

Enhancing Sudanese University EFL Students Sentence Writing

Dr. Ahmed Mohamed Khair Abdalla

Faculty of Sciences and Arts-Taif University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background:

The study attempts to handle how to develop students writing skill at the Sudanese tertiary level. It gives insight into the possible ways, directions and what can generally develop the writing skill in the tertiary level by acquainting students with some sentence and writing skills. This enlightenment includes an answer to why students in the Sudanese tertiary level are weak in writing and how the writing skill is handled in secondary and tertiary levels contributes to this weakness.

The previously mentioned ways and directions aim to draw attention to how a gradual progress in the writing skill can occur. First, they aim to inculcate in students how to produce grammatical structures correctly and to use words and phrases in written sentences meaningfully. Second, these directions aim to familiarize students with the use of these structures for communicative purposes.

Writing is not an abstract system which is used for making grammatically correct sentences. It is a way for expressing ideas that denote the communicative purposes of the language. So, if students are able not only to produce sound structures in writing but also to use them to express what they need communicatively, one can say that they have skills in communicative writing and consequently they have communicative competence in the language.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The English language is studied as a specialization and a university requirement in most of the Sudanese universities. The English language teachers emphasize that students' performance in the language skills is less than satisfactory. They are very slow and respond negatively to the two skills they are mainly exposed to, i.e. reading and writing. Students weakness in writing is more apparent and emphatic because they frequently sit for examinations and do writing assignments.

One can say the ability to write effectively has a direct bearing on success in public examinations. To a large extent, students pass or fail many examinations according to how well they are able to write. Writing is the medium through which students can demonstrate what they have learnt. Consequently, they may score badly not because they do not understand the contents of their subjects but because they are unable to make effective use of writing to show their understanding.

Since the language skills overlap and support one another, development in one skill leads to development in other skills; whereas weakness in one skill leads to weakness in other skills. Students weaknesses in writing will obviously lead to weaknesses in the other language skills, particularly speaking. Therefore, a negligence of the top priority behind learning English as a medium of communication and interaction will occur.

1.2 Rationale:

The members of the English department, Allama Iqbal Open University (n.d: 2), have stated that choosing a channel of communication involves making a choice between writing and speaking. This certifies the importance of writing as a principal skill in communication. Hence, helping foreign language learners to improve their writing skill will help them to become good communicators.

The natural sequence for developing the language skills is listening, speaking, reading and writing. This can be right if our investigation relates to a mother tongue because the system of a mother tongue begins with acquisition not learning. Such a process is affected by individuals' innate ability which refers to the ability possessed at birth.

The case can be viewed differently concerning a foreign tongue. Students begin to learn a foreign tongue after they reach a certain age and within certain syllabuses and limited hours. They begin to develop skills in writing and reading rather than listening and speaking because students, as stated, are mainly exposed to the former skills. Therefore, to highlight developing the writing skill will be as taking a step up the ladder. This, similarly, hints at the importance of this study.

Being active in nature is another fact about writing which indicates its importance. It is active in nature because students undergo the painful effort of making choices of sound lexical and grammatical patterns when they write.

Due to the integrity of the language skills, developing the writing skill affects positively the development of the other skills. For instance, accuracy in writing refers to grammatical correctness, while fluency is checked according to whether or not the target meaning has been communicated successfully. When students write accurately, they will develop an spontaneous skill in conveying the oral message accurately. This point of view also shows the significance of this study.

Axelord and Cooper (1997: 2) point out that writing has a wide ranging implications for the way people think and learn. It similarly contributes positively to their chances of success, personal development and their relationships with each other.

Writing influences the way people think because the more they write, the more they become organized in their thinking . This organization appears when people write comprehensive sentences and paragraphs and think of words' appropriate locations in those sentences and paragraphs. Writing fosters the way of thinking because through writing people develop skills in making judgement about opposing points of view.

Added to influencing the way of thinking, writing helps in learning. In fact, one way to learn is via taking notes. Hence, people can focus on what is important and analyze what they learn since it is possible to refer to it the time they desire.

Also, writing promotes success and helps personal development. Through writing, people learn to reflect on their personal experiences and examine critically basic assumptions.

Finally, writing contributes to peoples' relationships. It impels them to exchange thoughts and take part in what involves them in their societies.

The above-named account justifies the importance of this study. It is the researcher's belief that drawing students' attention to what paves the way for them to develop the writing skill can genuinely be of benefit to the business of language teaching and learning.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of this study are:

- a. To identify the common writing errors made by EFL students.
- b. To illustrate the basic principles of communicative writing.
- c. To contribute to the field of English as a foreign language by suggesting effective ways of improving students' communicative writing skill.
- d. To emphasize the ultimate goal behind studying a foreign language as a communicating skill.

1.4 Questions of the Study:

The study attempts to give answers to the following questions:

- a. Why are the Sudanese tertiary level students unable to communicate clear thoughts when they write?
- b. Why are students unable to achieve cohesion and coherence in their writing?
- c. What are the necessary writing skills students need to write effectively?
- d. Do students write focused topic sentences and develop paragraphs properly?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study:

The researcher suggests the following hypotheses:

- a. The Sudanese tertiary level students do not communicate clear thoughts when they write.
- b. When they write, students are usually unable to achieve cohesion, the structural unity, and coherence, the unity of sense or meaning.
- c. Students lack the necessary writing skills needed to write efficiently.
- d. Students do not usually write focused topic sentences and develop paragraphs properly.

1.6 Methodology of the Study:

The researcher used the analytical descriptive method in handling the different aspects of the study. Moreover, an empirical study was conducted by 52 students enrolled in Batch 4, College of Languages and Translation, The National Ribat University. The empirical study aims to check on students' awareness of how to write good English which communicates comprehensible thoughts.

1.7 Limits of the Study:

The empirical study was carried out in the academic year 2009-2010. It was limited to the students of Batch 4 in The College of Languages and Translation, The National Ribat University, where the researcher works. The empirical study was limited to this batch in particular because the way this empirical study was carried out made it difficult to extend the population of the study to include students from other universities whom the researcher can teach for a whole semester.

The following chapter gives an account on the theoretical framework of the study. It reviews the literature and discusses the previous studies which were conducted in the field.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction:

The researcher's experience as a language teacher has shown him that the writing skill poses a real problem for university students. In fact, it is a problematic area for students at different educational stages. The writer of this study believes that providing a detailed account on developing the writing skill in all educational stages requires a lot of effort. What makes this difficult is the interpretation of writing from an educational stage to another. For instance, writing to children who newly begin school is a mere try to form letters and to develop a hand-eye coordination and the motor skills in general. It is obvious that suggestions for developing the hand-eye coordination and motor skills differ from the suggestions and ideas which develop the writing skill in the university student.

Despite this, one can say to develop the writing skill, it should be viewed as an integral and gradual system. Hence, developing a hand-eye coordination and the motor skills can be the initial stage in developing the writing skill.

For the sake of a smooth, sequential and consistent presentation of ideas, the researcher thinks it would be appropriate to adopt the principle of gradation in treating the theoretical framework of this study. Alkhuli (1983: 83) mentions two reasons for the application of this principle to teaching writing. Gradation can also be adopted in the presentation of what can develop the writing skill and for the same reasons. The first reason is an educational one which ensures that learning experiences go from the easy to the difficult. The second reason is a logical one which confirms to begin with teaching the sentence, paragraph and finally multi-paragraph composition. Likewise, the researcher is in favour of any attempt to highlight the progress of the writing skill to begin from sentence, paragraph and then multi-paragraph composition.

Therefore, all suggestions that imply the characteristics of good writing in this study will be graded in such a manner. Concentration, however, will mainly be on the sentence and then paragraph. Since they are basic elements in an essay, suggestions for producing the sentence and paragraph effectively apply to the production of a good essay.

Crystal (1995:257) summarizes the definition of writing as follows:

"Writing is a way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface. It is one kind of graphic expression. Other kinds include drawing, musical notation and mathematical formula. The standardized writing system of a language is known as its orthography : English orthography consists of the set of letters and their variant forms (e.g. capitals, lowercase), the spelling system and the set of punctuation marks".

2.1 The Difficulty of the Writing Process:

It has been illustrated in the introduction of the study that writing is important. Though, it remains and can be described as a complex skill. Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 60) even claim that an explicit model of text construction is beyond current research capacity. They, nevertheless, confirm the importance of understanding how texts are constructed as an essential part of understanding the nature of writing and writing development.

Writing can be described as a messy business. It is usually carried out unstraight-forwardly by many writers. They may finish a conclusion before writing the paper itself. Writers may spend hours writing one paragraph or finish a whole paper in hours. They may interrupt the presentation of systematic and logical ideas to write a list which they should have brainstormed first. Considering this reality, one can describe writing as a recursive process that moves backward and forward and which does not follow a consistent convention.

The following is a figure which shows the intricacy of the writing process and the complex range of tasks involved in producing a communicative piece of writing:

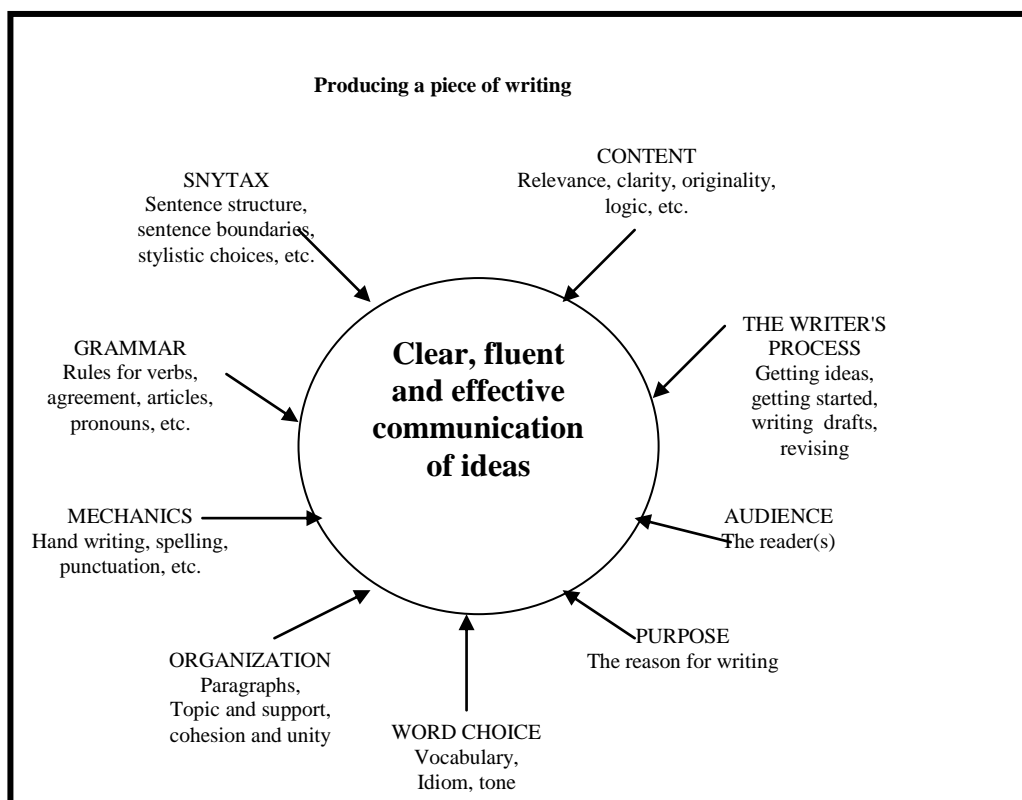


Figure (2.1) Producing a piece of writing

Source: The Language Skills, The Department of English, AllamaIqbal Open University (1988: 36)

As appears in Fig (2.1) that the production of clear, fluent and effective writing requires a number of complex and overlapping procedures. It requires knowledge of syntax, the mechanics of writing, a skill in defining a precise content, etc. Since these dynamic processes take place simultaneously, a thorough idea regarding how to handle them together is very necessary for communicative writing.

Also, the dynamic processes illustrated in Fig (2.1) have another implication. They give an understanding of the concept of communicative writing, the part and parcel of this study.

2.2 The Concept of Communicative Writing:

Besides communicative writing, those who are involved in teaching and learning the English language hear of different types of writing. Examples are: academic, expository, technical, expressive and descriptive writing.

One can not say that each type of writing has distinguishing qualities from the other types. The purposes behind practicing them may differ but finally they have something in common. For example, it is said that expressive writing checks on the

degree of comprehension and reflection on the part of the student. Writing well-constructed sentences which contain clear grammatical units and meaningful words is an essential part of this degree of comprehension and reflection. Hamp-lyons and Heasley (2006: 17) emphasize the same idea about academic writing. They maintain that academic writing should have predictable patterns of grammar, organization and argument.

In a study on contemporary rhetoric (Hairston, 1982: 3) expository writing is described as non-fictional which explains its ideas in a specific situation. This situation associates with a particular audience and purpose. Nevertheless, expository writing, like the mentioned types of writing, should be grammatical, meaningful, organized and argumental.

The writer of this study thinks of the mentioned types of writing as related in terms of formality. Furthermore, all of them can be communicative in nature. Accordingly, communicative writing can be viewed as an umbrella-term for the different types of writing. It aims at the ultimate and most competent goal behind the practice of writing since it presupposes that the writer should have considerable knowledge and understanding of what he writes and that he writes to inform the readers. The considerable knowledge and understanding required by communicative writing can appear in students' writing if they are, as previously mentioned, able to treat the complicated array of skills illustrated in Fig (2.1).

The context in which the writing skill is practiced at the secondary level provides part of the answer to why students are weak in writing at the tertiary level. There is a unanimity among teachers that the writing tasks given at the secondary stage are void of communicative purposes. Learners, probably, practice grammar through written exercises. They view words as entities of grammar and in most occasions learners are instructed by teachers to focus on the morphological changes of these words. They seldom think of words as entities through which they can communicate. Thus, one can say, setting clear and effective communicative purposes helps students to develop communicative writing skills and at the same time setting these purposes characterizes communicative writing.

Communicative writing is also characterized by being significant. It is significant because it is enjoyable and satisfies the needs of the reader. It does not repeat obvious, familiar and unimpressive conventional ideas which are full of generalities. It is not vague to tax the brains of readers.

Communicative writing is likewise economical and developed. Many of those who involve themselves in different writing tasks do not prefer economical writing. This attitude towards economical writing is not meritorious. Wordiness in writing is more likely to annoy readers than to attract their attention or admiration. Also, communicative writing should be developed adequately. It should contain opening questions to be answered, key sentences and thesis statements to be developed.

