

Analysis of Errors in Paragraph Writing in English by Second Year Geography & History Students at University of Baghdad

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1.Introduction

This study focuses on the writing skill which is a social act .Students need to express themselves in writing, but students of History and Geography departments are poor in writing. This study aims at identifying and classifying the errors committed by the students, and then giving remedies.

Writing can be considered as a channel or as a goal of language learning. Students learn to write in a foreign language. Writing as a goal basically focuses on the development of writing skills to fulfill such purposes as note-taking, summarizing, narrating, reporting and replying required for various real-life situation (Mechalakelli,2007)

Students at Departments of Geography and History study English as a part of their syllabus requirement in the College of Education for Women. The researcher realizes that it is important to improve students' skills in writing because it is an important tool to their profession and for further education in the future. Therefore, this study is an attempt to evaluate the writing skills of the second class evening students (History and Geography)Departments.

The students are asked to write a paragraph on topics based on their reading passages, chosen from their prescribed textbooks. They had been trained to construct a well- organized paragraph in their preparatory schools for three years until their graduation. Hence, the study attempts to find the students' errors in their writing in English.

Writing as a Language Skill

Writing is an essential skill in our everyday lives and that makes it really an important aspect of foreign language teaching. The writing skill is important because it is a good way to reinforce what students have learned and enrich them with new vocabulary in written form.

Al-Mutawa & Kailani (1989:129) have stated that learning and training to write gradually and systematically is a process which begins with simple copying and ends with free expression. It must be under the guidance of the teacher through several stages of writing experience.

Teaching writing is different from teaching other language skills, "it is different from understanding and speaking in being concerned with written symbols while understanding and speaking are concerned with the spoken language .Writing is related to reading because the two skills are concerned with written symbols" (Al-Hamash& Abdul-Rahim,1977:92).

The teaching of writing, like the teaching of reading, should take more than 10% of the class time. When the pupils control all the basic necessities of understanding and speaking , it is possible to improve their ability in writing the

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foreign language; they need a lot of practice in order to develop the writing skill(Ibid :93).

Holdston (1988 as cited in Michalakelli ,2007), states that the development of student's writing skills could be defined as "the creation of original text using the individual's intellectual and linguistic resources, rather than copying someone else's text, using a prepared list of words to create sentences or stories, filling in the blanks, or practicing handwriting".

Students are given the opportunity to write any information and ideas they know related to the topic of the text(Swan,1980:72). In order to give the students the opportunity to write about what they have previously read , they can be activate their memory and their experiences of text through the exposure to similar texts (Cabral,2004:4).

The teaching of writing skills is more difficult than the teaching of other skills because the effect of the first language system is different in writing . Allen & Corder (1974:177) state that in ESL "writing is the most difficult of the language abilities to acquire".

To improve EFL students' writing skills , they need to attain correctness and accuracy in grammar, vocabulary ,spelling ,punctuation, arrangement of sentence structures, linkage of information across sentences ,capitalization, putting or omitting the comma ,etc. (TEFL Jobs Abroad,2001).

The researcher realizes that it is important to improve students' skills in writing standard paragraphs because it is an important tool in their profession and for their further education .

Paulston (1976:181) states that when the students reproduce or understand writing they must learn how to:

- 1.identify the main ideas of the text ,and supporting details ;
- 2.recognize the rhetorical devices that typically go with different types and methods of development of ideas in writing, and
- 3.recognize those structural patterns which are typical of specific types of writing.

Lafene cited in paulston (1976:180) lists different types of writing that the students have to be familiar with as the following:

- 1. Explanation and analysis type**
- 2.Argumentation**
- 3.Description and summary**
- 4.Narration .**

In this research the two kinds of text narrative and descriptive are used in the History Department "Narration". The students are asked to write a paragraph in English about the history of (Roman). On the other hand, the Geography Department students deal with the type number (3), Description and summary. The students are asked to write a paragraph in English about subjects that are selected from their textbook. The researcher selects a passage entitled (A Cave) from their prescribed textbook and for these two texts the researcher adopts an exam in order to achieve the aims of the study.

