

An-Najah National University
Faculty of Graduate Studies

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**Discoursal Elements in the Written English of
Seniors at An-Najah National University**

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Education in Methods of Teaching, Faculty
of Graduated Studies at An - Najah University, Nablus,
Palestine

August, 2003

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Dedication

To my mother who gave me a lot and received a little,
To the soul of my father ,
To my brother Basam who is behind bars,
To all my sisters and brothers
and to all those who taught me how to read and how to write.

Acknowledgement

The researcher will continue to be grateful for the help and encouragement of all those who contributed to this work.

I would like to include special and sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr. Suzan Arafat to whom I am deeply indebted for her precious suggestions and constant support. I am grateful for her guidance without which the present study would not have come to existence.

I wish to express my profound thanks to Dr. Fahim Aboudi, Dr. Fawaz Aqel, and Dr. Abdedlrahim Barham for their valuable and constructive comments, and for their fruitful remarks which were helpful to a great extent to accomplish this study.

I am also indebted to Dr. Nabeel Alawi, Dr. Insaf Al-Saleh, Dr. Fawaz Aqel and Mr Sameer Mahmoud who most graciously approved the primary criteria and modified it.

Great thanks go to the students who facilitated my study by giving me the needed essays to conduct the present study and the effort they exerted in writing the essays.

Special thanks are also owed to my friends, Kamal Badrasawy, Malek Nasrallah, who helped me in the data correction ,Sa'id Hamed for help in proof reading; Ismael Abu Ziadeh for help in statistical analysis.

I am most grateful to my mother, brothers and my sisters ,especially Soona , who helped me in special ways.

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Abstract

The present study attempted to investigate some discoursal elements in the seniors' writing at An-Najah National University. It aimed at answering the following questions:

1. Do the English seniors' at An-Najah National University apply the discoursal elements(Coherence, Thesis Statement, Organization and Order,and Wording)when writing essays in English?
2. Are there statistically significant differences due to gender at An-Najah University in the application of the discoursal elements, particularly: Coherence, Thesis Statement, Organization and Order, and Wording?
3. Are these elements equally problematic to students at An-Najah University ,or do
Some elements pose more difficulties than others?

The population of the study consisted of all English seniors at An-Najah National University (43 students) in the academic year 2001-2002.The students were attending an advanced English course.

The researcher used means, percentages and standard deviations in order to answer the above -mentioned questions at ($\alpha=0, 05$) level of significance.

The findings of the study were:

1. English majors at An-Najah National University were able to apply the thesis statement and wording in a good way. However, they failed to apply organization and order and coherence.
2. There were no statistically significant differences between males and females with respect to the aforementioned scales of written discourse.
3. The element of coherence was the most problematic to the students; the element of thesis statement was the least problematic.

On the basis of the results of the study, the researcher recommended that further writing courses as well as special courses on contrastive linguistics help to improve students' performance and achievement in writing English.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the skill of writing has been somewhat neglected in the foreign language programme in Palestine. Writing has been dethroned from its privileged position in the curriculum and assigned to a secondary role (Sameer Mahmoud 2002, p.2).

He added that the aim of teaching English in Palestine is to enable students to communicate with a speaker of English using oral and written skills. However, these students fail to express themselves properly in writing, despite the fact that they have quiet enough knowledge of grammatical rules as well as a good output of vocabulary.

As a thinking process, Raimes(1983) pointed out that writing is important because it: 1) reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary which the students learn, 2) provides the students with the opportunity to be adventurous with the

language, through the effort, to express ideas and the constant use of eye, hand, and brain.

We can say that writing is a form of problem-solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering, planning, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written; so writing must be effective, persuasive, and graceful. It is not a matter of transcribing language into written symbols; it is a thinking in its own right.

Most studies have investigated linguistic aspects of language, such as syntax, semantics and lexical items. But much remains to investigate the discoursal aspects of the language. Even studies of discoursal elements have concentrated only on conversational aspects, such as intonation, structure, utterance...etc. So a great deal remains to investigate the written aspect of the foreign language since one of the major aims of teaching a foreign language is to teach the learner how to use the written language effectively and logically.

Language teaching has until recently been concerned with grammatical rather than communicative competence. Wilkins(1972) observes that although there have been major changes in the methodology of language teaching over years, the underlying principle has remained the same:

'It has been assumed that units of learning should be defined in grammatical terms, although the precise sequence in which they occurred could be taken by pedagogic consideration. Even those courses that encourage writing are structured grammatically(p.28).

Recent research throws interesting light for the good writer, Flower and Hays(1980), investigating the differences between more and less skilled writers, found that skilled writers are sensitive to their audience. They think about what the reader will be interested in by way of background information. Less skilled writers do not guide the reader through his organization with signals as to how the text is developed. They added that, the good writer is that who is aware of the rhetorical situation and the discourse of the language.

Harold(1981) argues that the competent writer must be a predictor of reaction and act on his prediction. He writes with one hand tied behind his back, being rubbed of gesture.

Hedge(1999) said that effective writing requires a number of things:

1.A high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information,

2. high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning,
3. and a careful choice of vocabulary and sentence structures to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers.

Jacobs(1989)noticed that there is a renewed interest in the skill of writing stems not only from a feeling of dissatisfaction with the poor results achieved by most students in writing, but also from a growing awareness of readers and researchers alike, that work on extended writing can contribute significantly to overall language learning achievement. For example, writing raises awareness of coherence, cohesion, unity...etc.

In saying so, we can characterize good writers as those who have a high sense and knowledge of using two competencies simultaneously: the linguistic one, and the rhetorical one.

Statement of the problem.

Most instructors of English complain that their students are poor and somewhat incompetent in the writing skills, although they know the grammatical rules and the lexical items of the learned language. Teachers want their students to produce coherent writing, they want to teach them what coherence means.

Then they want to teach them how to apply the discoursal features in a competent way when writing English essays.

Thus teachers need to have tools and methods which would help them teach the discoursal features in a suitable way. Discoursal elements are regarded as the main valid components in enhancing and enriching the students writing.

Purposes of the study.

The purposes of the study will be the following: -

- To investigate the extent to which senior students apply the discoursal features in their writing of essays in English at An-Najah National University.
- To identify and analyze the problems of the seniors' writing in the Department of English at An-Najah University.
- To provide practical suggestions and remedies in order to improve the students' writing at An-Najah University.

Significance of the study:

This study is meant to uncover, for both learners and teachers, the importance of applying the discoursal elements in the students writings of English essays. Thus, the present study is expected to have an important theoretical and pedagogical

significance. Theoretically, it is foreseen that it would enrich the English majors' knowledge with a practical clear-cut vision of the committed mistakes in the students' essays. Further, the significance of this study stems from its purpose, i.e., identifying and classifying some discursal problems in the seniors' writing.