Communicative writing can be described as coherent. Thus, it is characterized by the unifying element necessary for good writing. It is coherent because it is logically arranged, flows smoothly and adopt whatever achieves consistency, conciseness, formality and clarity. The smooth flow occurs when a sentence leads into another. Basically, this happens when certain expressions called transitions are used. These transitions provide the links between ideas.

Transitional expressions are major and minor. Expressions and words like, 'for example', 'to begin with', in 'contrast', 'however', 'also' and 'thus' are major transitions that help in organizing the main points in a communicative piece of writing. Minor transitions, on the other hand, are words like demonstrative pronouns and adjectives that link sentences within the main points of a communicative piece of writing.

By and large, major transitions, as stated by Yorkey (1982: 130) signal result, contrast, addition and time sequence. The following sentences illustrate the first three transition types using their same sequence in the previous sentence:

1. She couldn't succeed [therefore; hence; consequently; accordingly] she felt sad.
2. Defeat was obvious [even though; nevertheless; still; yet] the players did their best to win.
3. The sentence was severe [and unfair; as well as unfair; besides being unfair; furthermore it was unfair].

With regard to the transitions that signal a series or time sequence, the following are some examples: 'first', 'second', 'then', 'next', 'finally', 'at last' and 'afterwards'.

Transitions like 'because', 'as a result', 'results from', 'caused by', 'results in' are particularly effective in introducing causes and effects. Most of these transitions include verbs and hence can be referred to as transitional verbs. Like the preceding ones, these transitions give writing internal integrity and coherence.

Adjective clauses can likewise contribute to making a piece of writing coherent. They modify nouns in sentences and they are usually introduced by subordinators like 'who', 'whom', 'that', and 'which'. The following is an example which shows how an adjective clause modifies a preceding noun:

They bought a house that looks new and beautiful.

Another understanding of the use of adjective clauses in coherent sentences is that they do the same job of an adjective. In the sentence, 'Sarah is a hungry baby', the word 'hungry' can be replaced by an adjective clause that functions in a similar way to it, 'Sarah is a baby that wants to eat'.

Crystal (1995: 232), similarly, refers to other aspects of grammar which connect sentences and therefore achieve coherent writing. Such grammatical aspects as space and time adverbials, pronouns and determiners. The following are examples which illustrate this fact successively:

1. We left Paris on Monday morning. By the same evening we were in Rome.
2. The children were back in time for dinner .They were very hungry .
3. A Mercedes was parked in the street . The car looked new.

Also, what makes communicative writing considerably coherent is the use of parallelism or parallel structures. Parallelism creates a well-balanced writing through the repetition of structural elements. One can say the following lines are coherent because the gerund is repeated a number of times:

The government shoulders many responsibilities including, maintaining public order and safety, providing educational services, and introducing different projects that contribute to developing the country's economy.

Cohesion, like coherence, characterizes communicative writing. A brief distinction between the two concepts has been drawn within the hypotheses of this study. However, it is the researcher's idea that the absolute lines of distinction between the two concepts are a little blurred in a sense. In other words, they do not stand independently in writing. How the comprehensive use of transitions, actually grammatical devices, contributes to the production of coherent writing is explained in the preceding paragraphs. Still, some authors emphasize what is called grammatical cohesion. That is to say, the impact of grammatical devices or features on the production of cohesive writing. Hence, most grammatical features can act as coherent and cohesive devices in writing.

Ultimately, as pointed out by Thornbury (2005: 36), coherence is a quality that the readers derive from texts. It creates an interaction that enables readers to realize the capacity of texts as making sense to them. This sense is supported by the surface cohesive grammatical features of texts. Accordingly, one could say, coherence and cohesion are rather complementary in communicative writing.

The account given under 2.2 illustrates the concept of communicative writing broadly. However, all through the coming information and ideas which aim at showing how to achieve good writing, the concept of communicative writing will become more and more elucidated.

2.3 The Sentence Skills Students Need to Acquire:

2.3.1 Definition of a Sentence:

Acquainting students with the meaning and idea of sentence is a tentative step in paving their way to develop the writing skill.

Although it is the largest unit described in grammar, there is no acknowledged definition of the term sentence. Greenbaum (1991: 11) highlights two definitions of this term which he considers as deficient. The two definitions are:

1. Words that express a complete thought.
2. Strings of words beginning with a capital letter and ending with a full stop.

The first definition is a notional one. It defines a term by the notion it conveys. This definition is defective because it is difficult to determine what is meant by a 'complete thought'. A multiple sentence may express more than one complete thought whereas a notice is not regarded as a sentence despite the fact that it seems to be complete in itself. The following examples illustrate this point of view:

1. I am happy that you are joining our department (A complex sentence containing more than one thought.)
2. Exit/Danger/Restricted area (Some notices that each seems to be complete in itself.)

The second definition is a formal one. It defines a term by the form of what a term refers to. It is lacking because a sentence may, also, end with a question mark or an exclamation mark. Also, as illustrated in the examples below, titles and headlines are viewed as sentences although they do not end with a full stop:

1. Man killed in a tragic accident (Headline)
2. An Irish Airman Foresees his Death (Title of a poem)

This difficulty in defining sentence should not pose a serious problem. The ultimate concern should be to help students specify the possible grammatical patterns of the English sentence. Combination of words that conform to those patterns are then the grammatical sentences which contribute to enhancing the university students' writing skill.

A. Regular, irregular and non-sentences:

To further their idea on what a sentence is, students need to discriminate between regular, irregular and non-sentences. Regular sentences are compatible with the major sentence constituents. As maintained by Greenbaum (1991: 33), the basic structures of the regular sentence are:

1. SV: subject + intransitive verb
My father (S) is sleeping (V).
2. SVA: Subject + Verb + adverbial complement
They (S) are living (V) in Chicago (AC).
3. SVC: subject + linking verb + subject complement
I (S) feel (V) tired (SC).
4. SVO: subject + transitive verb+ direct object
We (S) have finished (V) our work (DO).
5. SVOO: subject + transitive verb + indirect object + direct object.
She (S) has given (V) me (IO) some money (DO).
6. SVOA: subject + transitive verb + direct object + adverbial complement.
You (S) can put (V) your coat (DO) in my bedroom (AC).
7. SVOC: subject + transitive verb + direct object + object complement.
You (S) have made (V) me (O) very happy (OC).

Greenbaum (1991: 34) similarly points out that the above structures depend on the choice of the main verbs, regardless of the auxiliaries. The same verb may enter into different structures. The following are some examples:

1. SV: I have eaten.
2. SVO: I have eaten lunch.
3. SV: It smells.
4. SVC: It smells sweet.
5. SVC: He felt a fool.
6. SVO: He felt the material.
7. SVO: I made some sandwiches.
8. SVOO: I made them some sandwiches.
9. SVO: I have named my representative.

10. SVOC: I have named her my representative.
11. SV: The children are growing.
12. SVO: The children are growing carrots.
13. SVC: The children are growing hungry.
14. SVO: She caught me.
15. SVOO: She caught me a fish.
16. SVOA: She caught me off my guard.

Irregular sentences, on the other hand, are fragments, which do not harmonize with the regular sentence patterns. With regard to how they occur in writing, fragments leave out words like subjects, verbs or any essential part of a sentence. It is possible to reconstruct them into complete regular sentences. Consequently, fragments are derivable in their interpretation from regular sentences. The following are some examples of fragments:

1. A, Where do they leave their money?
B, *In the cupboard.*
2. Isabel ran down the corridor. *And looked into rooms and closets.*
3. *Isabel running down the corridor into rooms and closets.*
4. We will leave. *As soon as the dishes are done.*
5. The housebreaker tried to escape. *Where to go? To the outskirts of the city? To a neighbouring country?*
6. I dislike dogs. *A lot.*

The complete sentence of the fragment in the first example is, 'they leave their money in the cupboard'. The missing words of the fragment are noticeable in the verbal context of the regular sentence. In the second example the verb 'looked' has no subject. The complete sentence is, 'Isabel ran down the corridor, and looked into rooms and closets'. This sentence contains a compound verb (ran, looked) which describes what Isabel did. The word 'running' in the third example is a participle that describes Isabel. Hence, the subject has no true verb. The complete sentence of this fragment is, 'Isabel ran down the corridor into rooms and closets'. It is complete because 'ran' is a true verb of the subject. The fragment in the fourth example is due to the insertion of the full stop after 'leave'. Many fragments occur because of the insertion of an end punctuation and a capital letter too soon. The complete sentence of the fourth fragment is, 'we will leave as soon as the dishes are done.' The fragments in the fifth example imply confusion, while the one in the sixth example implies emphasis.

Such fragments as those in the fifth and sixth examples are described by Blau and Burak (2005: 33) as intentional ones which are used by writers to indicate stylistic choices. Unintentional fragments are viewed as a type of sentence errors. The comma splices and run-on sentences are, likewise, two common types of sentence errors which are frequently made by students. To foster sentence skills, students need to know these errors and consequently avoid them in writing.

Since this part of the study attempts to clarify the idea of sentence, these sentence errors and other sentence errors and skills would be handled in a coming stage of this chapter.

A subordinate clause is a fragment. As known, it contains a subject and a verb and it usually begins with a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun. Such a fragment can be set of as a sentence by either combining it with the independent clause or removing the subordinate word. Following are three groups of sentences, the second one in each group revises the first:

- A. (1) Many pine trees bear large cones. Which appear in August. (The fragment is a subordinate clause modifying 'cones'.)
(2) Many pine trees bear large cones which appear in August.
- B. (1) The decision seems perfectly correct and fair. Although I can not say I like it. (The fragment is a subordinate clause modifying the entire independent clause.)

(2) The decision seems perfectly correct and fair although I can not say I like it.

C. (1) The decision seems perfectly correct and fair. Although I can not say I like it.

(2) The decision seems perfectly correct and fair. I can not say I like it. (The subordinate clause is made into a complete sentence by dropping although.)

A verbal phrase consists of a present participle, a past participle or an infinitive. A verbal phrase, like a subordinate clause is a sentence fragment. Hence, it can be mistaken for a complete sentence. This sentence error occurs because verbals function somewhat like verbs. Such a fragment can easily be corrected by combining the verbal phrase with the independent clause it related to. To convert a verbal phrase into an independent clause, it needs to be rewritten. Following are fragments consisting of verbal phrases and their revisions:

A. (1) He backed closer and closer to the end of the diving board. At last falling into the water. (The fragment is a present participle phrase modifying 'he' in the independent clause.)

(2) He backed closer and closer to the end of the diving board, at last falling into the water. (The presentparticiple phrase is attached to the independentclause.)

B. (1) Dancing has become very popular. Captivating all generations. (The fragment is a participle modifying 'dancing' in the independent clause.)

(2) Dancing has become very popular. It is captivating all generations. (The participle phrase is made into a complete sentence by changing the participle to the verb 'is captivating' and adding the subject it.)

C. (1) Covered with ice. The roads were impassable. (The fragment is a past participle modifying 'roads' in the independent clause.)

(2) Covered with ice, the roads were impassable. (The past participle phrase is attached to the independent clause.)

D. (1) Just to stay awake. That is the major challenge of long distance driving. (The fragment is an infinitive modifying challenge in the remaining part of the sentence.)

(2) Just to stay awake is the major challenge of long distance driving.(The infinitive is attached to the remaining part of the sentence.)

A prepositional phrase and an appositive are also sentence fragments. An appositive is a noun, or a noun and its modifiers that renames or describes another noun. Following are examples of the two fragments followed by their revisions:

A. (1) She was still beautiful two years later. After seven operations

(2) She was still beautiful two years later, after seven operations. (The preposition phrase is attached to the independent clause.)

B. (1) When I was a child, my favourite relative was an old uncle. A retired teacher who always told me stories of the life in his youth.

(2) When I was a child, my favourite relative was an old uncle, a retired teacher who always told mestories of the life in his youth (The appositive isattached to the independent clause with a comma.)

Non-sentences include labels, notices and expressions like Hello!'; 'Yes'; 'No'; 'So long!'; and 'Cheers!'. Such expressions are non-sentences because it is not possible to analyze them grammatically.

B. The types of sentences by purpose:

Within the framework of illustrating the idea of sentence, students should, likewise, get familiar with the types of sentences by purpose. Besides their knowledge of sentence structure, they need to develop a good idea on their purpose. For instance, students need to know that declaratives are statements which convey information while interrogatives are questions which request information. Similarly, they should be acquainted with the idea of imperatives as directives which request action while exclamatives express strong feeling. The following are some examples:

1. He was appointed a teaching assistant in our college. (A declarative)

2. Do you have your personal computer? (An interrogative)

3. Take a seat. (An imperative)
4. What a large car he drivers! (An exclamative)

C. The simple and multiple sentence:

Within the scope of bringing to light the idea of sentence, it is, also, necessary to refer to the simple and multiple sentence.

A simple sentence is an independent clause. It contains a subject and a verb and expresses a thought. It may similarly contain a compound subject or a compound verb. The following are some examples:

1. I teach English
2. Juan and Alicia come late everyday.
3. Alicia goes to the library and studies daily.

Sentence 2 contains a compound subject while Sentence 3 contains a compound verb. In sentence 3 'and' should not be confused as a coordinating conjunction which usually exists in a compound sentence and which joins clauses of equal value. In case the verb 'studies' is preceded by a subject, the sentence would become a compound one. It remains a simple sentence because 'goes' and 'studies' is a compound verb that describes what Alicia does.

A compound sentence is usually made up of two subject and verb pair. That is to say, two clauses of equal weight and importance. The clauses are joined by:

A. A coordinating conjunction:

1. Jack played football , So Maria went shopping.
2. Jack played football, for Maria went shopping.

B. A semicolon: Friday is the end of the week; it is my favourite day of the week.

C. Adverbial conjunction: Friday is the end of the week; therefore, it is my favourite day of the week.

The two sentences in A are almost identical except for the coordinators. Each sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinator with a comma preceding it. As realized in the two examples, the use of different coordinators influences the relationship between the clauses stylistically or in terms of action occurrence. In sentence 1A, obviously, Jack played football first and consequently Maria went shopping. In sentence 2A, Maria went shopping first. In this sentence Jack played football because, probably, he did not have any thing else to do or because Maria went shopping. Definitely, the use of other coordinators to replace 'so' and 'for' would have implications on the meaning of the sentence. Concerning sentence D, it is possible to set off the adverbial conjunction from the rest of the clause in other different ways:

1.,it is, therefore, my favourite day of the week.
2., it is my favourite day of the week, therefore.