1-1 The Statement of the Problem

It has been noticed by the researcher throughout her six years of teaching in the two departments, History and Geography, that students do not have the ability to summarize the assigned passage(s) given by the same instructor. Hence; she felt that an assessment of their weaknesses in the writing skill is needed. Iraqi students learn

English for several years, and they are still weak in English, especially in their writing skills. They still seem to commit errors in all aspects of language.

Errors in writing such as tenses, prepositions and weak vocabulary are the most common and frequent type of errors that are committed by learners. The learners usually face difficulties in learning the grammatical aspects of the Target Language (Henceforth TL), such as in subject-verb agreement, the use of preposition , articles and the use of correct tense (Daruse, 2009:486).

Such errors can be seen clearly in the learners' written performance. The areas that the students are weak in are vocabulary, inappropriate use of grammar in sentences, etc. "Teachers who analyze and treat errors effectively are better equipped to help their students become more aware of their errors". (Safiah as cited in Darus, 2009:486).

1.2 The Aims of the Study:

This study aims at answering the following questions:

1. What are the frequent types of errors committed in paragraph writing by 2nd year evening class students at Baghdad University?
2. Are there differences between Geography & History students?

1.3 The Procedures of the Study:

In this study the following procedures are followed:

1. Selecting a sample of learners drawn from the second evening class of the History & Geography Depts. in the College of Education for Women at Baghdad University.
2. Constructing a test, which aims at classifying the kinds of errors.
3. Administering the test after exposing it to a jury.
4. Analyzing the data of the test, drawing conclusions and formulating recommendations.

1.4 The Value of the Study:

It is hoped that this study is valuable for:

- The student's writing difficulties in order to identify and understand how to develop their writing skill.
- The teachers in order to generate and develop the methods of teaching writing skill that are followed by the Iraqi teachers.

1.5 The Hypothesis of the Study:

The null hypothesis of the study states that there are no statistical differences in committing errors in writing a paragraph in English by 2nd year evening students History & Geography Departments/ College of Education for Women at Baghdad University.

1.6 Limits of The Study:

The present study is limited to the following:

- 1- The 2nd evening class students of Geography and History Department in the College of Education for Women, Baghdad University .
- 2- The academic year (2009-2010).

1.7 Definitions of Basic Terms:

1.7.1 Writing Skill:

It is defined by Langan (2001:13), as the "process of discovery involving a series of steps and those steps are very often a zigzag journey." Writers do not discover just what they want to write about until they explore their thoughts in writing.

Arapoff (1979:33) states that "writing is much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech; it is, most importantly, a purposeful selection and organization of experience; i.e. thoughts-facts, opinions, or ideas".

1.7.2 Paragraph:

"A paragraph is a short paper of around 150-200 words. It usually consists of an opening point called a topic sentence followed by a series of sentences which support that point." (Langan, 2001:5).

Al- Hamash & Younis (1985:175) state that "a paragraph is a group of sentences concerned with one idea.

OWL (2009: 40 as cited in Ali ,2010:454) clarifies a paragraph as" a group of closely related sentences which deal with and develop one idea."

1.7.3 Errors

It is An act, assertion, or belief that:

1. An act that does not achieve its intended goal, or a statement that contains a mistake.
2. Unintentionally deviates from what is correct, right, or true.
3. The condition of having incorrect or false knowledge.

(Free online Dictionary, 2010)

"Second language learning is a process that is clearly not unlike first language learning in its trial -and- error nature. Learners make mistakes in the process of acquisition, and that process will be impeded if they do not commit errors and then benefit from various forms of feedback on those errors" (Brown,2007(a):257).

2- Literature Review

2.1 Error Analysis

The field of Error Analysis henceforth(EA) in Second Language Acquisition henceforth (SLA) was established in 1970 by Corder and his colleagues. They are state that (EA) that the learners produced errors by misunderstanding the rules of the new language. Analyzing errors made by language learners systematically makes it possible for the teacher or researcher to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching Corder(1967 as cited in Darus, 2009:487).

The investigation of errors can serve two purposes, diagnostic (to in-point the problem) and prognostic (to make plans to solve a problem). It is diagnostic because it can tell us the learner's grasp of a language at any given point during the learning process. It is also prognostic because it can tell the teacher to modify learning materials to meet the learners' problems (Ibid.).