Pedagogically, the findings of the present research are expected to have some values and assistance to the EFL learners and teachers so as to enhance the learners' writing by helping them brainstorm, organize, develop, revise, and evaluate their writing.

Questions of the study

The following questions will be formulated in order to be studied:

1. *Are English majors at An-Najah University able to employ the discursal elements of good writing when writing essays in English?*
2. *Are there statistically significant differences due to gender between students in the application of these elements, particularly: Coherence, Thesis Statement, Organization and Order, and Wording?*
3. *Are these elements equally problematic to students, or do some elements pose more difficulties than others?*

Limitations of the study

- 1- This study will deal only with the problems of writing from a discorsal point of view.
- 2- Further, it will include senior English majors at An-Najah University, in the city of Nablus, and in the academic year 2001-2002.

Definition of Terms:

Discourse Analysis: it is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. Discourse analysts study language in use. It is also related to sociolinguistics in that it is concerned with language in use in its social context (Michael Mc Carthy, 1999, p.5)

Organization and Order:

This deals with the sequence of the sentence within a paragraph. In a well-constructed paragraph sentences must follow a consistent order and organization. Thus the ideas must be arranged effectively for the reader and the information also must be relevant to the subject (Mc Crimmon, 1980:58-91).

Written Discourse:

It has to be learned usually in the formal setting of the school. It is mostly characterized by detachment from its immediate context due to the separation in time and in space between the reader and the writer who most frequently has no access to immediate feedback, but has enough time to edit his or her text before making it available for reading (Coulthard, M. 1977).

Thesis Statement:

It is the main sentence which indicates to the reader what the essay is going to be about, so it should be clear, precise, well-developed and well-supported.

Wording:

It is another quality of good writing. The writer needs to use precise and understood vocabulary. Further, he should avoid vagueness and unnecessary repetition in his choice of words.

Summary

The foregoing chapter attempted to cover the background of the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, limitations of the study and the definition of terms. This study aimed at investigating the extent to which senior students apply the discoursal features in their writing of English essays. Further, the study tried to analyse the most prominent discoursal problems. and find out their causes.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Academic writing as a genre has been analyzed from various perspectives. Research has demonstrated that in academic setting the writing of the non-native student frequently does not present balanced argumentation and is subjective to a greater extent than that of native students.

Sameer Mahmoud (2002) stated that like speaking and even listening, the teaching of writing in English classes in Palestinian schools and universities has been overshadowed by too much emphasis on the teaching of reading skill and the development of grammatical accuracy. In other words, there is no real interest in the teaching of writing in English and how it is dealt with in classes. Students and teachers also have a negative attitude towards writing. They rank it as the least important and the most difficult skill to them.

In their field study, Salamin and Jaber (1979) traced the lack of oral proficiency among high school students. One item in the

questionnaire, addressed to students, teachers and supervisors, asked the subjects to order language skills according to their importance. The subjects ranked writing as the least important. The status of writing in English can also be seen in students' overall level of proficiency. The majority of students spend 9-10 years learning English but they continue to experience great difficulty in producing writing that is genuine in terms of style and cohesion. It is surprising that they have a strong background in English grammar but they cannot produce a text without mistakes in mechanics: spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation. Let alone problems in logical development and organization in their writing, students tend to resemble Arabic style. For example, they translate from Arabic to English. In other words, they do not think in English.

Kroll(1990)stated that in the recent years, foreign students who have mastered syntactic structures have still demonstrated inability to compose adequate themes, term papers, thesis and dissertations. Instructors have written, on foreign-student papers, such comments as ' the material is all here, but seems somehow out of focus,' or 'lacks cohesion' and these comments are essentially accurate. The foreign student paper is out of focus because he is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native speaker.

At this point it would be interesting to find out what kind of comments student writers prefer and think as helpful. Cohen(1990) found that student writers pay considerable attention to teachers' comments concerning mechanics and grammar, but they also pay much attention to comments regarding vocabulary, organization and content areas where teachers' comments were probably lacking.

These findings are strengthened by the findings of a study conducted by Covil(1997) in that content feed-back recipients have a more positive attitude towards revising.

Regarding the effect of negative or positive comments, Leach (1997) asserted that positive comments are usually more helpful than negative ones, and that teachers should play different roles when responding to papers such as average reader, coach, or editor.

Lunsford (1997) said that some oriented writing is marked by what maybe called an approach by indirection. In this kind of writing, the development of the paragraph maybe said to be turning and turning like in a widening gyre. The circles or gyres turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential

views, but the subject is never looked at directly. Things are developed in terms of what they are not, rather than in terms of what they are. In fact, such development in a modern English paragraph will strike the English reader as awkward and unnecessary indirect.

Writing is a mode of communication through which meaning is conveyed by means of written words. This indicates the presence of two levels of writing; words and meaning. Atari(1998) reiterated various sources such as Halliday and Hassan, Harish, and Zamel. He referred to these as the accuracy level and the communicative efficiency level. The former refers to the mechanical elements (grammar, spelling, punctuation, and indentation). The latter refers to cohesion and coherence. Steinman(1982) argued that there are two levels of writing and named them as “the correct expressions”, which refers to the ability to write correctly. “the effective expressions”, on the other hand, refers to the ability to choose and form a sequence of correct expressions which when written and read cause the readers to experience the effect intended by the writer.

Over the past three decades, the majority of studies dealing with learner language have concentrated on the learner's

production data at the sentence level. This in keeping with the general interest expressed by theoretical linguists in sentence grammar. In recent years, however, some linguists have shifted their focus of attention away from analysing sentence structure towards analysing the 'process by which language is utilized by human beings (Beaugrande, 1980,p.20).

The interest in text linguistics and discourse analysis has motivated EFL/ESL researchers to study the communicative function and rhetorical rules of language. Moreover, concepts such as cohesion and coherence have been identified as two majors standards of textuality (Beaugrande and dressler,1981). Instructors of rhetoric, nowadays, place great emphasis,in their teachingand evaluation of composition, on text cohesion and coherence.

The related literature of this study, will deal with the effect of the first language and its writing system upon the students' writing in the target language. Further, some studies will deal with the necessity of introducing the students of writing to the culture and the discoursal elements of the target language.

I. Studies Referring the Problem to the Differences of the Two Cultures of the Native Language and the Target Language.

The relationship between language and culture has been a focus of attention from a variety of disciplinary perspectives for many years. Linguists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and others have sought to understand whether and how cultural factors influence aspects of human behavior such as perception, cognition, language, and communication.