Coordination as a clause linkage, obviously, occurs in compound sentences, while subordination occurs in complex sentences. Greenbourn (1991: 110), thinks that these types of clause linkage may mingle since it is possible to have a subordination within a main clause of a compound sentence. Also, as pointed out by him, subordinate clauses in a complex sentence can be coordinated. The examples below illustrate the two ideas consecutively:

1. Mite specialist have identified 30,000 species of mites, but they believe that these represent only a tenth of the total number.
2. They claimed that the streets are clean, the rubbish is regularly collected, and the crime rate is low.

In the first compound sentence, 'but' begins a main clause and 'that' begins a subordinate clause within a main clause. Actually, the 'that-clause' is subordinate to the 'but-clause' and not to the sentence. Thus, the 'but-clause' is superordinate to the 'that-clause'. The second sentence is complex. The three clauses which are separated by commas, the first begins with 'that', are coordinated subordinate clauses. Together, they constitute the direct object of the sentence.

It has previously been mentioned that clauses in a compound sentence are equal in importance. Coordination as a clause linkage shows this equality in importance. According to Holt, et al. (1995: 79), the presentation of unequal ideas in a compound sentence as equal results in faulty coordination and unclear relationship between those ideas. They suggest avoiding faulty coordination by putting less important ideas into subordinate clauses. The first of the following sentences contains a faulty coordination while the second one revises it:

1. We stopped to buy a picnic lunch, and we missed the train.
2. Because we stopped to buy a picnic lunch, we missed the train.

A complex sentence comprises an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses. The subordinate clauses which constitute part of the complex sentence are:

A. Adverbial clauses: introduced by subordinators such as 'before', 'after', 'as', 'when', 'although', 'because', 'until', 'if' and 'while'. For instance:

1. When he handed his homework, he forgot to give the teacher the last page.
2. The teacher returned the homework after she noticed the error.

B. Adjective clauses: introduced by relative pronouns such as 'who', 'whom', 'that', 'which', 'whomever' and 'whoever'. For example:

1. You may invite whomever you like to the party.
2. The woman whom my mother talked to sells cosmetics.

C. Noun clauses: introduced by 'that', 'where', 'whether', 'if', or 'question words'. For example:

It would be interesting to know where Susan is from.

A compound-complex sentence has at least three subject-verb pairs. It has two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. The independent and dependent clauses are joined using the same rules that are used to create compound and complex sentences. For example:

1. Once students learn the types of sentences, they will know how to punctuate sentences correctly, and they will write essays well.

As has been stated before, a general grasp of the English grammar goes hand in hand with writing communicative sentences. Added to bringing to light what a sentence is, the grammatical issues treated under 2.3.1 are particularly important for sentence construction. They could be viewed as a basis upon which the sentence skills build. Also, they help students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) to develop skills in analyzing sentences. Concerning the simple and multiple-sentence, using a variety of sentences to make writing interesting distinguishes experienced writers. Using many simple sentences in writing sounds immature, while using many complex sentences seems to be difficult and hard to understand.

2.3.2 Revising Sentences through Grammatical Choices:

An understanding of the English grammar helps students to think of grammatical choices in writing through which they can revise sentences. To phrase it differently, sentences can be reconstructed to be refined by using different structures and grammatical words. Also, identifying grammatical structures involved in writing enables students to position or reconsider positioning words or expressions correctly in sentences. Examples of these grammatical structures are parallel structures, cleft sentences, there-structures, structures which give corrected placement and structures which avoid writing long subjects at the expense of predicates.

A. Parallel structures:

When they write, many students consciously try to avoid repeating the same structures. To them, this will probably result in monotonous sentences. They painfully struggle to come up with various structures in writing sentences. In contrast, as stated by the researcher in his attempt to clarify the concept of communicative writing, the use of parallelism or the repetition of structural elements creates well-balanced and clear sentences.

Hairston (1982: 55) supports this idea and sees parallelism as a linking device which creates effective sentences. Also, the repetition of the same structures and key words provides readers with cues or signals that keep them moving in the right direction. Thus, the sentences which are paired with similar grammatical forms are better than the sentences which are paired with unsimilar grammatical forms.

Bearing in mind these considerations, students can be directed to revise their writing with parallel structures. They can particularly receive training to use parallel structures to coordinate ideas, to compare or contrast ideas and to link ideas with correlative conjunctions. Following are three groups of sentences that illustrate parallel structures in the these contexts. The first sentence in each group is paired with unsimilar grammatical structures followed by one or more revised sentence (s) paired with similar grammatical structures:

A. Parallel structures in linking coordinate ideas:

1. Juan likes baking bread and he likes to cook his own food. (Gerund paired with an infinitive.)
2. Juan likes baking bread and he likes cooking his own food. (Gerund paired with a gerund.)
3. Juan likes to bake bread and he likes to cook his own food. (Infinitive paired with an infinitive.)

B. Parallel structures in comparing or contrasting ideas:

1. For an athlete, playing fairly should be as important as to win. (Gerund paired with an infinitive.)
2. For an athlete, playing fairly should be as important as wining. (Gerund paired with a gerund.)
3. For an athlete, to play fairly should be as important as to win. (Infinitive paired with an infinitive.)

C. Parallel structures in linking ideas with correlative conjunctions:

1. Because the drama society has four performances this week, I shall have time for neither playing with my nephew nor to go on a picnic. (Gerund paired with an infinitive).
2. Because the drama society has four performances this week, I shall have time for neither playing football with my nephew nor going on a picnic. [Gerund paired with a gerund.]

B. Cleft sentences, there-structures and end-weight structures:

Swan (1980: xiii) defines the cleft sentence as the sentence in which special emphasis is given to one part (e.g. the subject or the object) by using a structure with 'it' or 'what'. In cleft sentences with 'it' the emphasized part comes at the beginning while it comes at the end in cleft sentences with 'what'. Greenbaum (1991: 112) refers to cleft sentences with 'what' as pseudo-cleft sentences where the first part is normally a nominal relative clause introduced by 'what'. In cleft sentences with 'it', both 'it' and the auxiliary that follows are semantically empty words. Although some authors describe cleft constructions as expletive ones that rob sentences of their energy, impressive and emphatic writing is required in some contexts. Consequently, cleft sentences can be better substitutes to normal sentences in such contexts.

The second example in each pair of sentences below is either a cleft sentence or a pseudo-cleft sentence which revises the first one:

- A. 1- The Sudanese flag is waving.
2- It is the Sudanese flag that is waving.
- B. 1- A human error caused the explosion.
2- It was a human error that caused the explosion.
- C. 1- After they spent a year working for a butcher, they decided to become vegetarians.
2- It was after they spent a year working for a butcher that they decided to become vegetarians.
- D. 1- I want a good sleep.
2- What I want is a good sleep.

As shown in the second example below, using a general abstract noun in this type of sentences is as effective as a nominal relative clause:

1. A human error caused the explosion.
2. The thing that caused the explosion was a human error.

Like cleft-sentences, 'there-structures' give greater prominence to the subject. They are put in the subject position and the subject is moved to a forward position. 'There-structures' are used to revise the first sentence in the pair of sentences below:

A- (1) Some topics are best discussed in private.

(2) There are some topics that are best discussed in private.

B- (1) Nobody is outside.

(2) There is nobody outside.

In 'there-structures', the prominence of the subject and the rest of the sentence result from their presentation as new information.

Among the structures which revise sentences also are the 'end-weight structures'. The researcher has referred to this structure in 2.3.2 as the structure which avoids writing long subjects at the expense of their predicates. As a matter of fact, a sentence is awkward and more difficult to understand when the subject is noticeably longer than the predicate. A sentence, in contrast, would seem improved when it contains a shorter subject and a longer part (the predicate) which comes at the end.

Following are awkward sentences with long subjects improved with sentences that position the long part towards the end:

1. The rate at which the American people are using up the world's supply of irreplaceable fossil fuels and their refusal to admit that the supply is limited is the real problem. (Awkward)
2. The real problem is the rate at which the American people are using up the world's supply of irreplaceable fossil fuels and their refusal to admit that the supply is limited. (Improved)
3. A serious try to find out the reasons behind the writing problem in Sudanese universities and to decide on radical solutions is not considered. (Awkward)
4. No one considers a serious try to find out the reasons behind the writing problem in Sudanese universities and to decide on radical solutions. (Improved)
5. A pronunciation set of symbols to enable the reader to produce a satisfactory pronunciation is used. (Awkward)
6. A pronunciation set of symbols is used to enable the reader to produce a satisfactory pronunciation. (Improved)

Also, sometimes, the units that follow the verb may differ in length. Here, it is preferable to position the longest unit at the end:

1. The discovery of a baby mammal in Siberia has provided biochemists, anthropologists, immunologists, zoologists, and paleontologists with ample material. (Clumsy)
2. The discovery of a baby mammal in Siberia has provided ample material for biochemists, anthropologists, immunologists, zoologists, and paleontologists.

C. Misplaced modifiers and expressions:

The correct word order is important for the clarity of sentences. Where an expression belongs is shown by where it is placed within a sentence. The incorrect word order results, most probably, from the wrong placement of modifiers. Wyrick (1993: 128) refers to the modifiers which modify the wrong part of the sentence as 'misplaced'. He also, observes that such modifiers change or distort the meanings of sentences. In the examples below, the position of 'only', a modifier, affects the meaning of the sentence:

1. Only Linda said she hated him. (Nobody else said so except Linda.)
2. Linda only said she hated him (Linda said she hated him but said nothing other than that.)
3. Linda said she hated only him. (Linda hated him and no one else.)

It is, therefore, necessary to position modifiers near the words they modify. This, as mentioned, helps to avoid changing the originally intended meaning by a sentence.

Following are examples of misplaced modifiers followed by their correct placement:

A- (1) The lost child was finally found wandering in a frozen farmer's field.

(2) The lost child was finally found wandering in a farmer's frozen field.

B- (1) Because she is thoroughly house-trained, Sarah can take her dog almost anywhere she goes.

(2) Because she is thoroughly house trained, Sarah's dog can accompany her almost anywhere she goes.

C- (1) They knew what I meant quite well.

(2) They knew quite well what I meant.

D- (1) He said on several occasions he suffered from headaches.

(2) He said on several occasions that he suffered from headaches.

In 1-A, locating the modifier just before 'farmer' implies that what is frozen is the farmer not the field. The correct placement of the modifier in 2-A shows the intended meaning, what is frozen is the field not the farmer. The word 'house-trained', in 1-B, refers to cats or dogs which are trained to defecate or urinate outside houses in special boxes. In 1-B, it is not clear whether Sarah or the dog is house-trained. In 2-B, a correct placement is given because the sentence clearly states that Sarah's dog is house-trained. The phrase 'quite well' is misplaced in 1-C. It is positioned correctly in 2-C since it is placed near the verb it modifies.

Concerning 1-D, the idea seems a little different. The expression 'on several occasions' has more than one interpretation because it is positioned where it might belong in either of two directions. This expression may go with "he said" or with "he suffered from headaches". To associate this expression with "he said", as illustrated in 2-D, the conjunction 'that' can be inserted after it. Thus, the expression "on several occasions" will be outside the boundaries of the subordinate clause.

It is necessary to make reference to the so-called dangling modifiers within this account of misplaced modifiers and expressions. Blue and Burak (2005: 354) simply state that dangling modifiers dangle because they have nothing in the sentence to modify. These dangling modifiers are often introductory participial phrases like 'seeing the film' or infinitive phrases like 'to see the film'. Grammatically, the phrase should modify the noun or pronoun that follows it.

The following is an example of a dangling modifier:

Seeing the film, Adil Imam was extraordinary .

'Seeing the film' dangles because this phrase incorrectly modifies Adil Imam. The correction of this error is:

Seeing the film, Sarah thought Adil Imam was extraordinary. (seeing the film' modifies Sarah.)

Another examples is:

To see the film clearly, glasses had to be worn.

'To see the film clearly' dangles because this phrase incorrectly modifies 'glasses'. The correction of this error is:

To see the film clearly, Sarah had to wear her glasses.

('To see the film clearly' modifies Sarah.)

D. Writing unredundant Sentences:

Vigorous writing is concise. Students need to be trained to write unredundant sentences. They should be attentive to use as many words as they need to make their points. Thus, students can revise sentences by replacing unnecessary words and phrases with shorter alternatives. This requires not to keep sentences short and void of important details. Ultimately, the redundant should be pruned and every word should be meaningful.

Wyrick (1993: 133) defines redundant sentences as those which contain words that repeat the same idea or whose meanings overlap. The idea of redundancy can also be extended to include the sentences that contain long phrases which do not necessarily repeat the same idea and at the same time can be replaced with shorter alternatives. Redundant

sentences, similarly, include phrases which can be eliminated altogether. Such phrases usually add nothing to the meaning of a sentence.

Table (2.1) and table (2.2) contain redundant phrases. These phrases are presented by (Holt, et al, 1995: 99; Wyrick, 1993: 131-133). The redundancies in table (2.1) manifest the words that repeat the same meaning or overlap in meaning, whereas, the redundancies in table (2.2) manifest cumbersome and pompous phrases. Such cumbersome phrases are sometimes thought of as competent and impressive. Hence, some writers intentionally include them in their writing. All redundant phrases should be avoided in favour of better alternatives. This usually results in concise, consistent and understandable sentences.

Table (2.1) Redundant phrases and their short alternatives

No	Redundant	Better
1	12 midnight	Midnight
2	3 am in the morning	3 am
3	Circle around	Circle
4	Close proximately	Proximately
5	Completely unanimous	Unanimous
6	Cooperate together	Cooperate
7	Each and every	Each
8	Reverted back	Reverted
9	Reflected back	Reflected
10	Fell down	Fell
11	A true fact	Fact
12	New innovation	Innovation
13	Red in colour	Red
14	Pair of twins	Twins
15	Final outcome	Outcome
16	Exactly the same	The same
17	Repeat again	Repeat
18	Shorter/longer in length	Shorter/longer
19	Small/large in size	Small/large
20	Summarize briefly	Summarize
21	Surrounded in all sides	Surrounded
22	The future to come	The future
23	Usual/habitual custom	Custom

Table (2.2) Complicated phrases and their simple alternatives

No	Complicated phrases	Simple alternatives
1	Regardless of the fact that	Although
2	Due to the fact that	Because
3	At this point in time	Now
4	Concerning the matter of	About
5	By means of	By
6	In the event that/owing to the situation that	Because
7	There is a reasonable expectation that	Probably
8	Taking into consideration	Considering
9	Prior to the occasion when	Before
10	Should a situation arise	If
11	Have a tendency to	Tend

As mentioned, some redundant phrases can be left out altogether. The second sentence in the examples below eliminates the redundant phrase:

A- (1) As far as I am concerned, there is no need for further studies regarding that problem.

