



## INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF TEACHER IN IMPROVING SUDANESE SCHOOLS YOUNG LEARNERS' WRITING SKILLS

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims at investigating the role of teacher in improving Sudanese schools young learners' writing skills. The researchers have adopted the descriptive analytical method. Diagnostic test has been used for collecting relevant data to the study. The study sample composed of (60) younger learners at secondary Schools, which were randomly selected. The results revealed that there are statistically significant differences among students. Exercises in writing in spine serious are not enough to enable students master the basic writing style. Moreover, young learners do not know how to form a word by using prefixes and suffixes as morphological derivation. The study has recommended that young learners should be trained in how to construct their sentences syntactically. Furthermore, Young learners should be trained in to avoid a lot of spelling mistakes when they construct sentences.

**Keywords:** Writing, Error, Spelling Errors, Syntactic Errors, Semantic Errors

### Introduction

Writing is defined as knowledge as well as skill which we need in order to facilitate the conveying textual meaning for performing academic and profession tasks. Many writers believe that English writing skill is very essential for second English learners, while others believe that English writing skill is dying out. This study is aiming at highlighting the reasons go beyond the importance of English writing skill for second language learners. Firstly, teaching English writing skill for Sudanese school students. Secondly the importance of English writing skill as foundation for student's future careers to write various professional forms such as business documents including business reports, letters and emails. Moreover, in academic field, English writing skill is regarded as the most influential skills. In this study, the researcher discovers variety teaching English writing skill techniques that are important for second language researcher uses a scientific approach to help the student's good command achieve English language writing skill. The researcher also shows the key elements of writing ski1l. Such as punctuation, spelling and the correct grammar are essential.

### Aims and Scope of the Study

This study aims to investigate the role of teacher in developing Sudanese school young learners' writing skills. The scope of the study is limited to English language teachers in the Sudan. There are (60) third year students at secondary schools.

### Literature Review

**Definitions of Writing:** Traditionally, writing is considered to be one of the most un favorite fields of the study for many students if not all. Generally it has been noticed not only L2 learners feel hatred towards writing, but also on many occasions, even L1 professional writers too. (Cimcoz. 1999. P: 3).

When we write we use graphic symbols: these letters or combination of letters which relate to the sound we make when we speak. On one level, writing can be said to be the act of forming these symbols,



making marks on flat surface of some kind. These symbols have to be arranged according to certain conventions to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences (Byrne 1995: P: 100).

According to online Cambridge Dictionaries, writing is an activity of creating pieces of written work like stories, poems or articles. Also writing means the skill or activity of producing words on a surface.

#### **Role of the Teacher**

Patton (2002) states that English writing skill teachers should know the difficulties which may face their students in the process of teaching in order to assist them to achieve their goals.

It is true that non-native speakers are more likely to commit errors. English teachers are indeed facing the challenge of adopting and developing a wide range of methods to accomplish effective teaching of English writing.

This of course, is not an easy task. A lot of students in Sudan continue to fail to master the basis of the English writing even after long years of formal educations.

Teachers of English language feel satisfied to have students who speak and write English correctly. This has been the ambition of all EFL teachers.

Students in governmental or non-governmental schools in Sudan start learning English from primary schools and by the end of secondary schools, the students have spent more than eight years and that their vocabulary repertoire is expected to be massive, their knowledge of grammar rules and the mechanics of writing is satisfying, most of the students are still not able to write a correct paragraph using the basic structures of English language which they have learnt. However, why do students still find difficulties in English when their teachers do their best to help them to achieve good results?

Teachers of writing skill in Sudanese secondary schools difficulties in encouraging their students where they developed their English vocabulary to use it correctly in conveying various textual meaning. Translation is regarded as a serious problem that is facing teachers of writing skill in Sudanese school as most of the students translate the text ideas to their mother tongue.

Sudanese teachers are to find methods to activate in a meaningful way the passive knowledge the students possess in terms of writing skill. As well as to help the students become more proficient while working to eliminate some of their common errors. A better understanding of the [L1] influence in the process of EFL. Rivers (1968-p- 243) argues that any academic writers must meet four major conditions:

- A. The conventions of the language.
- B. He must learn to control the structure of the language so that what he writes is comprehensible to his reader.
- C. He must learn the graphic systems of foreign language.
- D. He must learn to select from among possible combinations of words and phrases those which will convey the nuances, he has in mind in the register which is most appropriate.