Reasons (1987 as cited in Yazdani ,1988:198) argues that the human errors originate in cognitive mechanisms which are very powerful, and that process must be designed to satisfy the validity of the power of these mechanisms. He states that collaboration between artificial intelligence, and cognitive psychology reach the goal to the human performance.

EA research has limitations of providing only a partial picture of learner language; and having a substantive nature in that it does not take into account avoidance strategy in (SLA), since EA only investigates what learners do; e.g. learners who avoided the sentence structures which they found difficult due to the differences between their native language and FL (Brown, 1994 & Ellis 1996 as cited in Daruse 2009:260).

Richards (1974:80) was -- a researcher of EA; he argues that many of the learners' errors happen due to the strategies that they use in language acquisition, especially their L2.

2.2 Source of Errors

The procedures of error analysis are used to identify errors in second language learner production data. The analysis of learners' errors determine the source of error to explain why certain errors are made and how the learner's cognitive and affective processes relate to the linguistic system and to formulate and understand the process of second language acquisition, like interlanguage transfer (Brown, 2007(a):263).

2.3 Types of Errors

The errors are those in receptive and expressive errors... "errors in comprehension will frequently pass unobserved .We can test comprehension in general terms, but it is very difficult to assign the cause of failures of comprehension to an adequate knowledge" (Allen & Corder,1974:124 - 25).

It is presumed that the second language learner will demonstrate such lapses, slips and mistakes of performance arising from an imperfect competence in the target language (Ibid:122).

The most common errors that can be made and identified are found in addition, omission, a substitution, and ordering (Brown (a), 2007:262-263).

"in order to analyze learner language in an appropriate perspective , it is crucial to make a distinction between mistakes and errors , technically two very different phenomena ... mistakes must be carefully distinguished from errors of a second language learner , idiosyncrasies in the language of the learner that are direct manifestations of a system within which a learner is operating at the time". (ibid:257-258)

2.4 Writing- Reading Relationships

Sattayatham & Ratanapinyowong(2008:20-21), explain that reading text that are written by native speakers enrich the students with a wide vision and cultural aspects. They state that the "ability to the language learners to express themselves extensively in their own words can be obtained from what they read and their personal experience".

Writing is one of the three activities that are related to brainstorming activities ,it is a way to activate students' background knowledge and increase their motivation to read. Brainstorming is a technique that requires students to express orally or in writing whatever they know about the topic of the reading text before they get to it in relaxed atmosphere. It can be practiced via different ways such as questioning , vocabulary prediction , writing , etc. AL- Jbouri (2003:41 as cited in Maurice ,1979:335).

2.5 Previous Studies

2.5.1 Ahmed,1981

"Error Analysis in the Written English of the Students of Science "

The purpose of this study was to study , classify , describe , and explain the causes for the most common errors found in the English writing of science students. In this study the errors have been classified into 14 categories , such as spelling errors, punctuation , noun groups, prepositions the use of adjectives ,and some other errors. The author of this study collected 800 written scripts of the first year students of the College of Science, University of Mousel .The students of this college were asked to write in English essays of no less than 200 words. A topic was given to the students of each department related to their field of specialization. Analysis of all types of errors has revealed that the number of errors made by the students in all types is 20352. After analyzing the data of this study , it has been found that errors in the use of vowels are more numerous than any other spelling errors .This type of errors constitutes (16.342%)of the total number of spelling error . The second type of error has been called consonantal errors , which forms (3.704%)of the total number of spelling errors.

2.5.2 Al-Azzawi,1998

"Evaluating EFL Iraqi College Students in Writing Composition with Instructional Implications "

The purpose of this study is to investigate empirically the difficulty manifested by EFL Iraqi College students in the various skills of writing and examined the students' ability in the use of certain skills of writing in EFL in contrast with Arabic the students' native language . The population of this study are all the students of the English Department, college of Education/ Ibin Rushed for the academic year 1997-1998 they are about 660 male and female . The findings of the study reveal the following:

- 1-There are common errors in relation to most of the skills of writing which have no equivalents or counterparts in Arabic.
- 2- Analysis of variance of students' percentages of errors of the four stages reveal significant differences among them, because the calculated value which is 1,488,is significantly less than that of the theoretical value, which is 8.954 this indicates that the students' percentage of errors is not different across the four stages. The researcher recommends that these skills should be taught starting from the early stages of intermediate and secondary school which will help to improve their background knowledge in the skills which have no equivalents or counterparts in Arabic.