Carlson (1988) indicated that rhetorical patterns are different from one language to another. He reported that Chinese paragraph is usually vague and does not show objectivity. He added that the writer employs a variety of metaphors and euphemistic expressions. The Japanese writer, however, paraphrases his idea repeatedly throughout a paragraph in quiet arbitrary style. The English paragraph, on the other hand, tends to be linear. It is organized according to time, space, and logic. The logical paragraph presents only one limited idea, the main idea, and the idea is developed by several supporting details. The writer, in English, should employ transitional devices in order to link the independent ideas and details.

Yoshida (1990), in a contrastive study of the rhetorical patterns of English and Japanese writing, found that the organization of English and Japanese paragraphs and essays was completely different. This difference was clearly shown in stylistic features and writing processes. He also found that cultural preferences for certain rhetorical patterns did use first language rhetorical patterns when they write in English.

Irujo (1986) in a study conducted at academic people (faculty and graduate students) who were asked to use idioms of English. She found that her students were able to transfer idioms in their writing from their first language to the target language in those cases where they perceived a similarity between idioms. This occurred even in cases in which the respective forms of idioms were not exact. In a latter study, Irujo (1993) found that fluent bilinguals (first language speakers of Spanish who had learned English as adults) who lived and worked as professionals in an English speaking environment were able to produce, in a translation task, appropriate English idioms and expressions, including some that were quite colloquial and had no equivalent in Spanish. Despite this rather positive finding, Irujo wisely cautioned that even though the speakers used the idioms in translation task, "We cannot assume that these subjects would use

idioms and expressions in normal conversation or writing tasks(p.85).”

Byram and Morgan (1993) stated that :

It is axiomatic in our view that cultural learning has to take place as an integral part of language learning and vice versa. There should be a development of a theory that necessarily bring the learning of culture into the research that deals with second and foreign language teaching and learning. The mere acquisition of linguistic competence is insufficient, teachers need to integrate current research finding into their transmission of knowledge of learners(p.90).

Hymes(1996) similarly called for introducing ethnography and research on influences of culture on language into education and stated that both disciplines can draw on and change one another. He added that language plays a crucial role in the social life of the community, and a lack of cultural understanding among members of several communities often leads to social inequality that has yet to be recognized.

Smoke(1995)indicated that, in composition writing, students are expected to present their views objectively, approach a topic from a balanced perspective, and support their views credibility. Students are usually instructed that the reader needs to be convinced of the validity of the writer's position and that the onus of persuading the reader is on the writer.

Nonetheless , Hiracawa (1987)asked senior student in Japan and Indonesia to write essays about different topics.His study,however,was restricted to the data produced by 22 out of 44 in which he only compared between the objectivity and proof in their writing. He gave examples of the Japanese and Indonesian writings.The former, considers vagueness and ambiguity as essential elements in their writing .The latter, considers that the notions of harmony and understanding between the reader and the writer represent one of the fundamental values and that factual objectivity is not usually expected.

Streven (1987) asserted that the need for rhetorical objectivity and justification may present a formidable obstacle for L2 learners if they are “absent in the learner's culture ”.

In order to avoid such problems, Hvitfeldt (1992) mentioned that students can develop their writing skill through exposing them to authentic materials which are drawn from real-life situations.

Santos (1988), in a study of professors' reaction to the academic writing of non-native speaking students supports the current approach of teaching writing as a process of planning, composing, revising, and editing. Non-native students need to improve their skills in the areas that most directly affect content, such as, organization, development, and support of their idea and arguments; those are the areas that are given the most attention by the process. Two papers of 400 words were written by a Chinese and a Korean, and corrected by 178 professors from different departments. Content, of course, received lower ratings than language; that is, the two writers' problem was more serious at the discoursal level, not at the sentence level.

However, authentic materials indicate what information is required and give a possible way of sequencing that information. Used skillfully, authentic materials can make English writing lesson more interesting, stimulating and meaningful.

Nonetheless, authentic materials should be about a topic which is relevant, interesting, and in a form which can easily be presented to the student. Written authentic materials are easy to get; they are found in newspapers, books, pamphlets, leaflets, brochures, magazines, letter, forms, and advertisement.

The attitudes of student writers towards the provided feedback affect their attitudes towards revision, which is a basic stage of writing. Lehr(1995) found that Arab students often see revision not as an opportunity to develop and improve a piece of writing but as an indication that they have failed to do it right from the first time. To them revision means correction. He suggested that this assumption can be corrected if teachers' comments on papers focus on more than mechanics.

Fattash(2000) investigated the effect of providing content-feedback by utilizing Grice's Maxims on the writing performance of the students of writing of An-Najah National University, and their attitudes towards this kind of feedback. The researcher conducted an experimental study on a sample consisting of (48) students from An-Najah National University. A questionnaire was distributed among the students of the experimental group to investigate their attitudes towards content-feedback. She found

that providing content feedback by utilizing Grice's Maxims had a positive effect on the performance of the student writers at the part of coherence, while it had no effect on the improvement of the use of mechanics in writing. Further, student writers have positive attitudes towards content-feedback by utilizing Grice's Maxims.

Depending on the results found, the researcher recommended the following:

1. Teachers are advised to provide their students with content-feedback by utilizing Grice's Maxims in order to help them revise their ideas and the intended message they want to convey to their readers.
2. Teachers are advised not to grade the preliminary draft written by the students because, when the students receive their papers graded, they will not pay attention to the comments written on them. This in turn will not help them revise their ideas.

II. Studies Referring the Problem to the Effect of the Native language and its System on the Target Language.

It is indicated that human communication need to be logical. In writing, logic is referred to by the term coherence. Coherence can be defined as the logical connection among the ideas of a written text. But still coherence is far more difficult to be defined. The definition of coherence continued to range from a narrow sense of coherence to a broader sense. Halliday and Hassan(1976) considered cohesion as an index of textual coherence. They believed that coherence is located in the text itself without considering the role of the reader and the context. Their definition of coherence was criticized by many researchers of the schema theory such as Carell(1982) who viewed text processing as an interactive process between the text, the reader and the writer.

Kachru (1995) assumed that Arabs stand a good chance of being misunderstood in Arabic unless they reassert and exaggerate. He goes further in noting that if Arabs say exactly what they mean without the expected exaggeration, other Arabs may not only miss the point but interpret the message to mean just the opposite. He says that the ESL instructor may find it useful to be aware of these stylistic differences, especially in

writing tasks involving personal opinion and argumentation.