#### **Qualities of Good Writing**

Since writing is a matter of translating the sound of words into common graphic symbols, its subjects to the requirements of good qualities which include the following:-

- Accuracy
- Clarity
- Naturalness

Accuracy of writing means the use of correct style of symbols structure namely in terms of words formulation or morphological structure and syntax. If so, the written context or message will transmit the exact sound and meaning intended by the writer.



While clarity of writing means the use of the most clear ways of writing to convey the intended and exact meanings and ideas expressed by the speakers or writers as simple as possible to enable the ordinary recipient or reader to get those intended meanings and hence understand them.

Whereas, naturalness of writing context mainly cohesiveness and coherence of the written text, and it must follow the natural from the target language in order to enable the reader to get ideas from what he reads.

In addition to the above three qualities also there are many varied skills necessary for writing good prose these skills are:

- Language use: the ability to write correct and appropriate sentence.
- Mechanical skills: the ability to use correctly these conventions in written language, e.g. punctuation marks, spelling, etc.
- Treatment of content: the ability to think creatively, develop thoughts and excluding all relevant information.
- Stylistic skills: the ability to manipulate sentences, paragraph, and use language effectively.
- Judgment skills: the ability to write in an appropriate manner form a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information

(Pratt-Johnson,2008)

Successful candidates will have passed an examination designed to test ability to produce a selection of the following types of writing:

- Basic level: letters, postcards, diary entry and forms.
- Intermediate level: as basic level, plus guide and set of instructions.
- Advanced level: as intermediate level plus newspapers, report, and notes.

Also the candidates' performance will have met the following minimum criteria:

- Basic level: no confusing errors of grammar, vocabulary, a piece of writing legible and reading intelligible and able to produce simple un sophisticated sentences.
- Intermediate level: accurate grammar, vocabulary and spelling though possibly with some mistake which don't destroy communication, handwriting generally legible, clear expressions, appropriate usage, a fair range of language, able to link them and points coherently.
- Advanced level: extremely with high standard of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, easily legible handwriting, no obvious limitations on range of language able to use accuracy, ability to produce organized coherent writing and displaying considerable sophistication (Simic. 1994)

### **Learners' Problems of Writing in English**

Constructing grammatical acceptable sentence in a language for one who has not acquired or mastered writing skills often been a problem. Sudanese students are exempted from this (Yule 1998. P.2). (Quotes Michael Montaign) in these words "the greater part of this world's problems are due to questions of grammar" this is not far from the truth since English is being learned as a foreign language for specific needs such as business, diplomacy and academic purposes ... etc and that must be used with such accuracy and effectiveness that it can be easily understood by the native speakers. That is to say learners must have a certain standard approximating the native speaker's. in other words when learners fall far below this standard, they are said to be making errors.

#### **When Students Make Errors?**

- They make errors when they have problems with the chain of language (syntax).
- Errors contain certain valuable information on the strategies that people use to acquire a language.
- Avoidance of excessive errors in the best policy in any teaching program.



The problem with the chain of language or syntax are connected with what Hedge (2000) calls competence has been explained as that knowledge which enables the native speaker of language understand and produce the grammatical sentences of the language, and to accept or reject sentences produced by other as grammatical or ungrammatical using the internalized rules, and the term has been explained as the native speaker's actual production of grammatical sentences, for this reason the role of performance should be considered a long side that knowledge in the teaching process since competence is knowing what is grammatically correct and performance is what is actually occurs in practice. This concept illustrated in (Hubbard et al 2000. P. 143) as spoken and written texts.

### Errors

According to Brown, "errors concern a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter language competence of the learner" (1994 p- 205). The important idea need to be stated here, errors refer to structures only. Both Corder (1967, 1971) and reveal a criterion that helps us to do so. A mistake can be self-corrected, but errors cannot. Errors are "systematic" ie. Likely to happen regularly and not recognized by learners. Hence, only teachers or researchers would locate them, the learners would not. Norrish (1983) made a clear distinction between errors and mistakes. The writer stated errors are "systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong". Also the writer added that when a learner of English as a second or a foreign language makes an error systematically. It is because the learner has not learnt the correct form.