The results of the above study are concerned with determining the effectiveness of certain methods or techniques in teaching the various skills of writing to help the students minimize their error .

3- The Procedures

The aim of this chapter is to report on the experimental work that has been carried out for the purpose of investigating and classifying the difficulties faced by the Iraqi EFL College students in writing English paragraph. These difficulties are to be identified , classified and analyzed . Thus a test is constructed to achieve the aim of the present study. This chapter includes the sample selection procedures , the construction of the test , its validity , reliability , administration and the statistical means used in this research.

3.1 The Population and Sample

To achieve the purpose of the study , all the evening class students of the Geography and History departments in the College of Education for Women at Baghdad University (2009-2010) are the population of the study . This means that the original population of the study included 200 female students of Geography and History Departments. Fifty students who were repeaters, i.e.; failed a year or more were excluded . Since the study deals only with the students' evening class students, the remainder was 150 who constituted the target population from which 30 students were randomly assigned for the purpose of the pilot study for the purpose of measuring the reliability of the test . The remainder number of the population was 120 females .

Table (1)
The population and the Sample of the Study

History Department			Geography Department		
Section B	Section A	Total number	Section B	Section A	Total number
30	30	(60) students	30	30	(60) student

3.2 Test Construction

The test aims at identifying and classifying the difficulties faced by the students of History and Geography Depts. in writing correct English paragraph

In order to construct a test , the first and the most important step is that the researcher has to choose and select the test contents. In order to elicit the students' errors , a test which consists of 5 Wh –questions to each one (Geography& History) departments .The test was adopted for the students from their textbook and they were asked to read two passages that the questions are related to.

In the adopted test the researcher chose one of these two passages and asked the students to write one paragraph .The test contains a note for the students to supply punctuation marks where they are needed .Thus the materials of the test are limited to the course content . The test was, then, given to a jury who agreed on its validity before administration.

The following is the time of the administration of the test and the materials that are given to each department students :

1-History Department :The materials of the course are about (History of Romans). This kind of paragraph is according to the(Narrative text)because it deals with the story of the Romans, the beginning the of the empire , their life ,(politic& economic),the end of the Romans.

2- Geography Department: The materials are about (Rivers , Caves , Islands, Deserts). this kind of paragraph is according to the(Descriptive text). Because it deals with description of one geographical subjects,i.e. caves (what is a cave , how it is formed,...etc) .

3.3 Test Validity

It is the most important consideration in constructions and use of all types of test Al- Mutawa & Kailani (1989:146), state “a valid test measures what it ought to be

testing”, also , validity is the degree to which a test measures what it claims to measure.

Allen & Corder (1974:329) state that validity is "assessed by comparing the outcome of the test with some independent estimate of the learner's general standard". The researcher has constructed a paragraph test assuming that it will achieve the aim of this work as mentioned in(1.1).For the purpose of the present study .

In order to ascertain face validity of the test of this study, the items of the test have been submitted to a jury of experts** in the English Department and the Psychology and Education Department, at the College of Education for Women , University of Baghdad .The percentage of agreement among the jury is 100%. The jury confirmed that the test is designed to measure what it is supposed to measure .

3.4The Pilot Study

After the researcher secured the validity of the test , she applied it to a pilot sample to determine the appropriateness of items . Thirty students were chosen randomly for the purpose of conducting pilot-testing . From the evening class students from the College of Education for Women:15 students were from evening class Geography Department , and 15 from History Department. The pilot-study was carried out on 10th of March in 2010 . The researcher explained the aim of the study and the way followed to answer the items of the test . In addition to that , she attempted to answer some questions raised by the students. It appeared that the test and its subject were clear.

3.5 Test Reliability

Reliability is a necessary characteristic of any good test . Lado (1961:196)believes that “a test reliable if the scores obtained with it are steady”. Reliability means the consistency with which a set of a test scores measure whatever they do measure(Allen&Corder,1974:329).