(2) There is no need for further studies regarding that problem.

B- (1) In the final analysis, the state would have been better off without such a policy.

(2) The state would have been better off without such a policy.

C- (1) Legislators are already in the process of reviewing the statutes.

(2) Legislators are already reviewing the statutes.

D- (1) What I mean to say is that adopting good teaching methods helps students to develop academically.

(2) Adopting good teaching methods helps students to develop academically.

Intensifying or modifying words are also another source of redundant phrases. Students can be directed to avoid using words such as 'extremely', 'severely', 'absolute', 'absolutely', 'considerable', 'considerably' when they are not necessary. For example, it is enough to say, "the salary increase is inadequate".

Saying, "the salary increase is severely inadequate" adds nothing new to the meaning of the sentence. Such intensifiers should not be banished from students' vocabulary. It is advisable to use them sparingly in certain expressions to achieve the required effect.

E. Sentences with verbs and the active style:

The frequent use of nouns in sentences is a common cause of a poor writing style. Using nouns instead of verbs results in longer sentences than necessary. The second example in each group below revises the first and shows how sentences can be improved by getting rid of nouns in favour of verbs:

A- (1) All employees were involved in the development of the programme.

(2) All employees were involved in developing the programme.

B- (1) The testing of the students was carried out by Jane.

(2) Jane tested the students.

C- (1) Clicking the icon causes the execution of the programme.

(2) The programme executes when the icon is clicked..

Also, single-word verbs can replace phrasal verbs (two or three word verbs) in sentences. This usually results in formal and concise expressions. The second example in the following pair of sentences revises the first which contains a phrasal verb:

A- (1) During the football game, the rain-damaged roof of the stadium fell in, injuring several spectators.

(2) During the football game, the rain-damaged roof of the stadium collapsed, injuring several spectators.

B- (1) When the rain stops, the police are going to look into the crime and take finger-prints.

(2) When the rain stops, the police will investigate the crime and take finger-prints.

C- (1) At the next class meeting, our teacher will briefly tell about his research on the qualities of good writing.

(2) At the next class meeting, our teacher will summarize his research on the qualities of good writing.

D- (1) Wars account for the destruction of countries.

(2) Wars destroy countries.

It is advisable to use active expressions rather than passive ones in non-scientific expressions. Some writers use the passive style because they think it is more formal and acceptable. Quite the contrary, using the passive style, like nouns, results in poorly structured and longer sentences than necessary. The following sentence shows the improvement of switching from passive to active:

1. The report was written by Jack, and was found to be excellent.

2. Jack wrote the report, and it was excellent.

In certain situations, however, it can make sense to use the passive style. For example, if the purpose is to stress the thing acted on, then it will be reasonable to use the passive. In the following sentence, the writer tries to emphasize the constant bombing of the city:

1. The city was destroyed by constant bombing.

Also, at times, the subject of an active statement is unknown or unimportant, then the passive style can be acceptable:

1. The flight was cancelled.
2. Thousands of people are killed annually in highway accidents.

F. Pronouns and antecedents:

The examples which show the unclear relationships between pronouns and antecedents are taken from (Fowler, 1983; Greenbaum, 1991).

A pronoun derives its meaning from its antecedent, the noun it refers to. A pronoun can also be an antecedent for another pronoun.

A pronoun must refer clearly and unmistakably to its antecedent. Thus, sentences would be clear. Students, probably use pronouns unclearly to refer to antecedents. Fowler (1983: 224) suggests two ideas to achieve a clear reference. First, a pronoun and its antecedent should agree in person and number. Second, the pronoun should refer unambiguously to a single, close and specific antecedent. However, a pronoun may refer to two or more nouns in a compound antecedent. The first example in the following pair of sentences contains an unclear reference. The second sentence revises it:

A- (1) The students worked during the vacation for individuals who were fussy about their work. (Does 'their' refer to 'the students' or 'individuals'?)

(2) The students worked during the vacation for individuals who were fussy about the students' work.

B- (1) The men removed all the furniture from the room and cleaned it. (Does 'it' refer to the room or the furniture?)

(2) The men removed all the furniture from the room and cleaned the room (or the furniture).

In sentence 2-B, the pronoun reference had been made clear by replacing the pronoun with the suitable noun. To avoid repetition, sentence 2-B can be restructured so that the pronoun can refer to only one antecedent:

1. After removing all the furniture from it, the men cleaned the room.
2. The men cleaned all the furniture after removing it from the room.

A relative pronoun usually introduces a clause that modifies a noun. To prevent confusion and unclear reference, a relative pronoun should immediately follow its antecedent. The first of the following sentences is confusing because the relative pronoun is not placed near its antecedent (book). The second sentence is clear because the relative pronoun is placed near its antecedent:

1. Sue found a book in the library that her class-mate had studied.
2. In the library, Sue found a book that her class-mate had studied.

Sometimes, the pronoun and its antecedent are widely separated in long sentences. So, the relationship between the two would be unclear. Following is an example and its revision:

1. A rich man had established the village's oldest school which over the years had served as an educational institution, a meeting place for villagers and a shelter for the homeless. However, no villager could remember him. (The pronoun 'him' is too far from its antecedent.)
2. A rich man had established the village's oldest school which over the years had served as an educational institution, a meeting place for villagers and a shelter for homeless. However, no villager could remember the rich man.

Some pronouns like 'this', 'that', 'which' and 'it' cause an implied reference when they refer to a whole idea described in a preceding clause. This implied reference is called 'broad reference'. It is acceptable only when the pronoun refers directly and clearly to the entire preceding clause. If not, it is advisable to avoid using the pronoun by providing an appropriate noun. 'It' in example-1 below is an unacceptable broad reference followed by two revised sentences:

1. The faculty members reached agreement on a change in the requirements, but it took time. (Does 'it' refer to reaching agreement or to the change?)

2. The faculty members agreed on a change in the requirement, but arriving at agreement took time.
3. The faculty members reached agreement on a change in the requirements, but the change took time to implement.

At times, the pronouns 'it' and 'they' are used in contexts like the following:

1. In the third paragraph of the essay it describes the difficulty of the journey.
2. In the National Sudanese Television they present good programmes.

'It' and 'they' can sometimes be used indefinitely or function as indefinite pronouns. The indefinite pronouns refer to persons or things in general rather than to a specific person or thing. The way 'it' and 'they' are used in the previous examples is inappropriate in formal writing and it is preferable to be avoided. The previous awkward sentences can be restructured in the following better way:

1. The third paragraph of the essay describes the difficulty of the journey.
2. The National Sudanese Television presents good programmes.

Pronoun use should be consistent. The same pronoun should always refer to the same person (s):

1. Everyday we watch many programmes on television. It is up to you to decide what is worth watching. (Inconsistent)
2. Everyday we watch many programmes on television. It is up to us to decide what is worth watching. (Consistent)

The inconsistency in the first of the following examples results from the inconsistent switch from passive to active:

1. A dictionary should be used to find the meanings of new words and to acquire vocabulary.
2. You should use a dictionary to find the meanings of new words and to acquire vocabulary.

The agreement between a compound antecedent and its pronoun may be unclear when the parts of the antecedent are connected with 'or' or 'nor'. To achieve a clear agreement, the pronoun's person and number should agree with the part of the compound antecedent located near to the pronoun. Following are two examples:

1. Steve or John should have raised his hand.
2. Neither the student nor the elderly people will retrieve their deposits from that landlord.

As seen in example 2 above, it is necessary to position the plural part of the compound antecedent close to the pronoun or else the sentence would be awkward. The first of the following sentences is awkward because the singular part of the compound antecedent is positioned near the pronoun. The second sentence revises the first:

1. Neither my parents nor my brother completed their task appropriately.
2. Neither my brother nor my parents completed their task appropriately.

Indefinite pronouns like 'each', 'either', 'neither', 'no one', 'everyone', 'someone' and 'anything' are singular in meaning. Generally, when these indefinite pronouns serve as antecedents to other pronouns, the other pronouns are usually singular. Following are some examples:

1. Everyone in the lodging drivers his own car.
2. Each of my brothers likes to eat healthy food.
3. Something made its presence felt.

Using a singular pronoun to refer to an indefinite pronoun may lead to an awkward sentence when the indefinite pronoun clearly means 'many' or 'all':

1. After everyone left, I shut the door behind him.
2. After everyone left, I shut the door behind them. (Better)

2.3.3 Ways to Write Clear Sentences Beyond Grammar:

Investigating the ways to write clear sentences in this part does not elaborate on revising sentences through better grammatical structures and words. Other ways for writing clear sentences and which surpass the boundaries of grammar are provided.

A. Comprehensible and straightforward sentences:

Whenever it is possible, complicated words should be avoided in favour of simple alternatives. This leads to sentences with clear ideas.

Also, there are examples of words that are frequently misused in place of similar sounding words with different meanings. Such words are confusing. Students should avoid these words unless they are able to use and spell them correctly in sentences. The first of the following tables includes examples of some complicated words and their simple alternatives. The second table includes some commonly confused words. All examples are provided by Fenton (2003 : 9/33 & 18/33):

Table (2.3) Complicated words and their simple alternatives

Word/expression to avoid	Simple alternative	Word/expression to avoid	Simple alternative
Utilize	Use	Endeavour	Try
Facilitate	Help	Terminate	End, stop
At this time	Now	Transmit	Send
In respect of	About	Demonstrate	Show
Commence	Start	Initiate	Begin
Terminate	End, stop	Assist, assistance	Help
Ascertain	Find out	Necessitate	Need
In the event of	If	In excess of	More than
In consequence	So	Dwelling	House
Enquire	Ask		

Table (2.4) Commonly confusing words

Affect: verb meaning to influence	Effect: noun meaning result or verb meaning to bring about
Adverse: adjective meaning unfavourable	Averse: adjective meaning opposed to or disinclined
Principle: noun meaning standard or rule of conduct	Principal: adjective or noun meaning most important
Stationery: noun meaning writing materials	Stationary: adjective meaning not moving
Illicit: adjective meaning illegal	Elicit: verb meaning to give rise to
Flaunt: verb meaning to show off	Flout: verb meaning to show contempt
Allusion: noun meaning a passing reference as in " were you making an allusion to my wife?"	Illusion: noun meaning a false impression
Complement: noun meaning something that completes, or verb meaning to make complete	Compliment: noun meaning praise or verb meaning to praise
Council: noun meaning an assembly	Counsel: verb meaning to recommend or noun meaning recommendation
Ensure: verb meaning to make certain	Insure: verb meaning to protect against risk
Mitigate: verb meaning to moderate	Militate: verb meaning to influence (for or against)
Practice: noun as in " put my ideas into practice"	Practise: verb
Advice: noun meaning recommendation	Advise: verb

Comprehensible sentences also avoid using legal and technical words except where necessary. Ordinary people think of using these words as competent. On the contrary, these words are pompous and make sentences difficult. Some examples of legal words are 'forthwith', 'hereof', 'thereof', 'therein', 'henceforth', 'thereat', and 'hereto'.

Comprehensible sentences similarly avoid abbreviating words out of laziness. For example, it is inconvenient to write 'approx' for 'approximately' or 'e.g.' for 'for example'. Even 'etc' is used inconveniently in sentences sometimes. As appears in the examples below, the use of 'etc' is either vague or redundant:

- a. He eats lots of fruit, such as apples, oranges, bananas, etc. (Redundant).
- b. In my free time, I enjoy sports, etc. (Vague).

The 'etc' in the first example is redundant because of the 'such as'. The 'etc' in the second example is vague because it does not represent the other things enjoyed beside sports. The correct way to write the two sentences is:

1. He eats lots of fruit: apples, oranges, bananas, etc.
2. In my free time, I enjoy sports and other activities such as reading.

'Such as' in sentence-2 above tells the reader that not all examples have been given.

Abbreviating words unnecessarily or out of laziness extends to include the abbreviations used by jargon. One understanding of jargon is the descriptions of specific things within a specialized field. These descriptions are often abbreviations. For example, the abbreviations OGM, CPF and ALU successively refer to 'Oil Gathering Manifold', 'Central Processing Facility' and 'Arithmetic Logic Unit'. The first two abbreviations are used in the field of petroleum industry and the third abbreviation is used in the field of computer sciences. Unless the message is directed to specialized fields, the use of such abbreviations will result in incomprehensible sentences.

In comprehensible sentences, it is better to avoid addressing the reader directly as 'you':

1. If you receive less than 550 on the TOEFL examination, you may not be able to enter some U.S universities. (Bad)
2. Applicants who receive less than 550 on the TOEFL examination may not be able to enter some U.S universities.

Comprehensible sentences also avoid asking the reader direct questions and using informal negative forms. The following pair of sentences illustrate the two opinions above successively:

A- (1) What are the reasons for homelessness?

(2) The reasons for homelessness include....(Better)

B- (1) Many universities do not admit new students after the academic year begins.

(2) Many universities admit no new students after....(Better)

B. Selecting the correct words:

The researcher has hinted at the idea of word choice in 2.3.3.A by explaining how the complicated words and the commonly confusing words lead to unclear sentences.

In writing clearly, word choice can make an enormous difference in the quality of the students' sentences. Simply, if students substitute an incorrect or vague word for the right one, they take the risk of being totally misunderstood. Accordingly, students need help to avoid the possible indecision over word choice. They should receive practical suggestions on selecting words that are not only appropriate but also memorable and persuasive.

To take accurate decisions on word choice, students should distinguish between the words used in the three levels of language, colloquial, informal and formal.

Colloquial words are used in speech and they are identified as non-standard by dictionaries. Colloquial words are usually part of fragments and shortened words. Colloquial words should not be used in sentences included in professional letters, reports or papers. Using them in these contexts implies a casual relationship between the writer and reader.