Kachru added that contrastive analysis has shown that the surface structure of languages can differ significantly, sometimes to such an extent that traditional grammatical terminology can not be used to describe a language. The differences in grammatical structure, lexical items and rhetorical patterns cause the student innumerable problems as they impose themselves on the target language. Teachers should recognize this fact and employ techniques that will help students avoid transferring the structure of their native language to the target language. When a beginning student is asked to produce a text, he has no choice but to frame the required text according to his concept of what a similar text would be like in his mother language. Thus, a student might produce a text using English lexical items, the grammar of both English and the native language, and the rhetorical patterns of his native language.

Teo (1995) indicated that the argumentative text in American and British English is defined by its problem-solution structure, and its purpose to convince the readers of the superiority of the solution provided in the text. An argumentative text in some oriental writing, on the other hand, is defined by its raising of one

(or more related) issue(s), and discussing it(them) by providing either just the writer's opinion and prescribing solutions, or several opinions and solutions, including those of the writer, so that the readers can arrive at the desired solution .

Keplan (1988) said that the major theoretical claim of the Contrastive Rhetoric Hypothesis (CRH) is that different language systems have different ways of organizing ideas in writing. A related claim is that, unlike the native speakers of English, who expect expository prose to be developed as a sequence of claims and direct proof, non-native users of English employ rhetorical progressions of text that are incongruous with the expectations of the Anglo-American reader.

Allen (1985) said that the Arab writer's style is circular, not cumulative. He comes to the same point two or three times from different angles, so the reader has the curious feeling that nothing is happening, he is going around and around. Allen, after going to teach in Cairo, realized that Arab writer's rhetoric is a common one and what he is doing is normal and commendable for Arab readers.

Yorkey (1974) refers the problems of writing, which Arab students encounter in English to the interference and transfer from L1. He stated that the main characteristic of an Arab's written English is his infrequent use of subordination and the over use of coordinate constructions. This is referred to the 'Wa Wa Method' of writing because of Arabic "wa" (and) which is excessively used as a sentence connector.

While Anita (1982) attributed the phenomenon of using more coordinations than subordinations in Arabic to the abundance of coordinating devices in the language itself. Yorkey (1974) said that it is the consequence of the underestimation of the distinctions between cause and effect, real and unreal conditions and main and supporting ideas.

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Beck (1980) ascribed discursual mistakes and irregularities committed in writing to negative transfer from Arabic. Characteristics of Arabic such as circularity, digression and overuse of 'and' intensively spread in the written assignments of Arabs in English.

White (1980) stated that a common complaint of instructors of writing is that their students can not develop their ideas when

they are asked to answer an examination question or write an essay. Their main difficulty is in organizing the sentences into a paragraph. It is a problem of rhetoric, that is, of organizing the paragraph in such a way that serves a definite purpose. White also described the Arab students' organization as circular and not cumulative. This is ascribed to the absence of linearity in Arabic, therefore, Arab students are forced to transfer the rhetorical patterns of Arabic to English.

Norment (1984) conducted a study at (44 students) from Spain, China, and England (non-native). He dealt with the contrastive analysis of organizational structure and cohesion elements of their writing. He suggested that, teacher of basic writing should at least develop a minimum knowledge of contrastive analysis and contrastive rhetoric. This knowledge will help the teacher of writing become aware of stylistic features and rhetorical patterns of each language, and then teach his students how to differentiate between writing processes in their native language and those in the second language. A main stylistic feature of English, for instance, is its linearity, but a main stylistic feature of Spanish is its being digressive.

Kharama (1985) stated that :

The main causes of the problem are, in our opinion, the following: nature of the teaching process, idealization of the teaching materials, lack of motivation, limited exposure to authentic English, inadequate command of the foreign language, teacher's tolerance of students' discursal mistakes, and, finally, differences between English and Arabic rhetorics (p50).

Kharama, studying 66 seniors' English essays written by Arab students at Kuwait University, also pointed out that weakness in the student writing skill is due to the differences between the style of discourse used and Arabic. Meanwhile, he referred that problem either or partially to the interference and negative transfer of rhetorical stylistics and patterns of Arabic to English. He concluded that 'reference' is an instance of partial interference since the devices used in both languages are quite similar. "Reference", as Haliday and Hasan (1976:31-38) define, is an appropriate way of cohesion, it is either "exophoric", referring to something outside the text, but known from the context of situation, e.g. 'He is a nice chap' or 'endophoric, referring to something explicit in the text, e.g. 'He who hesitates gets lost'.

Malek Nassrallah(2001) conducted a study to identify some syntactic features of spoken English in the senior English majors' writing at An-Najah National University. The population of the study consisted of (45 students). He found that there were great occurrences of coordinated constructions, simple present tense, parallel constructions, sentence fragments, self-reference, and demonstrative modifiers. In addition, few occurrences of wh-interrogatives, reduced participles, nominalization, passive voice constructions, subordinated constructions, complex sentences, and compound complex sentences. On the basis of these results the researcher recommended that further courses on the differences between the spoken and written language will improve the students' writing of English.

To conclude, the studies related to this study refer the problem of writing at the discoursal level to the effect of both: the culture of the native writer and the system of his language which result in the transfer of the rhetorical and discoursal patterns of L1 to L2; and also to the students' lack of exposure to the authentic materials.

Summary

The preceding discussion has so far made it clear that the problem of writing discourse attributed to two major elements, namely, the differences between the two cultures of the native language and the target language as well as the effect of the system of the native language on the target language.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the population and sample of the study, research instrument, research design, procedure of conducting the study, data collection, variables, validity and reliability, and statistical design.

Population of the study:

The sample of the study consisted of (42) senior students (19 males and 23 females) who were asked to write (42) composition papers. The students were enrolled at the Department of English at An-Najah University in the city of Nablus in the academic year 2001-2002.

The following table shows the distribution of the sample according to gender:

Table (1)

Population distribution according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	45.2%
Female	23	54.8%
Total	42	100%

Research instrument:

The researcher has conducted a checklist of composition evaluation composed of 4 parts including 24 questions. It was employed for correcting the composition written by students.

The checklist was developed by the researcher with the help of the following references in writing discourse and rhetoric:

Dr. Nabeel Alawy, Dr. Insaf Assaleh, Dr. Fawaz Aqel and Mr. Sameer Mahmoud.

Furthermore, the instrument was approved by a jury of judges formed of five doctors at An-Najah National University.

Guided by the notes of the doctors, the checklist of composition evaluation included 4 grading domains establishing criteria for correcting and evaluating the students' compositions.

Each scale is defined in terms of what a good composition should present.

The four domain measure the communicativity and acceptability of the discourse of the composition. They deal with what the student is going to talk about in the paragraphs, each of which is limited, well - developed and properly organized into some kind of logical sequence.