To achieve this purpose,30 female students were selected randomly and were tested by the topics of the study test. After scoring the test papers of the sample . The judgment coefficient was found to be 90.339 for descriptive subject (Geography Department) and 88.650 for narrative subject (History Department) which are considered high positive correlation .

3.6 The Scoring Scheme of The Test

The time allotted for answering is forty five minutes for each Department .Any violation of the direction was considered an error or failed to use the correct way of writing or failed to use any thing which is related to the test paper ,it was considered an error. It was also when a student’s applied an unnecessary word considered a mistake.

3.7 Test Administration

The test was applied to the whole subjects of the study 120 students in four 2nd – year classes in the two Departments in College of Education for Women on the

* The Names of Experts

- 1- Prof. Nejat _AL _Joubori
- 2-Asst. Prof.Shatha AL – Saadi
- 3- Asst. Prof.Layla Yosif .
- 4- D.Rathea Muttar Al- Khaffaji
- 5-Ins .Ennam najem jaber

13th and 15th, April, 2010. The test has been given to the evening second – year students of (History & Geography) Departments under the same conditions. Time was limited to (45) minutes to answer the test completely to each Department. Answer sheets were scored according to the analytic method. The following is the date of the test according to each department:-

1-History Dept. : The test has been given to the evening 2nd class students for the two sections (A) and (B) in the same time, on 13th of April / 2010 after one month of pilot study. The researcher asked the students to study two passages, the test is constructed according to one of them. They started to answer five questions and related these answers in one paragraph.

2- Geography Department: The test has been given to the 2nd class students for the two sections (A) and (B), at the same time, on 15th of April (2010) after one month of pilot study. The researcher asked the students to study two passages, the test is constructed according to one of them. They started to answer the five questions and related these answers in one paragraph.

3.8 Statistical Means:

In order to achieve the aims of the study to establish validity and reliability and to analyze the final results of this study, the following statistical methods have been adopted and used:-

1- The Percentage for all types of errors committed by the students :

$$\text{amount/total} \times 100 = \% \text{ percentage}$$

(Mehrens and Lemann, 1984:192)

2- The t-formula to measure the differences between the ratios of percentage: The formula is for calculating the differences between the percentages.

$$t = \frac{p1 - p2}{\sqrt{KB \left(\frac{1}{n1} + \frac{1}{n2} \right)}}$$

(Wikipedia, 2010)

P1=The percentage of the Geography dept., P2=The percentage of the History dept.

$$B = \frac{N1P1 + N2P2}{N1 + N2}$$

$$K = 100 - B$$

N1 = The first group (Geography Department).

N2=The second group (History Department).

4-Analysis of Data

4.1 Introduction

This section draws a classification of difficulties based on the findings of the present study as follows: Identifying and classifying the difficulties faced by the Iraqi EFL college students in writing English paragraphs. Statistical analysis tools are used to analyze the data of the study. The t-formula of differences between ratios is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the percentage of History and Geography Departments.

In order to fulfill the purpose of the study, the researcher depends on error analysis since the aim of error analysis is to describe and explain errors committed by the

learners of FL while writing the language . The analysis reveals for the teacher the areas of difficulties where the learners need more careful explanation and guidance.

4.2 Classification of Difficulties

The difficulties in the two Departments have been classified as follows :-

1-Grammatical Difficulties

- 1-Misuse of tense
- 2-Misuse of singular /Plural form
- 3-Subject –verb agreement
- 4-Article
- 5-Prepositions
- 6-Word order

2- Mechanical Difficulties

A-Punctuation

- 1-Misuse of capitals
- 2-Omission of commas
- 3-missing space

B-Spelling

- 1-Wrong spelling
- a-Addition of the letter (e)at the end of the word

3-Lexical Difficulties

- 2-Misuse of translation from Arabic to English
- 3-Missing word
- 5-Misused word
- 6-Word choice

The following tables explain the errors in each Dept., according to the above classification and the frequency of each item with its percentage.

