of the study and achieve its aim. The statistical results of the writing post-test show that the mean score of the experimental group is (33.80) with a standard deviation of (8.80), whereas that of the control group is (22.36) with a standard deviation of (6.43) .The calculated t-value is found to be (5.25)   whereas the tabulated t-value is (2.01) at the degree of freedom (48).This means that there is a significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the achievement of the two groups, in favour of the experimental group which is taught by the SS technique. See table (6).

Thus, the hypothesis which states that "there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of students' achievement of the first experimental group which is taught by Syntax Surgery technique and that of the control group which is taught by the prescribed method in writing post-test" has been rejected.

Table (6)

The Means, Standard Deviation, and T-values of the Two Groups on the Writing Post-test

Groups	No. of students	Mean	Sd	T-Value		DF	Level of sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated		
E G	25	33.80	8.80	5.25	2.01	48	0.05
CG	25	22.36	6.43				

4.2 Discussion of the Results

The obtained results show that the students of the experimental group perform better than the students of the control group in their achievement in writing composition. This indicates that SS technique is an effective method in teaching writing.

The improvement of students' achievement in writing by employing the SS technique may due to the following reasons :

1.The EFL intermediate students find that the SS technique is enjoyable since it starts like a game through writing on a sentence strip.

2.This technique focuses on writing sentences correctly and since a sentence is one of the main compositional elements, students are able to write composition in an appropriate way that the reader can grasp the idea of the topic.

3. Teaching students the basic component of an English sentence helps them not to transfer into the native language while writing a composition.

4.Some topics in the AB of the 2nd intermediate grade involve pictures and required the students to write a sentence below each picture to express what it means. Since this technique focuses on parts of the sentence, students succeed to write and express themselves correctly.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

In the light of the results of the study, the following points are drawn:

1.The SS technique is more effective than the prescribed method in writing composition.

2. Writing a composition in a language full of errors hinder understanding and communication. Since this technique concentrates on writing composition correctly, it helps grasp the idea and what the writer wants to reflect.

3. Since this technique relies on analysing the sentence and cutting it up into its component parts, students avoid transfer into their native language.

4. This technique helps the students to develop their repertoire of the parts of speech (verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so on) since it focuses on cutting up the sentence in to its component parts. For instance, to put adjectives before nouns, etc.

5.2 Recommendations

1. It is advised that teachers focus on the procedures of SS strategy in teaching writing composition.

2.Teachers should direct students' attention to the components of an English sentence and different English sentence pattern to help them write correctly without committing great mistakes that lead to misunderstanding.

3. Teachers could employ SS technique to enhance students' attention to different parts of speech (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc.)

4. In addition to teaching writing, teacher could employ this strategy in teaching English grammar, in particular tenses.

References

Abbot, E.A. (2007). *How to write clearly: Rules and exercises on English composition.* University Press: John Wilson and son. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22600/22600-h.htm.

Adrian,R., & Rosa, R.N. (2012). Using the syntax surgery in teaching a narrative text to junior high school students. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *1*(1), Serie B. September,109-118.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L.,& Razavieh (1979). *Introduction to research in education.* Pinehart and Winston.

Bachman, L. F, & Palmer, A. S. (2000). *Language testing in practice: Designing useful language tests*. Oxford University press.

Baltra, A. (1998). *Hispanic ESL students reading in English: The language problem.* Unpublished manuscript. California State University, Fresno.

Beers, K. (2003). *When kids can't read: What the teacher can do*. Retrieved fromhttp://www.Themainidea.net/tmi-pdfs/THE%20MAIN%20IDEA%20--%20When%20Kids%20Can%27%20Read%20--%20--%2011-09.pdf

Best ,J.W. & Kahan ,J .(2006). *Research in education* (10th ed.). Pearson Education, INC.

Damai, E.A. (2018). *The influence of using syntax surgery technique towards students' reading comprehension in descriptive text at the second semester of the tenth grade of SMK Gajah Bandar Lamping* [Un published thesis]. Raden Intan State Islamic University, Indonesia.

Elaf, S.A. & Manal, O.M. (2024). The correlation between syntactic awareness of EFL university teachers and students' writing performance. *Journal of Language Studies*. 8(1), 305-336. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25130/lang.8.1.14

Fareeq, G.A. & Sozdar, R.S. (2023).Investigation of the impact of technology on the written production of EFL learners in Iraqi Kurdistan. *Journal of Language Studies. VI* (4), 95-104

Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, *32*(4), 365–387.

Glass, G. and Stanley , J. C. (1970). *Statistical methods in educational psychology.* Prentice-Hall, Ince.

Graham, S., Harris, K. R., & Santangelo, T. (2012). Meta-analysis of writing instruction for students in the elementary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *104*(4), 879–896.

Graves, D. H. (1983). *Writing: Teachers & children at work*. Heinemann.

Herrell, A. (1998). *Strategies for supporting English language learners as readers.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Herrell, A.L., & Jordan, M.(2016). *50 strategies for teaching English language learners* (5ᵗʰ ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.