Informal words are usually part of the sentences that use correct grammar and which appear in professional assignments. Formal words, on the other hand, make up the sentences used in important documents. These sentences use balanced sentence structure and elevated tone which refer to words that describe writers' attitudes toward their subject matter and audience.

To take accurate decisions on words choice, students, likewise, need sizable vocabulary. Hence, they need to be provided with practical directives for expanding their vocabulary. Lane and Lange (1999: 271), highlight some directives for expanding vocabulary. They suggest that students should put themselves in English speaking environment and read in English as much as possible. Lane and Lange emphasize that students need to focus on more than just the meaning and make new lexical items part of their active vocabulary. To them, students should develop a skill in selecting the words they need to understand and use. These words, most probably, belong to the field of their study. Also, as stated by Lane and Lange, to be able to guess the meaning of new words, students should become familiar with the meanings of common prefixes, suffixes and roots of words.

Besides expanding words, these directives help students to use new words in producing idiomatic English. To phrase it differently, these directives will help students to develop skills in producing written ideas like native speakers. Non-idiomatic sentences are not necessarily unclear to native speakers. These sentences seem to be awkward to native speakers since they always phrase them differently from the way non-native speakers phrase them. For instance, the underlined part of the sentence, 'I feel' that I lack knowledge in expressing myself with sophisticated English words', would seem to be awkward to native speakers and would be phrased by them in idiomatic English in the following ways:

1. I can not use sophisticated English words to express myself.
2. I lack the knowledge to express myself in sophisticated English.

Hence, the closer students' sentences are to idiomatic English, the easier they will be for readers to understand.

In taking precise decisions on word choice, students, similarly, need to identify the exact words of idioms. Idioms can be used by idiomatic writing but they give a totally different understanding. They refer to the expressions whose meanings are not clear from the meaning of their individual words and which must be learnt as a unit. Many of the idiomatic expressions involve prepositions which students may confuse or misuse. Thus, it will be sensible if students use these idiomatic expressions sparingly and make sure of the exact words which compose them by consulting good dictionaries. Following are some correct forms of idioms and their common errors:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| 1. Insights into | not | insight of |
| 2. Comply with | not | comply to |
| 3. meet their standards | not | meet to their standards |
| 4. Aptitude for | not | aptitude toward |

Finally, to take accurate decisions on word choice, students, also, need to develop skills in distinguishing a word's denotation and connotation. A word's denotation refers to its basic or usual meaning, the meaning illustrated by a dictionary; a word's connotation, as pointed out by Wyrick (1993: 159), refers to the emotional associations surrounding its meaning. This emotional association is justifiable as the idea which a word makes one think of in addition to its main meaning.

Many words with similar denotative meanings can carry different connotations. So, the proper word choice requires students to choose only words whose connotations fit their purpose. For instance, 'home' carries connotations of warmth, security and family which 'residence' lacks. Likewise, 'old' and 'antique' are synonyms but the connotative meaning of 'antique' suggests something that also has value.

Crystal, (1995: 170) refers to the words which are highly charged with connotations as loaded. He maintains that these words are often used in the language of politics and religion. Probably, such words are needed in these contexts because they are expressive and usually cause the necessary effect. In comparison with the language of science and law, it is preferable to avoid using loaded expressions. Students should similarly consider these facts in deciding on which word to choose.

2.3.4 The Comma Splice and Run-on Sentence Errors:

Like fragments, the comma splice and run-on sentence are sentence errors. The sentence errors are broadly global and local. Lane and Lange (1999: xi) refer to nine global errors and six local errors. Global errors are serious errors and affect more than just a small part of a sentence. These errors impede the reader's understanding of the writer's ideas. Local errors, on the other hand, are less serious and usually affect a small part of a sentence.

Students are exposed to most of the serious and local errors because these errors are demonstrated and corrected by teachers so frequently. Examples of the familiar global errors are detectable in verb forms, using modals, word order, and connecting words. Some of the familiar local errors, on the other hand, are detectable in the subject verb agreement, the singular and plural of nouns, the use of articles and prepositions.

To foster sentence skills, as mentioned by the researcher in 2.3.1.A, students need to know and avoid sentence errors like fragments, run-on sentences and comma splices. Two reasons have stimulated the researcher to focus on these sentence errors in particular. First, they are classified as global. Second, not like the previously mentioned types of global errors, students are not exposed to the sentence fragment, the run-on sentence and the comma splice errors. Also, students are not exposed to the other sentence errors which are treated under 2.3.2.

A. The comma splice error:

The comma splice error occurs when two or more main clauses are joined only by commas. For example:

The examination was finally over, Susan could feel free to enjoy herself again.

In this sentence, the comma is the only mark of punctuation between the main clauses. Hence, the relation between the two clauses is not immediately clear because readers expect the same sentence to continue after the comma. This may cause readers to reread to understand the writer's meaning. Following are extra examples:

1. Cars would not start, many people were late to work.
2. Sue ran down the corridor, she did not know where she was going.

A comma splice error can be corrected by:

1. Inserting a coordinating conjunction between the main clauses:

- Sue ran down the corridor, but she did not know where she was going.

2. Inserting a semi-colon between the main clauses:

- Sue ran down the corridor; she did not know where she was going.

3. Subordinating one clause:

- Although Sue ran down the corridor, she did not know where she was going.

4. Adding a period (forming separate sentences):

- Sue ran down the corridor. She did not know where she was going.

It is possible to use conjunctive adverbs to combine two clauses in correcting a comma splice. The clauses are separated by a period or by a semi-colon:

1. Most Sudanese refuse to give up unhealthy habits, consequently our medical costs are higher than those of many other countries. (comma splice)
2. Most Sudanese refuse to give up unhealthy habits. Consequently, our medical costs are higher than those of many other countries. (Revised)
3. Most Sudanese refuse to give up unhealthy habits; consequently our medical costs are higher than those of many other countries. (Revised)

B. The run- on sentence error:

The run-on sentence error occurs when two clauses are joined without a punctuation. This usually results in sentences which are difficult to understand on first reading. Similarly, these sentences are never acceptable in standard English. A run-on sentence error can be corrected in the same way as a comma splice error. The following is an example of a run-on sentence error followed by the four possible corrections:

1. Tim was shy he usually refused invitations.
2. Tim was shy, so he usually refused invitations.
3. Tim was shy; he usually refused invitations.
4. Because Tim was shy, he usually refused invitations.
5. Tim was shy. He usually refused invitations.

2.4 Writing Effective Paragraphs:

2.4.1 Strategies for Writing Paragraph Types

As previously stated that writing is an intangible process for many students. Consequently, it is essential to make explicit the ways or strategies which writers adopt when writing paragraphs. Unfortunately, the Sudanese tertiary students are neither aware of these strategies for practicing writing, nor these strategies are purposefully demonstrated by teachers in

the foreign language classroom. Their purposeful implementation will definitely contribute to developing students' writing skill. Modelled, shared, paired, guided and independent writing are examples of these writing strategies.

Bindon (1999: 81) sees modelled writing as the explicit demonstration of how thoughts become written words when the teacher takes the role of an author and begins to write a paragraph thinking aloud. Thus, students will both be able to see into the mind of a skilled writer and to develop paragraph properly.

Shared writing is practiced in a different way from modelled writing. Dewsbury and Bindon (1999: 96) argue that shared writing encourages students to apply their understanding of written thoughts within a supportive setting, free from the burden of responsibility of being the sole authors.

In modelled writing, the teacher is in total control of the process, while he acts as a motivator in shared writing. Hence, shared writing provides students with a better opportunity to practice writing. The thought processes, the decisions and the resultant writing belong to the whole class, not just the teacher.

The researcher thinks of shared writing as a step forward between modelled and guided writing. A step which prepares students to guided writing and free writing since they move from the explicit demonstration of modeled writing to the relative independence of guided and free writing. Actually, guided writing differs from shared writing in a way. In guided writing, students exploit the supportive context individually.

In paired writing students practice writing in twos. As partners, they share both the planning and the writing. To develop confidence and to make their practice more effective, each partner can write a sentence in turn.

Independent or free writing is the last phase of writing in which students try to write communicatively. Preferably, students are to occupy themselves in independent writing activities on daily basis. Students are expected to be equipped with the writing experience which enables them to handle free writing skillfully since they have received training in the previously mentioned writing strategies.

To carry out their practice of independent writing successfully, students need some guidance in the form of pre-writing discussions of a topic. Then, each student takes the risk to try out ideas and to develop understanding in a communicative and a non-threatening environment.

These writing strategies can be adopted in writing the common five types of paragraph patterns: paragraph of analysis, paragraph of description, paragraph of comparison and contrast, paragraph of analogy and paragraph of definition.

In a paragraph of analysis, the main idea is either presented deductively or inductively. The deductive organization of such paragraphs moves from the general to the particular. The topic sentence is presented as a general statement at the beginning. In an inductive organization, the reverse is true. The paragraph moves from the particular to the general. It begins with supportive details and the topic sentence is positioned at the end.

In a paragraph of description, a physical description, as of a person or place, is dealt with. The description may also be of a process, a step-by- step explanation of how something is done. For example, describing the physique of a rugby player or a process like the method of mouth-to-mouth respiration.

The paragraph of comparison and contrast compares or contrasts two things or more. This paragraph usually states the idea of the things being compared and contrasted in the first sentence. Then, the supportive details come in the subsequent sentences.

The paragraph of analogy is usually organized around an analogy . To phrase it differently, this paragraph compares one thing with another thing that has similar features in order to explain it. For instance, an analogy can be drawn between the human heart and the pump to make easier the explanation of the function of the human heart.

The purpose behind the paragraph of definition is to define or explain the meaning of something. To develop this paragraph properly, the definition may involve analysis, description, comparison or contrast, or perhaps even an analogy.

Perhaps of the paragraph patterns, the paragraph of analysis, the paragraph of comparison and contrast and the paragraph of analogy seem to be a bit difficult to develop by students. The following are sample paragraphs of these three paragraph patterns taken from Yorkey (1982: 123,124). The first two represent a paragraph of analysis. The first of which adopts a deductive organization, whereas the second adopts an inductive organization. The third paragraph compares and contrasts 'discovery' and 'invention', while the fourth draws an analogy between a good prose style and a good runner:

1. *Modern people, in spite of their scientific knowledge, often seem as superstitious as their ancestors .Astrology is a half-billion- dollar business. Intelligent persons still believe that lines on their palm or the arrangement of tea leaves in a cup predict the future .Airplanes do not have a row of seats numbered 13, and buildings omit a thirteenth floor. Black cats, broken mirrors, and spilled salt create fear and anxiety in many people.*
2. *From Italian we get such words as balcony, cavalry, miniature, opera, and umbrella. Spanish has given us mosquito, ranch, cigar and vanilla. Dutch has provided brandy, golf, measles, and wagon .From Arabic we have borrowed alcohol, chemistry, magazine, zenith, and zero. And Persian has loaned us chess, checkers, lemon, paradise, and spinach. It is clear that English is a language that borrows freely from many sources.*
3. *Discovery and invention are sometimes confused. Essentially, however, they are quite distinct. Discovery is the finding of something that has always been there, though its existence or its meaning has remained hidden. Invention is the design of something new to be made from known materials. America, for example, was discovered; the United States was invented. America has always been there, though its existence was unknown, at least to Europeans, until navigating explorers found it. But the United States was a combination of known materials: Land, Law, and people.*
4. *In prose, the good style is the lean style. Like a good distance runner, it hasn't an ounce of fat anywhere on it. And like a good distance runner, it moves without excess motion. Its arms don't flail out in all directions; they swing easily at the sides in a beautiful economy of effort. A good style has the same grace and beauty in its motion as a good athlete because there is nothing wasted. Everything is there for a purpose.*

As known, getting started is the hardest part of writing paragraphs for many students. Brainstorming helps to make the embark on the actual task of writing easier and to write as effective paragraphs as the previous sample paragraphs. To brainstorm, students should jot down phrases that come to their minds in connection with a paragraph idea. Markstein and Hirasawa (1998: 235) maintain that brainstorming mainly occurs as a liner list. Another listing technique is mapping or clustering. This occurs by writing the main idea of a paragraph in the centre of a page. The relevant brainstormed ideas are to be written a round the main idea. This technique is particularly important because it makes the relationships between ideas more clear.

2.4.2 The Topic Sentence:

The topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It announces what a paragraph will be about and controls its subject matter. The entire discussion of a paragraph which may include examples, details and explanation must directly relate to and supports the topic sentence. As known, the thesis statement declares the controlling idea of an entire subject. The topic sentence, in a sense, is a smaller thesis. It asserts one main idea which can be developed into one of the body paragraphs in a subject.

Sentence 1 in the outline below represents a thesis statement in an essay, while each of sentence A, B and C represents a topic sentence which can be developed into a body paragraph in that essay:

1- At our school, the library is the worst place to study.

A. Our library has uncomfortable chairs and tables.

B. In our library, students do not enjoy much privacy

C. Our library contains poorly edited and few books.

Hence, the topic sentence is the essence of essays and paragraphs. Details that surround the topic sentence serve to explain the writer's points. These details provide the evidence which the reader needs to understand general ideas.

The effective topic sentence states the student's clearly defined opinion on something. Thus, a good topic sentence should be limited to fit a paragraph. A paragraph with an unfocused topic sentence touches only on the surface of its subject and wanders away from the writer's main idea. On the other hand, a topic sentence that is tightly focused will not only help the reader to understand the point of a paragraph but also helps the writer to select, organize and develop his supporting details.

Below are examples of unfocused topic sentences followed by their revisions:

A- 1- Too many people treat animals badly in experiments. (Unfocused. What people? Badly how? What kinds of experiments?.)

2- The cosmetic industry often harms animals in unnecessary experiments designed to test their products. (Focused)

B- 1- Grades are an unfair assessment of students' knowledge.(Unfocused. All grades?In all cases?Unfair how?).

2- Course grades based solely on one term paper do not accurately measure students' knowledge of the subject.(Focused)

The focused examples above are provided by Wyrick (1993: 54) to show that, added to what mentioned above, a topic sentence should be reasonable and should contain something worthwhile to say. To persuade readers, as stated by Wyrick, students should have a thorough understanding of what they write. Students should not clutter their topic sentences with expressions like 'in my opinion', 'I believe' and 'in this paragraph I will argue that'. Such unnecessary phrases and announcements weaken writers' topic sentences. These phrases make writers sound timid or uncertain.