Table (1)
Analysis of errors(History Department)

Type of Error		Errors freq.	%
Grammatical Difficulties			
1	Misuse of tense	175	7.8
2	Misuse of singular/plural form	335	14.9
3	Subject-verb agreement	111	4.9
4	Articles	106	4.7
5	prepositions	166	7.4
6	Word order	176	7.8
Mechanical Difficulties/ Punctuation			
7	Misuse of capitals	116	5.2
8	Omission of commas	103	4.6
Mechanical Difficulties/ Spelling			
9	Wrong spelling	335	14.9
10	Addition of the letter(e) at the end of the word	123	5.5
11	Missing space	141	6.3
Lexical Difficulties			
12	Missing translation from native to foreign (Arabic –English)	70	3.1
13	Missing word	85	3.8
14	Misused word	72	3.2
15	Word choice	132	5.8
Total		2246	100%

Table (2) Analysis of errors(Geography Department)

Type of Error		Errors freq.	(%)
Grammatical Difficulties			
1	Misuse of tense	125	8.3
2	Misuse of singular/plural form	190	12.6
3	Subject-verb agreement	69	4.6
4	Articles	84	5.6
5	Prepositions	94	6.2
6	Word order	73	4.8
Mechanical Difficulties/ Punctuation			
7	Misuse of capitals	94	6.2
8	Omission of commas	76	5.0
Mechanical Difficulties/ Spelling			
9	Wrong spelling	265	17.5
10	Addition of the letter(e) at the end of the word	69	4.6
11	Missing space	73	4.8
Lexical Difficulties			
12	Missing translation from native to foreign (Arabic – English)	78	5.2
13	Missing word	73	4.8
14	Misused word	82	5.4
15	Word choice	65	4.3
Total		1510	100 %

Table(3)
The Frequency of Errors According to The Higher Degrees of Errors
For the two Departments

Criteria Analysis		Level of Errors				
		Geography Dept.		History Dept.	Total	%
		Number of errors	of			
1	Wrong spelling	265	335	600	16.0	
2	Misuse of singular/plural form	190	335	525	14.0	
3	Misuse of tense	125	175	300	8.0	
4	Misuse of prepositions	94	166	260	6.9	
5	Misuse of capitals	94	116	210	5.6	
6	Misuse of articles	84	106	190	5.1	
7	Subject-verb agreement errors	69	111	180	4.8	
8	Word order	73	176	249	6.6	
9	Omission of commas	76	103	179	4.8	
10	Missing word	73	85	158	4.2	
11	Misused word	82	72	154	4.1	
12	Misuse of translation from Arabic to English	78	70	148	3.9	
13	Missing space	73	141	214	5.7	
14	Word choice	65	132	197	5.2	
15	Addition of the letter (e)at the end of the world	69	123	192	5.1	
Total		1510	2246	3756	100%	

Table(4)
The Differences of the percentage of the errors in two Departments

Level of Significance	t- Value			Total	Errors	No. Subjects	Groups
	t-Distribution	Calculated Value	%				
0.05	1.96	0.235	59.8	3756	2246	60	History dept.
			40.2		1510	60	Geography dept.
			100%		3345	120	total

4.3 Comparison of the History Dep. and Geography Dep.

At the end of the paper 's students analysis ,it is emerged from the statistical analysis using the percentages:

The percentage of errors of students in the Department of History is **59.8%**

The percentage of errors of students in the Department of Geographical is 40.2%

It is clear that the percentage of student's errors in the Department of History are the highest for the students in Geography Department.

When the test significance of the differences between the ratios found that the difference is a function where the calculated value 0.235 is less than the value indexed 1.96 in the degree of freedom 118 at the level of significance . This proves that the Geography Dept. is equivalent with the History Dept. According to the data that reveals in Table (4) , the null hypothesis is not refuted, because there are no statistically differences between the two Departments. So that the null hypothesis is accepted ,which state that there are no statistically significant differences between the Geography and History Depts.student's errors in writing english paragraph.

4.3.1 Grammatical Difficulties

A- Misuse of tense

Analysis of data revealed that the total number of errors is the choice of English tense amount to **(600)**with percentage**(16.0)** . A large number of the students made errors in this area . The data showed that:

- The students of the(Geography Department) used the past tense or present continuous of the English verb instead of the simple present tense in writing a (Descriptive Paragraph).

-The students in the History department used the simple present tense instead of the past tense in writing a (Narrative Paragraph) .