Norrish defined mistakes as "inconsistently deviation when a learner has been taught a certain correct form and the writer uses one from sometimes and another at the other times quite inconsistently, the inconsistent deviation is called mistake and it is in this light that the researcher has chosen to focus on students' errors not mistakes. An error however is considered more serious. In contrastive analysis, the theoretical base of which was behaviorism, errors were seen as "bad habits" that had been formed. The response way based on stimulus. It was assumed that interference of the mother tongue [L1] was responsible for the errors made during the transition period of learning the target language.

The researcher found out many errors committed by Arabic speaking students in essay writing.

The study will first provide information on errors in the writing of EFL secondary school students. Second describe the method of the study used in collecting the data third the results and discussions, Fourth conclusions and recommendation.

### Types of Errors

In this study the researcher concentrates on certain types of errors. These errors are spelling errors, Morphological errors, syntactic errors, semantic errors and miscellaneous errors.

### Spelling Errors

There are many types of errors such as:

Substitution eg S for C, Y for I (absence, arbitrariness)

Omission, eg single consonants for double, omission of vowel, consonants , consonants delays or anticipation of consonants e.g (Receive, prescriptive, recognize) Homophones, ie using words that sound the same but are spelt differently eg (your, /you're, their/they're, hear/here, illicit/licit, principle/principal, practice/practice, two/too/to). Other eg likely typographical errors or slip, Archaism. (Based on Wary, 1996-99, 100) The apostrophe ('s): spelling and grammar errors combine in the case of the apostrophe in English. Much confusion is caused because the usage of ('s) in every day contexts such as (shop signs) is changing students may not be familiar with rules governing the use of specific elements for example where the ('s) , (s) or (s') should be used.



### Syntactic Errors

Syntax is the combination of words into sentences. Syntax, of course depends on lexical categories (parts of speech). There are eight main parts of speech in grammar school. Linguistics takes a different approach to these categories and break down words into morphological and syntactic groups.

### Semantic Errors

Richard D. Moors (2011) argues that "Semantics relates to the meaning of words, sentences or programs" In common English we might usually say this sentences has a few grammatical errors, but the semantics are clear. E.g. "I getted the milk out of the fridge and putted them into me coffee." On the other hand, these sentences are grammatically fine but semantically ambiguous. Eg "Children make nutritious snacks", "Police shoot man with crossbow".

### Methodology of the Study

The researcher has drawn the sample for this study exclusively from third year students at secondary schools who responded to diagnostic test. A sample of (50) students was randomly selected for the test.

### Tools of the Study

The researcher has used diagnostic test as a tool to collect the information of this paper. Diagnostic test was given to the third year students at secondary schools whom were selected randomly.

The researcher has used the descriptive analytical and quantitative methods as well as diagnostic test as a tool in the collection of relevant data and information in pursuing this paper. Population of this study is drawn exclusively from third year students at secondary schools. The population is third year students at secondary schools. A sample of (60) students was randomly selected for the test.

### Results and Discussion

The researcher has used the diagnostic test as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed a test to investigate the hypothesis "Teachers can play great role to improve English writing skill for Sudanese school young learners". The tables below are going to illustrate what has been stated earlier.

### Students' Diagnostic Test

This item tries to elicit information from the students concerning their views about the Teachers who can play great role to improve English writing skill for Sudanese school young learners.

**Table 4.1: The frequency distribution of the answers according to the types of errors**

Types of errors	Wrong answers	Correct answers	Most answers
Syntactic error	40	20	Wrong
Semantic error	35	25	Wrong
Spelling error	33	27	Wrong
Miscellaneous error	45	15	Wrong
Morphological error	50	10	Wrong

**Table 4.2: the answers distribution of the student's test according to part (1)**

Syntactic error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong answers	40	66.7%
Correct answers	20	33.3%
Total	60	100%

Source: the researcher from applied study by using SPSS

The above table No (4.20 ) and figure No (4.16 ) illustrate the percentage and frequency of the answers of the study sample that concern with the Syntactic Errors and shows that most of the sample answers were wrong which are represented by the percentage (66.7%). This justifies that younger learners need to be trained and developed in how they can construct sentences in their correct forms.