Also, to emphasize their understanding of what they write, students should avoid mixed constructions in writing topic sentences. In other words, when students begin with a sentence pattern in mind, they should not shift, mid sentence, to another pattern. Probably, this will lead to an unbalanced relationship between the subject and predicate. Below is an example followed by its revision:

1. Financial aid is a growing problem for many college students. (Financial aid itself is not a problem; rather, it is the lack of aid).
2. College students are finding it harder to obtain financial aid.

Most frequently, the topic sentence occurs as the first sentence in a body paragraph. However, it can also appear as the second sentence in a paragraph when the first sentence provides an introductory statement to the preceding paragraph.

2.4.3 Paragraph Development:

One of the serious weaknesses of students is their inability to develop paragraphs efficiently. A paragraph is well developed when the information adequately explain, exemplify, elaborate on, or in some other way support the topic sentence.

Although the topic sentence promises a good discussion, the following paragraph is underdeveloped:

Driving tests do not adequately examine a person's driving ability. Usually, the person being tested does not have to drive very far. The test does not require the skills that are used in everyday driving situations. Supervisors of driving tests tend to be very lenient.

The above paragraph does not sufficiently justify how driving tests do not adequately examine a person's driving ability. The paragraph does not even give examples for the skills which are used in everyday driving situations.

Contrary to the previous paragraph the following one adequately elaborates on the controlling idea of the underlined topic sentence. The sentences that illustrate the supportive details of the paragraph are taken from Wyrick (1993: 58):

Some famous inventors' performance in early education didn't herald genius. Famous inventor Thomas Edison, for instance, did so poorly in his first years of school that his teachers warned his parents that he would never be a success in any thing. Similarly, Henry Ford, the father of the auto-industry, had trouble in school with both reading and writing. But perhaps the best example is Albert Einstein, whose parents and teachers suspected that he was retarded because he responded to questions so slowly and in a stuttering voice. Einstein's high school record was poor in everything but Math, and he failed his college entrance exams the first time. Even out of school the man had trouble holding a job- until he announced the theory of relativity.

If the sentences that develop a paragraph form some kind of a list, it will be better to write the paragraph using the techniques of enumerated lists and pullet points. Enumerated lists are used when there is a specific ordering of the items in the list. On the contrary, pullet points are used when there is no specific ordering of the items in the list.

Fenton (2003: 7/33) presents the following paragraph as unacceptable because the writer is trying to make what is clearly a list into one paragraph. The paragraph which comes next re-presents the messy paragraph in a better way using an enumerated list:

Getting to university for a 9.00 am lecture involves following a number of steps. First of all you have to set your alarm- you will need to do this before you go to bed the previous night. When the alarm goes off you will need to get out of bed. You should next take a shower and then get yourself dressed. After getting dressed you should have some breakfast. After

breakfast you have to walk to the tube station, and then buy a ticket when you get there. Once you have your ticket you can catch the next train to the university station. When the train arrives at the university stations you should get off and then finally walk to the university.

To rewrite the previous paragraph using an enumerated list, it will appear as follows:

To get to university for a 9.00 am lecture:

- 1- Set alarm before going to bed the previous night.*
- 2- Get out of bed when the alarm goes off.*
- 3- Take a shower.*
- 4- Get dressed.*
- 5- Have some breakfast.*
- 6- Walk to the tube station.*
- 7- Buy a ticket.*
- 8- Catch the next train to the university station.*
- 9- Get out at the university station.*
- 10- Walk to the university.*

Fenton (2003: 8/33) also presents the following paragraph that uses pullet points:

Good software engineering is based on the following key principles:

- *Get a good understanding of the customer requirements (possibly by prototyping.).*
- *Deliver in regular increments(involve the customer/user as much as possible).*
- *Do testing throughout, (unit testing is especially crucial).*
- *Maintain good communication within the project team (and also with the customer).*

2.4.4 Paragraph Unity and Length:

A paragraph can be described as unified when every sentence directly relates to the topic sentence. The paragraph should not include irrelevant supportive details. All the details should stick to the announced subject or the discussion raised by the paragraph. The paragraph on page 53 Which elaborates on some famous inventors' performance in early education is an example of a developed as well as a unified paragraph.

Concerning paragraph length, one can say paragraph length varies. Wyrick (1993: 65) maintains that there is no set length, no prescribed number of lines or sentences. Ultimately, the supportive details should be sufficient to the idea of the paragraph. In any case, a paragraph should not exceed half a page. In case of a complex point that requires a paragraph to grow too long; for instance, more than half a page, one can look for a logical place to divide information and start a new paragraph.

2.5 Important Directions for Teaching Writing:

It is difficult to put into practice teaching methods or steps that can really help students to develop skills in writing. However, it is necessary to suggest some ideas that contribute to making teaching writing a successful task.

In teaching writing, teachers should begin with the elementary mechanics of written work like spelling, capitalization, word order and word division. Actually, demonstrating these writing mechanics should have occurred at the secondary level. At university, these writing mechanics are to be taught for remedial purposes and within the range of vocabulary and structure which students have already mastered. Also, for remedial purposes, teachers should involve students in writing activities that help them to achieve progress in sentence structure. Such writing activities include making similar sentences from substitution tables, dictation and writing stories which have been repeated orally more than once.

Guidance with the sentence structure should continue for a considerable time until the sentence structure, problems of arrangement and form become the responsibility of the student.

In free writing tasks, teachers should think carefully of a simple subject matter. Bright and McGreger (1970: 130) point out that teachers should adjust the subject matter's level of difficulty to the capabilities of the class. This will help students to gain confidence in free writing and will reduce errors which are usually a source of despair to them. One way to make easy a subject matter is to ask students to make use of their real-life circumstances in the writing assignments they do.

To teach writing effectively, teachers should avoid some common incorrect procedures. For instance, they should not supply students with useful words before they begin writing. A composition work should be planned in a way that enables students to cope with the problem from their current lexical stock. Providing useful words imposes teachers' vision on what students write and suggests that students can not write good English with the words they know. It is similarly improper to prepare modal answers that show students how to write a composition. Some teachers decide on a topic, its appropriate introduction, order of paragraphs and conclusion. Thus, students will have no chance to develop skills to arrange and create ideas for their writing.

Also, it is a fallacy to mark students' assignments immediately after they finish. The teacher who does so will be limiting students' experience to correct themselves. Writing is a co-operative endeavour. Students should exchange their writing assignments and learn together to put right, at least, superficial errors and slips before the teachers' red ink tells them where to look.

2.6 Previous Studies:

All the previous studies which are surveyed by the researcher treat the writing skill from a different angle to his own study. All these studies ultimately aim to show foreign language learners how to enhance their writing skills.

Mohammed Mohammed Zein Bushara (2006) handled "*The Paragraph Writing Skills*" in an M.A study with an aim to help foreign language learners at the tertiary level to improve their writing skills. The study attempted to assess the relationship between students paragraph writing skills and their academic levels.

Bushara's findings generally certify students' weaknesses in writing well-developed paragraphs with proper topic sentences and unity.

Bushara recommends the demonstration of the above writing skills through teaching.

Hasan Atieb Dawood Hamad (2006) conducted a doctoral study on the "*Manifestation of Cohesion and Coherence in the Written English of Palestinian Senior University Students*".

The researcher works as a language teacher in Palestine. What motivated the researcher to tackle this problem is the serious weakness he witnessed in students ability to write coherent and cohesive essays. The researcher believes he will help students to be on the fast track to develop writing skills by acquainting them with the features of coherent and cohesive essays.

The findings of Hamad's study indicated that the non-passing essays were unsuccessful in meeting readers expectations that are based on conventions of expository writing. These conventions have included maintaining consistent meanings for key concepts, and clearly showing the relationships between parts of the discourse.

Topic structure analysis has revealed ineffective patterns of paragraph development in non-passing essays.

Hamad suggests the following recommendations:

- a. Teachers should devote more time, effort and attention to the writing skill so as to help students produce cohesive and coherent texts.
- b. Teachers should train students to use cohesive devices through focusing on both the grammatical and semantic conventions of academic writing.
- c. Teachers should be devoted to their careers and they should be keen to improve their teaching expertise through attending workshops and revising the most up-dated references on methodology.
- d. Syllabus-designers should modify the English syllabus to enhance the students' language skills in general and the writing skill in particular.

- e. Decision-makers at the university level should reconsider the standards of admission to the Departments of English so as to ensure the best quality of students who wish to study English.

Abdel Malik Mahmoud Ibrahim (1999) treated "*The Problems that Face the Students in the Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Education, University of Gezira in writing the English language text*" in an M.A study which pursued the same goal of improving the writing quality of students.

The researcher handled some sentence errors which students make in writing texts. Examples are: article errors, word order errors, preposition errors and derivational and inflectional errors. The researcher similarly treated some features of a well written text.

The findings of this study generally certify students weaknesses in writing since they are unable to avoid the previously mentioned sentence errors.

Ibrahim recommends the following:

- a. To avoid vocabulary errors, students need to recognize words in context; while to avoid odd explanation, students should choose their words carefully in writing sentences.
- b. Students should notice the variations between languages, there is no complete translatability between Arabic and English.
- c. Teachers should encourage students to read widely in the target language. This helps students to overcome vocabulary problems, to enrich vocabulary and to broaden their horizons.

Mohamedein Yousif Mohammed (1995) conducted an M.A study which investigates what he calls "*The Communication Strategies in the Written Productions of Students*".

These communication strategies are systematic techniques which students resort to when they fail to gain access to the linguistic resources required to express the desired meaning in writing. These systematic techniques usually result in writing errors. The study was based on scripts written by students which enabled the researcher to identify and describe the writing errors which resulted from the said communication strategies and to enhance students' writing skills by showing them how to avoid these errors in writing.

In view of the previously mentioned communication strategies, the findings can be summarized as follows:

- a. Students tried to communicate their ideas by a reduced system. They tried to avoid some items or rules of the target language which they failed to use in their writing.
- b. To overcome their problem in communication, students tried to communicate written thoughts by expanding their communicative resources rather than by reducing their communicative goal. Students were found to transfer items or structures from their first language into the target language.

Mohammed recommends the following:

- a. To help students overcome the problem of the gap in the target language knowledge, a well designed remedial work should be incorporated in students' writing syllabuses. This remedy should be based on the analysis of students' needs. Syllabuses at university should be integrated with the syllabuses at the pre-tertiary level.
- b. Teachers can purposefully set some writing tasks that are a little beyond students language proficiency. This helps students to become aware of their communicative problems.
- c. Since learners exposure to English outside the English classroom is diminished by using the first language, more time should be allocated to English as compensation.

Eltaq Abdelwadoud Karadawi (1994)In a doctoral study has treated the "*Composition Writing Deficiencies in the Sudanese Final Year of the Secondary School*".

As stated by the researcher, examining the composition writing deficiencies will offer suggestions that can help students to improve the quality of their writing. Students will also have a better chance to develop in text writing at the tertiary level.

The following is a summary of Karadawi's findings:

- a. Students inability to write and summarize various texts is partially due to the inadequacy of composition and summary instructions in the Sudanese Secondary Schools.
- b. The writing deficiency in composition and summary can be attributed to the absence of the higher secondary students' exposure to English.
- c. At times, students' writing weaknesses result from inexperienced teaching. It may also result from teachers and students' lack of motivation.
- d. The secondary school students' writing deficiency also results from the negative influence of the first language.

Karadawi suggests the following recommendations:

- a. The national project of Spine should accommodate space for composition writing from the early phases of EFL, starting with pictorial text writing and ending with handling abstract topics that need certain technical linguistic abilities in English.
- b. The Arabic composition writing is to contribute to the EFL full text writing. It is therefore advisable that the secondary school Arabic syllabus is to design a composition writing programme that portrays the task in a more logical and persuasive method. The present Arabic composition programme is completely based on intuition.

Angele Aziz Tadros (1966) investigated "*The Interference Errors in the Written English of the Sudanese Students*" in a study conducted for a master degree.

According to the researcher, the study aims to enable teachers to help students identify and avoid the errors that could either directly or indirectly be traceable to Arabic.

The following is a summary of the study's findings:

- a. There is a high percentage of the Arabic interference errors.
- b. Errors of articles and prepositions rank high in the percentage of Arabic interference.
- c. There are grammatical errors particularly in the omission of the verb 'to be' and in relative clauses.
- d. Errors in lexis are more difficult to control than errors of grammar.

Tadros suggests the following recommendations:

- a. It is necessary to take into account areas of non-equivalence between Arabic and English in preparing satisfactory material for students. This will help to minimize errors of interference.
- b. Grammatical errors can be avoided if comparative studies between English grammar and Arabic grammar are carried out.
- c. Errors in lexis can be minimized if lexical items are taught in the context of the foreign language and the attempt to seek word-for-word equivalence is given up.

The following chapter describes the methodology of this study.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction:

This chapter describes the subjects and instrument upon which the analysis is built. It also clarifies the procedure followed to collect the data and achieve the findings.

3.1 Subjects of the Study:

The subjects of the empirical study were 52 students. Those students constituted the whole members of Batch 4, Semester 5, The College of Languages and Translation, The National Ribat University. In the fifth semester, students usually receive a course on the writing skill as part of their university syllabus.

The researcher has taught the aforementioned batch a course on the writing skills for a whole semester, two hours per week, with the purpose of enhancing their sentence and writing skills generally. Obviously, the components of the

delivered course mesh with the theoretical framework of the study. The components of the course consisted of the following:

1. The difficulty of the writing process.
2. The concept of communicative writing.
3. The sentence skills students need to acquire .
 - 3.1 What is a sentence:
 - 3.1.1 The regular sentence, sentence fragment and non-sentence.
 - 3.1.2 The types of sentences by purpose.
 - 3.1.3 The simple and multiple sentence.
 - 3.2 Revising sentences through grammatical choices:
 - 3.2.1 Parallel structures.
 - 3.2.2 Cleft sentences, there-structures, end-weight and front-focus.
 - 3.2.3 Misplaced modifiers and expressions.
 - 3.2.4 Writing unredundant sentences.
 - 3.2.5 Sentences with verbs and the active style.
 - 3.2.6 Pronouns and antecedents:
4. Ways to write clear sentences beyond grammar.
 - 4.1 Comprehensible and straightforward sentences.
 - 4.2 Selecting the correct words.
5. The comma splice and run-on sentence errors.
 - 5.1 The comma splice error.
 - 5.2 The run-on sentence error.
6. Writing effective paragraphs
 - 6.1 Strategies for writing paragraph types.
 - 6.2 The topic sentence.
 - 6.3 Paragraph development.
 - 6.4 Paragraph unity and length.