The students' knowledge of the proper use of the choice of the English tense is very limited. It revealed that the students failed to choose the correct tense in correct position. The following sentences are some examples of the misuse of English tense:

1-The Caves is formed in the surface... Geography Dept.

2-TheRoman empire start about History Dept.

B- Subject –verb agreement

The total errors of the two Departments are **(180)** with percentage **(4.8)**, students have always been taught to use a verb , which should agree with its subject . In spite of that , many errors were made in this area , i.e., they use a plural verb with singular subject and vice-versa:

1-The Caves is.

2-The Roman people was

C- Articles

The total errors are (190) with percentage(5.1); this is due to the interference of their native language (Arabic). Some of these errors are:

- 1-The types of cave the limestone one of the.
- 2-The made people obey to the Roman.

D - Prepositions

The total errors in the two departments are (260), with percentage (8.0).

"The roman come from name called Rumules he was in Italia just a such houses had poorer people in difference in the people to the food and eat to loo and the have man .

"In the affrica the cave cango are mor than 3 kilometer long and in antricta is found the ice caves types most.....".

4.3.2 Mechanical Difficulties**Punctuation A-**

The analysis of the students' writing reveals that they have misused of capitals and they omitted the commas. The total errors in the two departments are: (389)

- **Misuse of capitals (210) with percentage (5.6)**
- **Omission of commas (179)======(4.8).**

Following are some examples of the errors made in the choice of punctuation marks:-

1-Without paying attention to the title of the paragraph which is supposed to be in the middle of the paper with quotation marks,i.e :

- Without putting the title ... A
 1. (A Cave) , Cave , The Cave, etc.... (Geography Dept)
 2. (The Romans) , the story of the roman, (History Dept)

B-Starting their sentences with small letters as well as using wrongly capitalized words in the middle of sentences ,i.e. :

1- we know about the roman history, the Roman Empire sTarT The Two Thouznd ...History Dept.(1-

2- a Cave is a hollow space..., . the Cave form Limeston ...Geography Dept. 2-

C-Some students inserted commas where they were not needed and sometimes they omitted commas where they were needed.

B - Spelling

The total number of error of incorrect spelling amount to (600) with percentage (16.0) when examining these errors, it was noticed that the errors in spelling were more than other errors; it is the highest degree of errors committed by the two dept(s) .

The following are examples of these errors according to Geography & History Dept.(s) respectively.

For example the following:

A cave is a hollowe spece in the Erth's cruct . other cave bigger cave are killow maters long ""

"The cantries the Roman EmpireThe Roman start about two thousthin years ago , and the contryes that the Roman Empire councered are Empire , most of the Eest middle and afreca..."

-Missing space

The total errors are (214) and percentage (5.7) .They are as follows :-

-"theRomancamefrom Romeand starttwotousandyearsandyearsago....."

-ACave is a hollowspace in thesomecaves arenaturalunlbebor..."

4.3.Lexical Difficulties

-Misuse translation from Arabic to English.

According to the theory of language testing, the students will tend to transfer their vocabulary habits to the foreign language . The students will transfer meanings ,forms and thus distribution of the lexical units of their native language. "There is a sort of facilitation of learning and the units will not constitute learning problem . When these elements will operate in FL learning ,there will be interference from the native language and the students have a learning problem to overcome"(Lado,1961:186).

In the analysis of the student's papers writing of the two Depts. amount to (148) with percentage (3.9) as the following examples:

-this many caves is a limestone caves and seashore made by sea crashing against ..."

-Eating and drinking betweenRich and poor because the rich man abut same think and special party ..."

- Misuse of words

The students make errors in the choice of the suitable word ,i.e. words or phrases that add nothing to the meaning (Al-Hassan,2004:30).The total errors are (154) with percentage (4.1).

-"The cave caves eats in rain from conntinets from the cave a hollow types the Earth's caure the commintioni and coution."

-The Roman start about two thousthin years ago , and the contries that theRoman Empire councered are Empire , most of the Eest middle and afreca, the roman change the lives the people they"

5 . Conclusions , Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research.

5.1 Conclusions

As a result of analyzing the subjects' paper it result that the students have made different errors and they reveal that the teacher should concentrate on these items when teaching paragraph writing although they have been taken from the previous period of studying English as a foreign language and before they enter to the college. The researcher has arrived at the following:

1-It has been found out that the student have got a poor mastering of a number of aspects in writing a paragraph in English.