**Table 4.3: The answers distribution of the student's test according to part (2)**

Semantic error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong answers	35	58.3%
Correct answers	25	41.7%
Total	60	100%

The above table No (4.21) and figure No (4.17) illustrate the percentage and frequency of the answers of the study sample that concerns with the Semantic Errors and shows that most of the sample answers were wrong which are represented by the percentage (58.3%). This justifies that younger learners need to be trained and developed in how they can choose the correct meaning of words.

**Table 4.4: The answers distribution of the student's test according to part (3)**

Spelling error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong answers	33	55%
Correct answers	27	45%
Total	60	100%

The above table No (4.22 ) and figure No (4.18 ) illustrate the percentage and frequency of the answers of the study sample that concern with the Spelling Errors and shows that most of the sample answers were wrong which are represented by the percentage (55%). This justifies that younger learners need to be trained and developed in how they can write spelling of words correctly.

**Table 4.5: The answers distribution of the student's test according to part (4)**

Miscellaneous error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong answers	45	75%
Correct answers	15	25%
Total	60	100%

The above table No (4.23) and figure No (4. 19) illustrate the percentage and frequency of the answers of the study sample that concern with the Miscellaneous Errors and shows that most of the sample answers were wrong which are represented by the percentage (75%). This justifies that younger learners need to be trained and developed in how they can make their finishing touches and lay out of writing.

**Table 4.6: The answers distribution of the student's test according to part (5)**

Morphological error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong answers	50	83.3%
Correct answers	10	16.7%
Total	60	100%

The above table No (4.24 ) and figure No (4.20 ) illustrate the percentage and frequency of the answers of the study sample that concern with the questions and shows that most of the sample answers were wrong which are represented by the percentage (83.3%). This justifies that younger learners need to be trained and developed in how they can generate words by using derivation in terms of prefixes and suffixes.

**Table 4.7: one sample t-TEST for the questions of the study**

Parts of the test	N	mean	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
part1	60	3.6	0.2	12.6	59	0.00
part 2	60	2.7	1.81	7.4	59	0.00
part 3	60	3.4	2.44	8.12	59	0.00
part 4	60	3.6	3.5	14	59	0.00
part 5	60	4.3	4.6	13	59	0.00
For all	30	6.33	4.03	15.50	59	0.00



The calculated value of t-TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (1) was (12.6) which is greater than the tabulated value of T-TEST at the degree of freedom (59) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05%) among the answers of the respondents

The calculated value of t-TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (1) was (7.4) which is greater than the tabulated value of t-TEST at the degree of freedom (59) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05%) among the answers of the respondents.

The calculated value of t-TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (3) was (8.12) which is greater than the tabulated value of t-TEST at the degree of freedom (59) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05%) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our third hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of t-TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (4) was (14) which is greater than the tabulated value of t-TEST at the degree of freedom (59) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05%) among the answers of the respondents

The calculated value of t-TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (5) was (13) which is greater than the tabulated value of t-TEST at the degree of freedom (59) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05%) among the answers of the respondents

According to the previous results the test proved that the hypothesis of the study is accepted. The data collected was analyzed in relation to the study hypothesis. The data was collected by diagnostic test which had been given to students who do not know why these took place.

Also analyzing the data collected from the diagnostic test which had been given to students exclusively drawn from Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages. The population is English language students at Sudan Universities. A sample of (60) students was randomly selected for the diagnostic test.

The researcher has used the diagnostic test as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed test to identify the role of teachers who can play great role to improve English writing skill for Sudanese school young learners. The marks obtained from the test for all participants were analyzed and compared statistically by using frequencies and percentages. The analysis showed that the highest percentage which is represented wrong answers is estimated by (80%) in contrast to the percentage of correct answer which is estimated by lesser than this one (20%). Accordingly, this justifies that there is statistical difference in terms of teachers' point of views that Teachers can play great role to improve English writing skill for Sudanese school young learners.

#### Report Discussion

The data collection was analyzed in relation to the hypotheses of study. The data was gathered by virtue of diagnostic test which had been administered third year students at secondary schools students. Having analyzed and compared the results with main hypotheses; the results have shown that there are negative attitudes among students towards writing skill for Sudanese secondary schools young learners.

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