The student is also required to use clear ideas supported with correct details by correct transitions and connectors.

The first domain deals with the Thesis Statement and its clarity and precision. It is also concerned with whether the thesis statement indicates to the reader what the essay is going to be about; in addition, to the necessity that the thesis be well developed and supported by other topic sentences in the opening paragraph.

The second domain discusses the Wording that is the effectiveness of word choice, whether the student is sure of the precise meaning of the word and whether all words are consistent with the tone of the composition.

The third domain emphasizes the importance of Coherence in essay writing. It focuses on whether both sentences and paragraphs are woven together in such a way that enables the reader to move easily from one sentence to another and from one paragraph to another and to read the composition as an integrated whole, rather than a series of separate, incoherent sentences and paragraphs. Coherence can be established by using effective cohesive ties to show flow, progression and continuity in the written essay.

The fourth domain concentrates on organization and order, which are essential in good writing. These two elements show how effectively paragraphs are arranged for the reader and purpose. Order is concerned with the sequence of sentences in paragraphs while organization is concerned with the sequence of paragraphs in the whole composition through chronology, space or logic. The composition, through order and organization, must be well presented in a linear, communicative way.

Each question in the check list of evaluation is given the grades ranged from 1 to 5 : 1, 2 and less than 3 are weak; 3 and less than 4 are good; 4 and 5 are very good.

However, these grading scales of composition are restricted to the essays which require analysis and argumentation, because

these kinds of essays need to be well-organized and clearly structured for the meaning to be clear. Therefore, it is to be used in evaluating papers written by students at the university level.

As mentioned previously, the checklist consists of four parts containing 24 questions as follows:

1. Thesis Statement (questions 1-6).
2. Wording (questions 7-11).
3. Coherence (questions 12-17).
4. Organization and Order (questions 18-24).

Data Collection :

The subjects were assigned to write a well – organized composition about a familiar topic. The students were asked to follow the discursial writing qualities in their compositions.

First the evaluator was required to read the composition very quickly in order to evaluate its overall comprehensibility and communicativity. Then he was required to read the composition carefully more than once in order to be able to assign the suitable grades for the questions and then give his comments about the composition, if there were any.

Variables:

The independent variable of this study is sex(male and female) while the dependant variables are the items scores and the total scores of items constituting each of the four elements or qualities of good writing. These include :

- 1.Thesis statement.
- 2.Wording
3. Organization and Order.
- 4.Cohesion.

Validity of the instrument:

The checklist was adapted as the final research instrument after being approved with some modifications by five literature, linguistics, and writing specialists from An-Najah National University . The same five specialists approved the formality of the text, too.

Reliability of the instrument :

The reliability of the Checklist was established by using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The value was(0.97) this showed that the instrument was reliable in an acceptable level.

Table (2)

Alpha formula of instrument reliability

No	Domain	Reliability
1.	Thesis Statement	0.98
2.	Wording	0.76
3.	Coherence	0.90
4.	Organization and Order	0.85
Total		0.97

Procedures of the study:

In coordination with the Department of English at An-Najah National University, the researcher held a meeting with the instructor of Advanced Writing class on which the study was to be conducted. Being given the required permission (see Appendix B), the researcher himself asked the English seniors to write the composition. Students were asked to write about a hot topic "Advantages and disadvantages of martyrdom "suicide" bombings on the Palestinian cause."

Data analysis :

It is restricted to the quality of good writing mentioned in the checklist of composition, which was divided into four domains: Thesis Statement, Wording, Coherence, and Organization and Order. Each question in the checklist within the four domains was analyzed and computed separately in terms of means and percentages.

Statistical design

The items of the criteria were statistically analyzed according to the following parameters:

1. Percentages:

Each question in the checklist and each domain of the four domains of the checklist were calculated using percentages.

2. Means:

Means were calculated also for each question and for the domains as well.

Summary

The present study sought highlighting some discorsal features of the written essays of the senior's writing at An-Najah National University. To do so, the researcher collected (42) essays from an advanced English class. For this purpose, the descriptive design was used depending mainly on the criteria developed by the researcher. Having finally analysed the data at hand, findings were computed by using percentages and means.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The present study aimed at investigating and identifying some discursal problems in the writing of the English seniors. The results have taken two forms. The first one has dealt with each item of the (24) questions forming the checklist separately, and then each group of the questions forming the four different qualities, questions were distributed as follows: Thesis statement (1-6), Wording (7-11), Coherence (12-17), and Organization and Order (questions 18- 24). For each item the means and percentages have been counted and the results have been presented in tables (3-8). Moreover, the T-test has been employed to test whether there are any statistically significant differences between male and female students on the performance of the 4 above-mentioned qualities of good writing. The total scores of items constituting each of the four groups (qualities) are treated here as dependent variables and sex is treated as an independent variable.

Q 1: Are English majors at An-Najah University able to employ the discoursal elements of good writing when writing essays in English?

For testing the first question, means and percentages were used. The following tables present the statistical analysis for each question in the four domains.

Table (3)

Means and percentages of the first six questions about the Thesis Statement

Number	Means	Percentages %
1.	3.79	75.8 %
2.	3.76	75.2 %
3.	3.81	76.2 %
4.	3.40	68.0 %
5.	3.21	64.2 %
6.	3.21	64.2 %
Total	3.53	70.6 %

Looking at the above table , one can easily observe that the students have obtained high scores on each of the six questions about the Thesis Statement. The means, for instance, has

exceeded (3.19). This shows clearly the ability of the students to write a precise and clear thesis statement. In addition, the means of all the six questions are high and accepted as good writing. The means of the third question is the highest (3.81), while the means of the fifth question is the lowest (3.21). The total means of the domain is (3.53), which is good.

Table (4)

Means and percentages of the second group of questions
(7-11) about Wording

Number	Means	Percentages %
7.	3.50	70.0 %
8.	2.93	58.6 %
9.	3.31	66.2 %
10.	3.12	62.4 %
11.	2.83	56.6 %
Total	3.13	62.6 %

It is very obvious from the above table that the students achievement of the five questions about one of the major questions of good writing is also high. In questions (7, 9, 10) the means have exceeded three. This shows the adequate performance

and the convenient achievement of the students. However , questions (8,11) show weak performance. Despite this weakness, the total means of the five questions was good (3.13).