2- The production skills of writing is not real progression taking place in writing a paragraph in English . The teachers should give more training for their students in writing skill .

5.2 Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions which the researcher has arrived at , she would like to put forward the following suggestions and recommendations:

1- Writing a paragraph provides an art of self-expression. They need to provide an opportunity to write in a good way .

2-In order to improve EFL Iraqi College students in paragraph writing and make them overcome the difficulties which may affect their progression to produce correct written texts , the researcher suggests the following recommendations :

a-Encouraging college students to report events in speech , write, and describe(History &Geography respectively) since the ability to report events in both speech and write is an important productive skill . And the teaching of narrative and descriptive text occupy a significant place in teaching English as a FL.

b-EFL students should be taught how to write in English any various type of text within their field of study.

5.3 Suggestions or Further Research

In the light of the results of the present study , the following topics are suggested for further studies:

1 - A study is needed to examine the efficiency of a program developed for teaching paragraph writing in the first and second grades of college level , especially for the students of the non- departmental (History ,Geography and other depts.)

2-A contrastive study of the English and Arabic language may be carried out to identify the difficulties encountered by college students and help the students to avoid them.

3-A similar study can be conducted for investigating English words with spelling difficulties in order to avoid the difficulties in writing: Geographical & Historical terms and words.

4-A contrastive study can be conducted investigate the mastery of the use of correct grammar in both disconnected sentences and connected in one paragraph.

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تحليل الأخطاء في كتابة القطعة الإنشائية باللغة الانكليزية لطالبات المرحلة الثانية لقسمي التاريخ والجغرافية في جامعة بغداد

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ملخص البحث:

تحاول الدراسة الحالية تحليل الأخطاء التي قامت بها طالبات المرحلة الثانية لقسمي التاريخ والجغرافية /الدراسة المسائية في كتابة الفقرة الإنشائية باللغة الانكليزية ضمن منهاج تدريسهم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية/وحسب تدريس المهارات وضمن تدريس مهارة الكتابة. ولهذه الدراسة هدفان متصلان:

- ١- توضيح طبيعة الأخطاء التي ظهرت من تحليل (١٢٠) طالبة جامعية لقسمي التاريخ والجغرافية/ الدراسة المسائية/ كلية التربية للبنات / جامعة بغداد.
- ٢- توضيح النسبة المئوية للأخطاء التي قامت بها المجموعتين أعلاه ومعرفة مستوى الفروقات في ارتكاب الأخطاء.

حيث قامت الباحثة بتحليل أوراق الامتحان الخاصة ب الطالبات ،والتي تقدمت إليهم بطلب كتابة فقرة في اللغة الإنكليزية من (١٠٠) كلمة وتم تقديم الموضوع للطالبات لكل قسم وحسب المادة التي تم دراستها ضمن منهاج الكورس الدراسي وحسب كل قسم وفقا لدراسة النصوص حسب تخصصهم واتي تم اختيارها من ضمن سلسلة الكتب التالية :

- ١- قسم التاريخ وعنوان الكتاب هو "الروح" والكاتب "بول اسلي، ١٩٩٢" حيث تم اعتماد هذا الكتاب كمنهاج لتدريس النصوص التاريخية والتي تم إجراء اختبار كتابة الفقرة باللغة الانكليزية منه .
- ٢- قسم الجغرافية و عنوان الكتاب هو "العالم والتغيير" والكاتب "جون وورثي، ١٩٩٢" والمواضيع التي تم تدريسها ضمن الكورس الدراسي (الأنهار، المدن،،الكهف،الجزر والصحارى) ومن ضمن هذه المواضيع تم اختيار موضوع الكهف.

ومن خلال هذا الإجراء تم التوصل إلى الاستنتاجات والاقتراحات استنادا إلى نتيجة التحليل والوصف لهذه الأخطاء .

ومن تصنيف الأخطاء حسب الدراسة الحالية إلى ثلاثة أنواع من الصعوبات:

- ١-الصعوبات النحوية
- ٢- الصعوبات الميكانيكية/علامات الترقيم
- ٣-صعوبات معجمية