3.2 Instrument:

3.2.1 The Test:

The data upon which the analysis and discussion are built were obtained from two objective tests. The students sat for a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test occurred before teaching them, while the post-test occurred after teaching them. The students were not aware that the same test would be administered twice.

The researcher has followed this tool of data collection to be able to analyze the data comparatively, to see where students stand on the writing skills and to prove the possibility of a better performance in the post- test.

A. Construction of the Test:

The test consisted of eight detailed questions which tried to measure students awareness of the sentence and writing skills in general.

Question 1 consisted of two items. In item A, students were asked to define and illustrate with examples the regular sentence, the sentence fragment and the non-sentence. This question attempted to measure students awareness of the difference between the regular, irregular and non-sentence.

In item B, question 1 students were asked to complete the definitions that show the purposes implied by declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamative sentences. This question tried to see the degree to which students were aware of what generally these sentences denote in connected writing.

Question 2 required students to give well constructed and meaningful examples for the following:

- 1- A simple sentence containing a compound subject.
- 2- A simple sentence containing a compound verb.
- 3- A compound sentence with clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.
- 4- A compound sentence with clauses joined by a semi-colon.
- 5- A compound sentence with clauses joined by an adverbial conjunction.
- 6- A complex sentence with a subordinate adverbial clause.
- 7- A complex sentence with a subordinate adjectival clause.
- 8- A complex sentence with a subordinate noun clause.
- 9- A compound complex sentence.

This question measured students' skill to formulate well-constructed and meaningful simple, compound, complex and compound complex sentences.

Question 3 consisted of three items. Item A was made up of pair 1, pair 2 and pair 3. Students were asked to write a check mark beside the sentence that reads more smoothly and sounds more natural in each pair. Actually, this question attempted to see whether students were able to distinguish between the smooth sentences which contain parallel structures and the awkward ones which contain unparallel structures.

Item B, question 3 required students to underline the misplaced words in three sentences and to rewrite the same sentences placing related words together to make the meaning clear. The question aimed at checking on students' skill in placing modifiers near the words they modify.

In item C, question 3, students were asked to underline, in five sentences, the sentence fragment and to make each sentence into a complete regular sentence by attaching the sentence fragment to the other part. The question attempted to assess students' awareness of the sentence fragment as a sentence error and to check on their skill in changing the fragment to a complete regular sentence.

Question 4 consisted of item A, B and C. In item A, students were given two sentences. They were asked to encircle the number of the cleft sentence and to tell which of the two sentences is needed in emphatic and impressive contexts. The question attempted to see whether or not students were aware of the construction of the cleft sentence and its necessity in impressive and emphatic contexts.

In item B, question 4, students were asked to encircle the number of the better and more improved sentence in two pair of sentences. Students were similarly asked to tell why the chosen sentences were better and improved. Actually, this question aimed to see whether or not students were aware of the fact that sentences should not include long subjects at the expense of their predicates.

In item C, question 4, students were asked to rewrite some redundant sentences without redundancy. This question tried to see the degree to which students were able to trim unnecessary parts from sentences.

Question 5 measured students skill to create a clear relationship between the pronoun and its antecedent in writing sentences. Students were given a sentence in which it is not clear whether the pronoun 'it' refers to 'room' or 'furniture.' They were asked to rewrite the sentence twice so that the pronoun 'it' can clearly refer once to 'room' and once to 'furniture'.

Item A, question 6, measured whether or not students were aware of the comma splice error. Likewise, the question measured their skill to correct the sentences which include this error using four options. Students were given a sentence with a comma splice error. They were asked to name the error and to correct it using the four options.

Item B, question 6 measured whether or not students were aware of another sentence error, a run on sentence. Like the comma splice question, this question measured students' skill to correct the run-on sentence error using the same four options. Students were given a sentence with a run-on sentence error. They were asked to name the error and to correct it using the four options.

Item A, question 7 measured students' awareness of how ideas in coherent writing should be arranged gradually. The question attempted to measure their understanding of how the overall idea of a topic is usually embedded in a thesis statement and how the thesis statement can be divided into subsequent ideas which are embedded in topic sentences that can be developed into supportive details in a body paragraph. Students were given a thesis statement and they were required to write topic sentences for supportive body paragraphs.

Item B, question 7 measured students' skill to distinguish focused topic sentences. They were given pair of sentences and they were asked to write a check mark beside the focused topic sentence.

Item C, question 7 measured students' skill to write a focused topic sentence according to some supportive details that develop a paragraph adequately. Students were asked to add a suitable topic sentence to a paragraph.

Question 8 measured students' awareness of some basic concepts in paragraph writing. They were asked to give a brief idea on paragraph development, unity, coherence and length.

B. Validity:

The description given under 3.2.1.A certified that the test employed for the empirical study has content validity. The test has measured what it was supposed to measure because the contents were consistent with the stated goal for which the test was administered.

The instructions of the test were clear. Also, the format of the test was familiar to students. They responded naturally to it and showed a lot of cooperation. Thus, their obtained scores in the post-test, administered after teaching them, represented their actual skills in writing.

After administering the post-test, a sizable segment of students expressed their feelings about this test as sufficiently representative and comprehensive in terms of their expectations. Thus, taking into account students' impression, it is possible to say the test has face validity.

The researcher has also consulted a number of language teaching experts after setting the test. Their suggestions were highly appreciated in modifying the test. Afterwards, they approved of the appropriateness of the test to its purpose.

One can say, the test did not lack validity due to all these considerations.

C. Reliability:

To begin with, a test's reliability refers to the degree to which that test is stable in measuring what it is intended to measure. Most simply put, a test is reliable if it is consistent within itself and across time.

There are many types of reliability like the parallel forms, the internal comparison, the inter-rater, the test-retest, the split-half and the internal consistency reliabilities.

These various types of reliability may be estimated through a variety of methods that fall into two types: single administration and multiple administration methods. Multiple administration methods require that two assessments are administered. Examples of the reliabilities that require two administrations are the test-retest reliability and the parallel forms reliability. Single administration methods include the split-half and internal consistency reliabilities. It is more precise to say that the split-half is one variety of the internal consistency reliability.

The researcher did not estimate the reliability of the test employed by this study using a method that require multiple administrations. Such methods have disadvantages. For example, one major concern with the test-retest reliability is what has been termed the memory effect when two administrations are close together in time. Most of the subjects will remember their responses when they begin to answer again. Subjects will just answer the way they did in the first

administration. Hence, using the memory rather than reading through the test's questions carefully to provide relevant answers will create an artificially high reliability coefficient.

The researcher has used the split-half method to estimate the reliability of the test employed by this study. The researcher has implemented the same steps of the split-half method described by Henning (1987: 83).

First, the post-test was divided into two halves. The odd-numbered items were assigned to one half and the even-numbered items to the other half. Actually, the test was composed of 67 items. The odd-numbered items were 34 while the even-numbered items were 33.

Second, the SPSS programme was used to compute the correlation between the two halves. The resultant correlation was 0.5487 (0.55).

Third, as illustrated below, to increase the estimated reliability, the correlation (0.55) was re-evaluated by using spearman-Brown formula:

$$r = \frac{2r}{1+r} = 0.55 = \frac{2 \times 0.55}{1 + 0.55} = \frac{1.1}{1.55} = 0.70$$

Consequently, the estimated reliability (0.70), greater than 0.50, indicates the reliability of the test employed by this study.

D. T-Test:

To determine whether or not students' standards in writing have improved after teaching them, the researcher has used the Partial Sample T-Test which is part of the computer programme SPSS. The T-Test proved the difference between students standards in writing in the pre-test and the post-test statistically. Initially, the researcher has counted the number of failures and successful students in the pre-test versus the number of failures and successful students in the post-test.

To carry out a T-Test, the following hypotheses should be considered:

- 1- $H_0: A_{pre} = B_{post}$
- 2- $H_1: A_{pre} \neq B_{post}$

The hypothesis No.1 is called the Null Hypothesis. Concerning this hypothesis, the P. value (the T-Test's significant calculation) is always greater than 0.05. If the result was to accept the Null Hypothesis , that is to say, the P. value was greater than 0.05, then there will be no difference between students standards in writing in the two tests.

Concerning the hypothesis No.2, the opposite turns out to be the case. It is called the Alternative Hypothesis where the P. value is always less than 0.05. If the result was to accept the Alternative Hypothesis, then there will be difference between students standards in writing in the two tests.

As illustrated in table (3.2), the calculated correlation between the two variables is 0.56. It is significant (the P.value = 0.00) and this completes, as shown in Table (3.3), the 95% (a degree of confidence).

With regard to the T. Test, the P.value, as seen in table (3.3), is 0.002 (less than 0.05). Hence, the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted and this indicates the significant difference in students' standards in writing before and after teaching them.

Table (3.1) Paired samples statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 All group	1.50	104	.502	.049
The final result of exam	1.76	104	.429	.042

Table (3.2) Paired samples correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 All group & the final result of exam	104	-.563	.000

Table (3.3) Paired samples test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	Std, Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 All group-The final result of exam	-.26	.824	.081	-.42	-.10	-3.212	103	.002

3.3 Procedure:

The researcher has used the following procedure to collect the data and achieve the finding:

- 1- Marking the pre-test and the post-test.
 - 2- Confirming the validity of the post-test.
 - 3- Calculating the reliability of the post-test.
 - 4-Using the Partial Sample T-Test to confirm the difference between students' standards in writing before and after teaching them.
 - 5- Testing the correctness of the hypotheses of the study.
 - 6- Showing the frequency and percent of the right answers in the pre-test and post-test by putting them in tables.
 - 7-Showing the frequency and percent of the wrong answers in the pre-test and post-test by putting them in tables.
 - 8-Showing the frequency and percent of the answers which are neither completely right nor wrong in the pre-test and post-test by putting them in tables.
 - 9- Using figures which illustrate the percent of the right and wrong answers and the answers which are neither completely right nor wrong.
 - 10-Comparing and commenting on the frequency and seriousness of the wrong answers in the pre-test and post-test.
- The following chapter presents, analyzes and discusses the data.

4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction:

This chapter analyzes and discusses the data obtained from the pre-test and the post-test comparatively. The pre-test certifies students weaknesses in the aspects of the writing skill which are examined by this study, whereas the post-test certifies students liability to achieve progress in these aspects.

4.1 The Pre-test:

4.1.1 Q1(A) The regular, irregular and non-sentence:

Table (4.1) The regular, irregular and non-sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent	
Q1,A	1.Definition of reg. sen	0	0.0	51	98.1	1	1.9	
	example	25	48.1	25	48.1	2	3.8	
	2.Definition of irreg. sen.	0	0.0	47	90.4	5	9.6	
	example	1	1.9	51	98.1	0.0	0.0	
	3.Definition of non. sen	0	0.0	51	98.1	1	1.9	
	example	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0	

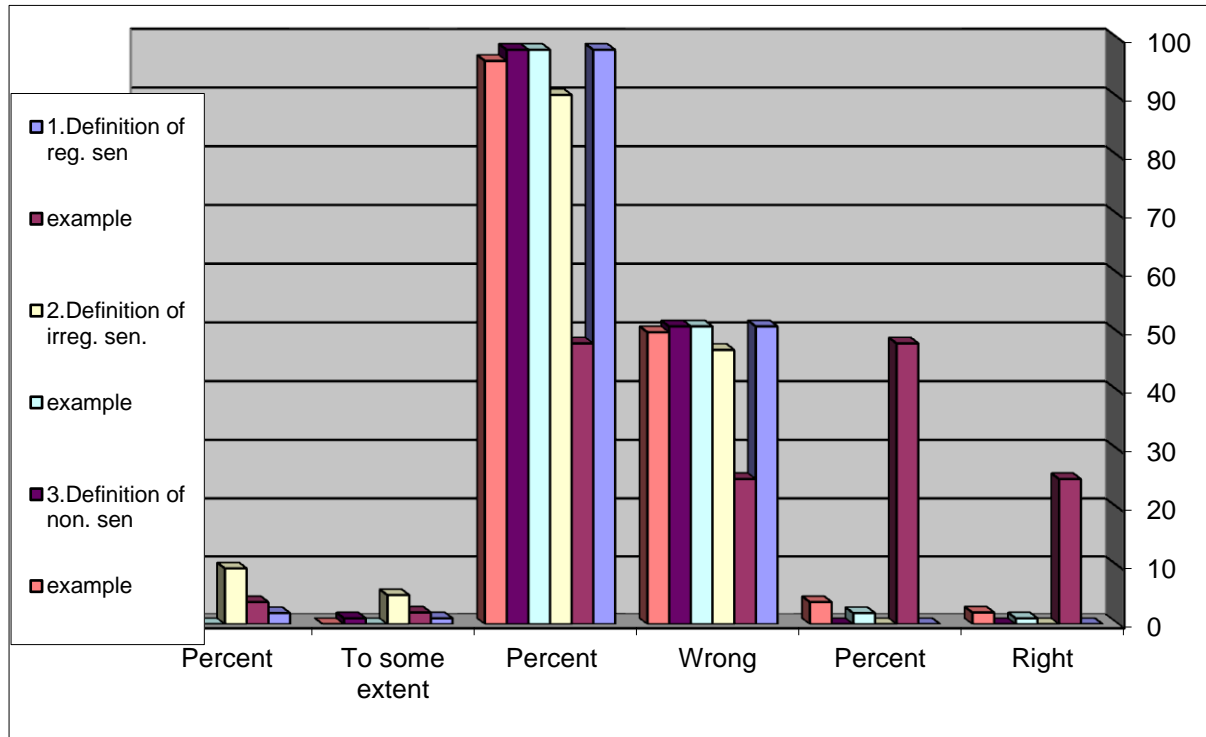


Figure (4.1) The regular, irregular and non-sentence

The students who failed to define the regular sentence were 51(98%). Only one student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer to the definition of the regular sentence. The students who formulated correct examples of regular sentences were 25(48.1%), while those who failed comprised the same number. Two students gave a to some extent answer to the examples of the regular sentence.