Table (5)
Means and percentages of the third group of questions
(12-17) about Coherence

Number	Means	Percentages %
12.	3.31	66,2 %
13.	1.33	26,2 %
14.	2.67	53,4 %
15.	3.19	63,8 %
16.	3.02	60,4 %
17.	3.07	61,4 %
Total	2.765	55,2 %

It is clear from Table(5) that the means show good performance with regard to questions (12, 15, 16, 17) (3.31, 3.19, 3.02, 3.07 respectively). While questions 13 and 14 indicate clear weakness of students' use of cohesive ties between sentences and maintaining the reference to people and things by using the correct pronouns.

are questions: (18, 19, 20,24) where the means were (3.64, 3.10, 3.14, 3.10 respectively) .

Q 2:Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students due to gender in the application of these elements, particularly:Coherence, Thesis Statement, Organisation and Order, and Wording?

To answer the second question of the study, the researcher used means and standard deviations . The following table shows the results.

Table (7)

Means and Standard Deviations of Male(19) and Female(23) of the sex effect .

NO.	Domain	Male		Female	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1.	Thesis Statement	3,81	0,456	3,82	5,77
2.	Wording	3,67	0,655	3,60	0,581
3.	Coherence	3,64	0,579	3,69	0,640
4.	Organization and Order	3.19	0,606	3,34	0,785
Total		3,25	0,436	3,31	0,409

The analysis of means and standard deviations has indicated clearly that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female students on the achievement and performance on the four writing domains, namely: Thesis Statement, Wording, Cohesion, and Organization and Order. The researcher attributed similarity to the fact that the senior students at the English department have the same level and knowledge; furthermore, they have studied the same courses through their studying at the English Department.

Q 3: Are these elements equally problematic to the students, or do some elements pose more difficulties than others?

For testing the third question of the study, the researcher ranked in order the four domains of the study. Each domain got the rank depending on its percentage as the following table shows.

Table (8)

Means and percentages of the four domains in rank order

Domain	Means	Percentages	Rank of means
Thesis Statement	3.53	70.6 %	1
Wording	3.13	62.7 %	2
Coherence	2.765	52.2 %	4
Organization and Order	2.89	57.8 %	3

Arranging all the means of the four Evaluation scales in decreasing order, we can observe their ranks as follows

1. Thesis statement (3.53)
2. Wording (3.13)
3. Organization and Order (2.89)
4. Cohesion (2.765)

Table (8) shows that the element of Cohesion is the most problematic to the students. This means that their writing lacks consistency and intelligibility. The element of Thesis Statement on the other hand, is obviously the least difficult.

Summary

The researcher, in this chapter, has presented the findings of the statistical analysis which has been displayed in terms of answering the questions of the study. Means and percentages which were used to analyse the data at hand proved that there were no significant differences between male and female students; furthermore, the students failed at using coherence and organization and order properly. Meanwhile, they succeeded in using the Wording and the Thesis Statement. Finally, Coherence was the most problematic domain while Thesis Statement was the easiest.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION , CONCLUSIONS , and RECOMMENDATIONS

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which the senior students apply the discorsal features in their writing and to identify the most prominent problems in their writing .

This chapter will discuss the results, draw the conclusions and suggest the possible recommendations. Furthermore, presentation of discussion will be introduced according to each domain. However, this does not mean that local errors of grammar and vocabulary are to be neglected since a lot of studies have been carried out on this particular area .

The following are the main types of discorsal good elements, with examples given by the subjects of the study.

Good use of Thesis Statement :

As mentioned in the Checklist of Composition Evaluation Scale (1) is concerned with the Thesis Statement ; whether it is

clear and precise , and whether it limits the purpose of the topic in an explicit statement which sets up the procedure or division throughout the essay. The following is an example of an opening paragraph taken from the assigned composition that subjects were asked to write; the title of which is “Advantages and disadvantages of martyrdom “suicide’ bombings on the palestinian cause”.

From the beginning of humanity and the existence of human race on earth, human beings refuse any type of oppression and resist all kinds of occupation. The palestinians are not excluded from this rule, so they have the right to use all possible means to protect themselves and their land . A new mean of defending is the use of martyrdom bombings inside Israel , these bombings have advantages and disadvantages on the security and economy of the palestinian case.

The Thesis Statement in the above paragraph is clear, precise, explicit , and limiting the main idea. This statement is completely relevant to the topic assigned. It is a little bit long but easy to understand. Furthermore, the wording and punctuation of the the topic sentence is correct ; it is well-supported in the paragraph.

The researcher meant to ask students to write whether he/she was for or against the martyrdom "suicide" bombings and the student here wrote a satisfactory Thesis Statement which the reader can guess what the whole is going to be about. Here is another sample of an opening paragraph written by another student:

Al-Aqsa Intifadah started on the 28th of September 2000, since that time the Israealis killed hundreds of palestinians, destroyed their houses, lands, crops, and other probrities. So, the palestinian tried many ways to stand in the face of these terrible acts, one of those ways is maryrdom "suicide" bombings. These bombings have advantages and disadvantages on the Palestinian case.

Looking at the above paragraph and reading it., we can find both explicit and implicit Thesis Statement. The former was used when the student talked about the Intifadah and the aggressive actions against Palestinian people. The latter was used when he talked directly about the advantages and disadvantages of the martyrdom "suicide" bombings. What was stated in the paragraph accounts for relevant and organized information related to the topic.

The following example of the Thesis Statement written by another student shows an unaccepted Thesis Statement:

After the consequent Israeli's incursions into our cities; a number of the palestinians, so longer, they could coexist with the sqular life, and they vocally try to dampen the uprising down. However, if the paestinians quit military, the Israelis will never let us freely ,for martyred operation is the lonely indispensable way whih enable us to achieve our national goals

Reading the above paragraph , one finds that it is neither well developed nor properly ordered. Further, the ideas are unclear since the sentences are incomplete. Fragmentations are evident in "After the consequent.....the uprising down" and "for martyred operation our national goals", which indicates that this Thesis Statement lacks strength and clarity.

Good use of wording:

The use of words is a very essential component in producing the ideas in a correct way. In fact, wording deals with the effective choice of words; the avoidance of unnecessary

repetition; the precise choice of words; and finally the avoidance of Arabic style in choosing words. Correct use of words is shown in the following sample composition :

Some people think that martyrdom bombings have bad effects on the palestinians because of the Israeli . blind violance against all palestinians including men , women, children , infants ,and the old. Also, damaging houses, cutting trees, taking more land, and arresting people are other negative effects of these operations. It's right ,but any occupied nation must sacrifice and expect more violent actions in fighting against a fierce enemy to restore the holy rights of its people.