Hind A.K. & Raad K.M. (2022). Effect of syntax surgery strategy on achievement of secondary school student's. *Journal of STEPS for Humanities and Social Sciences,1*(3), 1-19. Available at: https://doi.org/10.55384/2790-4237.1065

Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge University Press.

Jesness, J. (2004). *Teaching English language learners K–12*. Corwin Press.

Noor, M.A. & Madeha ,S.S. (2024). The effect of word-association activities on EFL Iraqi pupils' writing. *Journal of Language Studies. 8* (12), 222-236

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge University Press.

Swain, M. (1993). The output hypothesis: Just speaking and writing aren't enough. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 50,* 158–164.

Appendix (A)

Writing Post-test

Q1/Look at the pictures of the competition.
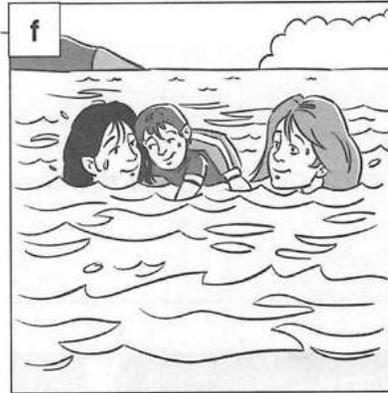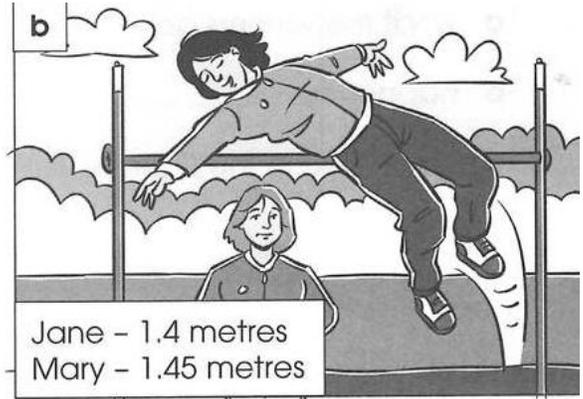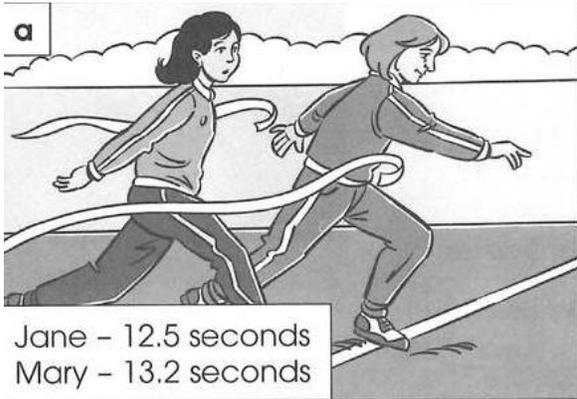
Now write the story (write five sentences beginning with picture c) (10 M)

First, the girls ran 100 metres. Mary lost. She was slower than Jane. Then, they did the high jump. Mary jumped higher than Mary. After the competition, …………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Q2/The following is a profile of an athlete, Cathy Freeman from Australia.

Name: Cathy Freeman

Sport: 400 metres

Why are they famous? She was the first Australian Aboriginal person to win an Olympic medal.

When did this happen? in 2000 at the Sydney Olympics

Why did you choose this person? She does a lot of work for her community and the Aboriginal people of Australia.

Now choose a famous athlete from Iraq. Find out more about them and fill in a profile in the same way as the previous one.(10 M)

Name: _____

Sport: _____

Why are they famous? _____

_____

When did this happen? _____

Why did you choose this person? _____

_____

Q3/Look at the following draft and find out 10 mistakes: spelling, wrong words, tense and punctuation. (10 M)

411,36,7

Karrada

Baghdad

4th March 2025

Dear Muna,

I was so sorry to hear about your accident. I hope you're leg does not hurt too much and that you will can leave hospital soon. We have an unusual week at school. First, we had a visits from a nurse called Janette. She gave us a talk about food. It was intresting and I really enjoy it. Now I can tell you which food is good for you and which is not so good. Then we had a visit from a netball coach. She was fantastic. We learning a lot from her. She showed us little things to make our game better. I will show them to you when your back at school.

All your friends miss you and send you their best wishes we will come and see you on Friday if you are still in hospital.

Love,

Sara

Q4/(20M)

Write about getting and sending messages and information. Follow the plan.

Introduction: *In the past, it was difficult to get and to send messages and information. Now it is easy.*

Paragraph 1

Topic sentence: *It is easy to find out what is happening in your country and in other countries.*

Make notes: How? What information?

Paragraph 2

Topic sentence: *It is also easy to get special information, for example, about a famous person.*

Make notes: Where?

Paragraph 3

Topic sentence: *Most people like to know what their friends are doing, even if they live in another country.*

Make notes: How can they do this?