As it is apparent from the sample above, the reader can observe effective choices of many words which lead to understanding , especially by native speakers of English . For example , in the previous paragraph , the student uses synonyms “ bad and negative ‘ and this shows he is capable of avoiding unnecessary repetition of words. Further, the reader can notice that the student is sure of the correct and precise meaning of words. Moreover, we can notice that the use of words is consistent with the whole tone of the essay. Nonetheless, in some

essays we can notice the incorrect use of wordiness as the following sample shows :

The disadvantages of martyrdom bombings are two reasons .In the beginning , Israel takes the martyrdom bombings as an argument to carry out their lousy plans . For instance , after each operation they will attack, destroy ,kill and make everything which is an illegal.All the countries of the world stand against us .'

The wordiness of the previous paragraph is weak. For example,the student writes the first sentence,"the disadvantages of the martyrdom bombings are two reasons."Of course , here , he means to say"There are two disadvantages of the martyrdom bombings." He also continues "In the beginning ." He means to say"Firstly." These mistakes occur because of Arabisation , that is , using the Arabic style in writing . Other mistakes in wording are caused by the ineffective choices of words like"argument." As readers we tend to misunderstand the sentence.The student could have used "pretext" to replace "argument".

Lack of coherence :

Coherence is a basic element of good writing which deals with the intelligibility and meaningfulness of the sequence of the parts to the reader; that is , whether the parts of the essay are put in a sequence to be intelligible and meaningful to the reader in a proper way.

Coherence is poorly treated in the students' essays. We cannot see a good sequence of the parts. Paragraphs are placed in the essay randomly. They are not linked together . In fact , the lack of transitional phrases and connecting devices characterizes most essays. Therefore, the reader cannot move easily from one sentence to another ,or from one paragraph to another.

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The deficiency of Coherence in the samples, is represented in the insufficient employment of these coherent devices :

1. Coordinating conjunctions :e.g. yet and for
2. Conjunctive adverbs :e.g. however, nevertheless, moreover, consequently and therefore
3. Transitional phrases : e.g. for example, for instance, above all, and on the other hand.
4. Enumerates :e.g. first , secondly , and finally

5. Cohesion or cohesive devices in paragraphs : e.g. reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion (Halliday and Hassan,1976:31-38)

The reader can also notice the redundant use of “and” which results to more coordinations than subordinations in the students’ essays . This supports Nasrallah’s finding (2001) who, like the present study,noticed the overuse of “and” . Another supporting finding was given by Tannen (1982: 16) who observed the repetition of syntactic constructions in written essays . For example, she found a student writing “.. and he knows spanish, and he knows french , and he knows english.....”

The following example shows the overuse of “and” and the scarcity of the other coherent devices in the students’ writing:

Defending one's homeland is a legal right, and that is well known everywhere and in every civilisation , ancient and modern ones. And it is also well known that no body can determine how this resistance is going to be , add to that there is no power in this world can force a whole, nation to let go what it gets.

Martyrdom bombings made all Israeli citizens and others live their lives terrified. They no longer feel peace or security. Well, in fact martyrdom destroyed their whole security shield, drop of money they used to improve that security shield seemed to be useless.

Lack of Organization and Order:

Organisation and order are very essential components in producing the ideas in an orderly way. While the former deals with grouping the material in the composition as a whole, the latter groups the main ideas in well-developed paragraphs. In both cases, the main idea must be evident throughout each paragraph and the whole essay.

Absence of organisation and order is shown in the following sample essay:

Fifty three years ago when the disaster happened to the Palestinian nation. From that time till now, they are fighting to get rid from this Israeli cancer that attacks their existence every day, every hour, during peace process and outbreaks. Consuming every power, creating any weapon, nothing left for them to fight with only

these exploding young bodies, weapons decorated by calling them(the martyrdom operations), that means in humans concepts the (suicide bombings).We can describe the martyrdom bombings as an emergency to achieve some patriotic purposes in a critical fatal situation. It has advantages and disadvantages on the Palestinian cause that's for sure.

In the above example there is no apparent grouping of thoughts or even a thesis statement, at least at the subjects' level. The thesis statement has to be stated clearly and precisely in the opening paragraph, and has to be also evident throughout the details which develop the main ideas; in this instance, it is indicated in the last sentence of the second paragraph 'it has advantages and disadvantages on the Palestinian cause that's for sure.'

Further, in ordering paragraphs and organizing the composition there should be directions of movement. The paragraph should move from either general to particular, or particular to general, whole to its parts, question to answer, cause to effect or effect to cause. None of these directions is employed in the above sample.

In addition, paragraphing is a means of presenting ideas in units of related sentences. When the writer has said all that is needed to be said in a particular unit, the paragraph is finished and then he should move to the next one. Examining most paragraphs written in the sample essays, one can conclude that there are no complete units at all. Nor does the writer move from one paragraph to another.

It is evident from the last sample that punctuation seems mostly to be neglected or badly employed. The writer here needs more and more training on punctuation. Moreover, one can notice the grammatical mistakes made by the student; he writes 'from that time they're fighting to get rid from the Israeli cancer.' He should have said 'they have been fighting to get rid from Israeli occupation.'

In conclusion, it is obvious that the students' writings were not approached properly from the point of view of discourse since two types of mistakes committed affect comprehensibility and communicativity. Even the two domains which had good means were not very satisfactory. Regarding Thesis Statement, they were explicit, clear, easy to understand and precise as well. The ideas which develop the Thesis Statement were well-grouped and presented in an orderly way. Topic sentences which are the main parts of the paragraphs, in most cases, seem to be clear and

precise; they are limiting the main topic and well-supported. Further, details are relevant to the main idea. Paragraphs and ideas within paragraphs were not connected by explicit and effective transitions or linking devices. This, in turn, has led to incoherence in the paragraphs and in the whole composition as well.

In fact, Wording in the sample composition was adequately treated. The word choice seemed to be effective. The compositions do avoid unnecessary repetition. Students were sure of the precise meaning of most words. However, students need to be well-trained in punctuation which is a newcomer to Arabic. Besides, they should pay attention to capitalization which does not exist in Arabic (Kharma, 1985).

Causes and Sources of the Committed Mistakes:

This study is mainly concerned with the discursal problems that Male and Female English language majors encounter in their writings at An-Najah National University. It does not deal with grammar or lexis. Yet, grammar and lexis are inseparable from comprehensibility and communicativity.

Studies conducted on different non-native students writing in English have shown almost similar results and attributed the mistakes committed on discourse in writing to various sources

and factors: differences of culture, style, and system. These factors have been looked at as the most dominant causes of the problem (Karchu, 1995).

Cultural differences play the biggest role in the poor achievement of Arab students in the writing skill. Each culture of both Arabic and English has its own patterns of thinking. The system and style of English language stem from the Platonic-Aristotelian thought. The development of ideas of thought flows in a linear and cumulative way (Anita 1982). An essay in English usually starts with an opening paragraph containing a thesis statement to be supported by reasons, facts and details in the succeeding paragraphs which, in turn, form the body of the essay, and end with a concluding paragraph, with all paragraphs in the essay being well developed in a linear, logical manner. In fact, we find neither circularity nor digression in a typical essay written by a native writer of English.

Although circular development prevails in the essay written by an Arab writer, digression and repetition are also very much employed in order to convey more emphasis and conviction to the reader. Shouby (1957) states that an Arab thinks that his reader will not understand him if he does not repeat, overassert and exaggerate.

The old approaches and methods of teaching the foreign language, such as behavioral psychology and structural linguistics, paid little attention to the skill of writing. The audiolingual method, for example, gave emphasis to sentences and words, particularly in speech. A secondary stress was paid to writing because the users of those approaches assumed that the foreign language learner was supposed to proceed from the word and sentence level to proper essay writing simply because he was able to write an essay in his native language (Keplan, 1988). Thus, this point of view has contributed, more or less, to the improper product of essay writing by the foreign language learners.

Another factor which affects writing performance, positively or negatively, is the instructor of writing courses. There seems to be some tolerance of students' discursal mistakes. They ought to pay more attention to the elements of good essay writing such as topic sentences, unity, wording, organization and order, coherence, the use of correct paragraphing, transitional phrases, and cohesive devices.

Likewise, students are responsible for the problem of unintelligible writing, too. It seems that students study the foreign language instrumentally, not integratively, i.e., they do not study English for the sake of interest in the language and its culture; it is the need which forces them to do so (Abu

Nabah,1988).Their concern focuses on the grammatical rules and lexemes which they think, will enable them to communicate on a limited level.It becomes, obvious, hereafter,that most Arab students lack the motivation of writing efficiently, and this, in turn, results in the unsuccessful command of English.

Further,an important cause of the problem is the students' limited exposure to the authentic materials of the foreign language.Students miss the opportunity of learning from real-life situations.Authentic materials provide the students with different possible ways of sequencing the information to be presented in the composition.

Finally, one cannot ignore the interference of the mother-tongue language. It is worth noting that most Arab students transfer their first language rhetorical modes and characteristics while composing in the second language. One can hardly stumble upon a paragraph or an essay without the overuse of 'and'. In addition, paragraphs and punctuation marks are almost neglected; however,if found,they are misused because they are new comers in Arabic. Capitalization,on the other hand,does not exist in the students' native language; consequently,it becomes too difficult for them to master.Stylistic features of Arabic,such as circularity,repitition and exaggeration,are also transferred by Arabs to be employed in their English essay writing.

Conclusions:

Through the analysis of the data obtained in the present study, the researcher has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Male and Female writing of English majors at An-Najah National University lacked the discorsal elements of good writing in Coherence, and Organization and Order. Meanwhile, they performed well in Wording and Thesis statement.
2. There were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between male and female students with respect to each of the four qualities of good writing.
3. Of the four writing elements, Coherence was the most problematic to the students; Thesis Statement was the least problematic.
4. Students need to read more and more since reading is a necessary requirement without which students cannot get the essential for putting ideas in an effective, coherent, and well organized paragraphs.

Recommendations

The following points should be taken into account if we wish our students to write in an appropriate way:

1. Teachers, whether at school or universities, should be aware of the function of discourse analysis to improve the students writings. They should also teach them how to write well-organized paragraphs, including good punctuation and capitalization.
2. Instructors of courses in writing are recommended to concentrate much more on the discourse of English composition. They should provide their students with clear topics and train them how to write in a linear and commulative manner.
3. It is obvious that further courses in writing as well as separate courses on the differences between Arabic and English will evidently improve the writing skill of English majors.
4. Teachers should identify the importance and keep encouraging students to adopt the strategies of writing to achieve coherence in their essays. They, for

example, should urge them to plan their work before writing and then check what they have written to make sure of its understandability.

5. Further studies on contrastive rhetoric of Arabic and English are worth recommending. These studies will reveal differences and universalities of the discoursal elements employed in both languages.
6. EFL learners are supposed to master the grammatical and discourse competence as the former helps them to be competent in using grammar, vocabulary, whereas the latter enables them to organize their texts cohesively and coherently.
7. English language majors should receive more exposure to the authentic language and culture. This could be achieved by giving them the chance to read authentic materials which are available and accessible.

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	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
*Thesis Statement...					
1- Is the wording of the thesis statement precise?					
2- Is the thesis statement clear?					
3- Does the thesis statement indicate to the reader what the essay is going to be about?					
4- Is the thesis statement satisfactory?					
5- Is the thesis statement well-developed?					
6- Is the thesis statement well-supported?					
*Wording...					
7- Does the essay avoid vagueness?					
8- Is the word choice effective?					
9- Does the student avoid unnecessary repetition?					
10- Is the word choice exact (precise)?					
11- Is there an Arabic style in choosing words?					
*Coherence...					
12- Are sentences woven together in such a way that the reader can move easily from one sentence to the next?					
13- Are paragraphs woven together in such a way that the reader can read the essay as an integrated whole?					
14- Is there continuity in each paragraph?					
15- Are paragraphs linked with effective transitions?					
16- Is the use of transitional words and phrases sufficient?					
17- Is there continuity in the essay as a whole?					
* Organization and Order...					
18- Is the main idea evident throughout the essay?					
19- Are the essay's paragraphs divided into chronological order?					
20- Does the conclusion represent an echo to the thesis statement?					
21- Is the whole essay easy to follow?					
22- Are ideas of the essay arranged effectively for the reader?					
23- Is the information relevant to the subject?					
24- Is the essay well paragraphed?					

Appendix B:

The Permission of the English Department



التاريخ : ٢٠٠٢/١٢/٢

السيد الدكتور رئيس قسم اللغة الانجليزية المحترم
جامعة النجاح الوطنية

تحية وبعد ،

الموضوع : تسهيل مهمة الطالب / اسامة مصطفى محمد مصطفى رقم (٩٩٥٠٥١٨)

الطالب المذكور اعلاه هو احد طلبة الماجستير في جامعة النجاح الوطنية ، تخصص اساليب
تدريس اللغة الانجليزية ، في كلية التربية، وهو بصدد اعداد الاطروحة الخاصة به بعنوان :

(An Analysis of some Discoursal Elements of Written English in the
Seniors' Writing Majoring in English at An-Najah National University)

يرجى من حضرتكم تسهيل مهمته في إجراء امتحان كتابي على طلبة سنة رابعة بكالوريوس.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم.

وتفضلوا بقبول وافر الاحترام ،

عميد كلية الدراسات العليا



د. سامي جبر