These statistics show students' unawareness of nearly six of the seven major regular sentence constituents. All the correct examples of the regular sentences were simple sentences which were composed of either a subject and verb or a subject, verb and object. Students lack the skill to extend their sentences to include other grammatical elements like adverbial complements, indirect objects and object complements. Hence, this, as raised by the first hypothesis of this study, marks students' writing at the tertiary level as incommunicative.

The students who failed to define the irregular sentence were 47(90.4%), while those who gave a to some extent answer were 5(9.6%). 51 students (98.1%) failed to give examples of irregular sentences, while one student (1.9%) was right.

How irregular sentences or fragments occur in writing is illustrated in 2.3.1.A. The writing which contains fragments is incomprehensible and conveys incomplete thoughts. Students knowledge and practice of restructuring fragments into regular sentences familiarize them more and more with the regular patterns of the English sentence. Added to this, students will avoid a common sentence error which can be classified as a serious one. Surely, the more students are aware of the sentence errors, particularly the unfamiliar ones, the more they will develop skills in writing communicatively.

With the exception of one student (1.9%), there was no correct answer of defining the non-sentence. Thus, the wrong answers of this question comprised 98.1%. Two students (3.8%) were successful in giving correct examples of non-sentences, whereas (96.2%) were unsuccessful in answering this question.

Non-sentences are forms of minor sentences. The major sentences include the simple and multiple sentence. As shown in 2.3.1.A, non-sentences do not follow the rules of grammar. Crystal (1995: 216) claims that some of these expressions are frequently used in everyday conversation as well as in certain types of the written language. Examples of non-sentences in the written language are notices, labels, advertisements and sub-headings. In spoken language we find such expressions as 'Heaven forbid' and 'God save the queen', Also, of the non-sentences which are used in spoken contexts are the examples given in 2.3.1.A. These are referred to as stereotyped social spoken situations.

For the sake of good writing, students need to distinguish the non-sentences used in the written language from the ones used in spoken language since the two systems are quite distinct.

4.1.2. Q1(B): The types of sentences by purpose:

Table (4.2) The types of sentences by purpose

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q1,B	1.Adeclarativesen. is...	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	2.An imperative sen. is...	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	3.An interrogative sen. is....	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	4.Anexclamativesen. is....	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0

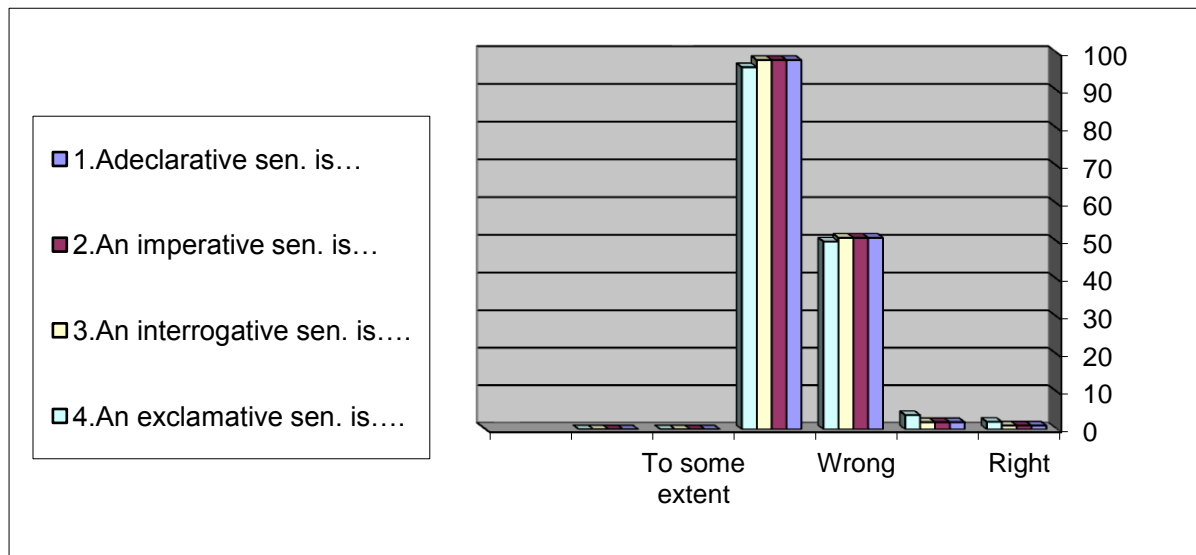


Figure (4.2) The types of sentences by purpose

One student (1.9%) succeeded in completing the empty spaces to show the purpose of the declarative sentence. The remaining 51 students who comprised 98.1% failed to give the correct answer. The number is repeated in showing the purpose behind both the imperative and interrogative sentences, one student in each question succeeded in giving the correct answer, while 51 students failed to do so. Concerning the exclamative sentence, two students (3.8%) succeeded in giving the correct answer. The remaining 50 students who comprised 96.2% were wrong.

It is clear from these statistics that students have no idea of the purpose of declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamative sentences. To phrase it differently, students have no idea of what these sentences imply in connected writing. Any sentence has a structure, that is, the grammatical units that co-occur in this sentence. Students should consider the uses or purposes conveyed by sentences in addition to their grammatical constructions.

Actually, the uses of sentences in connected writing is a ramified process. Students inability to determine the purposes of these sentence types in writing is a tentative proof of their inability to use sentences meaningfully. Hence, as suggested by the second hypothesis of this study, students lack the necessary skills to achieve the unity of sense or meaning in writing.

4.1.3: Q2 The simple and multiple sentence:

Table (4.3) The simple and multiple sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q2	1.A simple sen. containing a comp. s.	5	9.6	46	88.5	1	1.9
	2.A simple sen. containing a comp. v.	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0
	3.A compound sen with clauses joined by a coordinating conj.	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0
	4.A compound sen. with	3	5.8	49	94.2	0	0.0

clauses joined by a semi-colon.						
5.A compound sen. with clauses joined by advconj	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
6.A complex sen. with a subordinate adv clause	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
7.A complex sen. with a Subordinate adj clause.	0	0.0	52	100.0	0	0.0
8.A complex sen. with a subordinate n clause	0	0.0	52	100.0	0	0.0
9.A compound complex Sentence	0	0.0	52	100.0	0	0.0

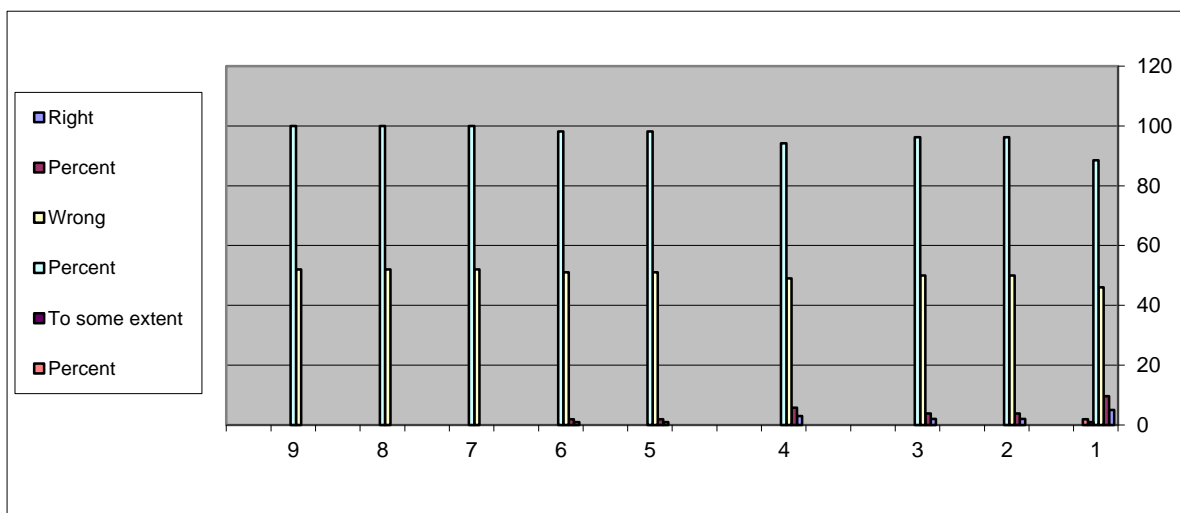


Figure (4.3) The simple and multiple sentence

Five students (9.6%) were successful in giving well constructed and meaningful examples of a simple sentence containing a compound subject. 46 students (88.5%) failed to answer this question, while one student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer. Two students (3.8%) gave correct examples of a simple sentence containing a compound verb. The remaining 50 students (96.2%) failed to write simple sentences with compound verbs.

Two students (3.8%) gave correct examples of a compound sentence with clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, while the remaining 50 students (96.2%) were wrong. As regards the compound sentence with clauses joined by a semi-colon, three students (5.8%) gave a correct answer while the remaining 49 students (94.2%) were wrong. One student wrote a correct example of the compound sentence with clauses joined by an adverbial conjunction. Thus, 51 students (98.1%) were wrong in writing correct examples.

As regards the complex sentence with a subordinate adverbial clause, one student (1.9%) wrote a correct example. The remaining students who comprised 98.1% were wrong. All the 52 students (100%) failed to build complex sentences with a subordinate adjectival clause and complex sentences with a subordinate noun clause. Finally all students were wrong in producing examples of compound complex sentences.

In question one (item B), it has been proved that students are unaware of the types of sentences by purpose. Also, question two proved their unawareness of the types of sentences by structure. With the skill to write good simple, compound and complex sentences, students will have the flexibility to convey their ideas precisely. Also, with good sentence variety, students can write good essays which are perfectly acceptable for academic work.

It is noticeable from students' answers that they have no idea of using punctuation correctly between the clauses of the multiple sentences. For instance, as illustrated in 2.3.1.C, students are unconscious that a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence should be preceded by a comma or that a semi-colon can be used to separate clauses in this sentence. Students are also unconscious of such grammatical words and expressions as subordinate clause, subordinator and coordinator.

Similarly, the answers proved students' weaknesses in what the researcher mentioned in 2.3.1.C and that they are unaware of the implications of connecting words, coordinators, for example, on the meanings of sentences. Quick and Greenbaum (1973: 267) refer to the semantic implications of coordination by 'and', 'or' and 'but'. For instance, the meaning of 'and' in the examples below is indicated by the parenthesized adverbs:

1. Susan washed the dishes and (then) she dried them.
2. Susan tried hard and (yet) she failed.
3. Susan heard an explosion and (therefore) she phoned the police.

'Or' expresses the idea that only one of the possibilities can be realized while 'but' denotes a contrast. This contrast may be because what is said in the second clause is unexpected in view of what is said in the first one. The contrast may also be a restatement in affirmative terms of what has been implied negatively in the first clause. These semantic implications of 'or' and 'but' are made explicit in the following examples successively:

1. You can sleep in the car, or you can go to the hotel, or you can go back home.
2. Jack is poor but he is happy.
3. Jack did not waste his time in the week before the exam, but he studied hard every evening.

Finally, students failure to give examples of the nine simple and multiple sentences has certified part of the idea which was suggested by the second hypothesis of this study, students lack the skill to achieve the structural unity when they write.

4.1.4: Q3(A) Parallel structures:

Table (4.4): Parallel structures

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q3,A	The sen that reads smoothly and sounds more natural:						
	• pair 1	26	50.0	26	50.0	0	0.0
	• pair 2	31	59.6	21	40.4	0	0.0
	• pair 3	33	63.5	19	36.5	0	0.0

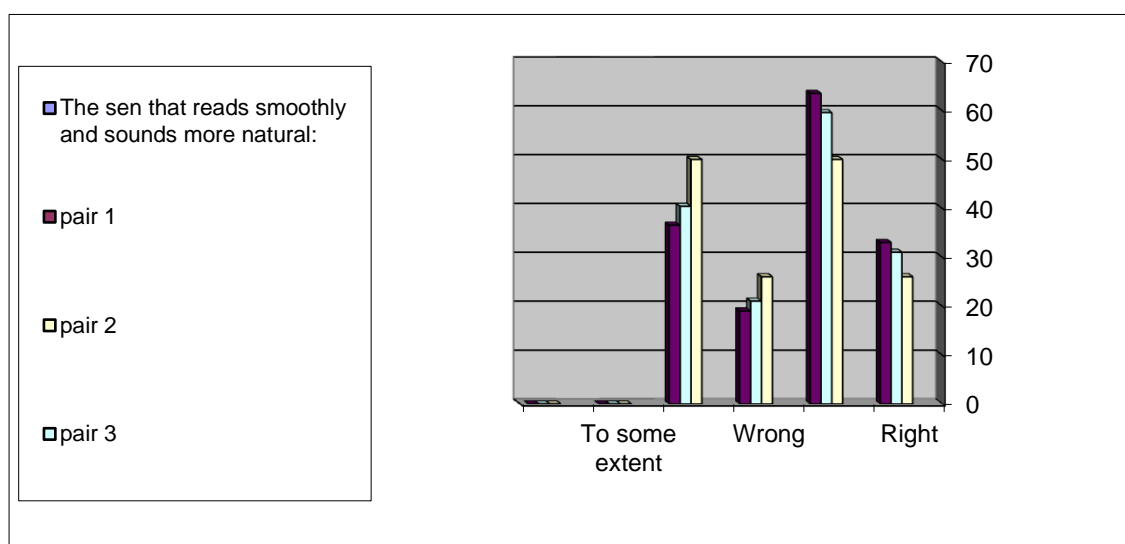


Figure (4.4) Parallel structures

In pair 1, 26 students (50.0%) wrote a check mark beside the sentence that reads more smoothly and sounds more natural. The remaining 26 students were wrong. As for pair 2, 31 students (59.6%) were able to tick the smooth and natural sentence, while 21 students (40.4%) failed to do so. Finally, in pair 3, 33 students (63.5%) have ticked the correct sentence, while the remaining 19 students who comprised 36.5% were wrong.

In comparison with the preceding question, students response to this question is much better. As seen in the previous statistics, many of them were successful to distinguish the smooth sentences which contain parallel structures from the sentences with unparallel structures. Notwithstanding, one can say, some students might have ticked the correct answer randomly without prior knowledge of parallel structures.

Axelord and cooper (1997: 475) place more emphasis on the idea of parallelism as a linking device. They label parallelism as the repetition of sentence structure among other cohesive devices which include pronoun reference, word repetition, synonyms and collocations. Thus, parallel structures serve as cohesive devices that guide readers and help them to follow the train of thoughts in a piece of writing.

4.1.5: Q3(B) The misplaced words:

Table (4.5) The misplaced words

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q3,B	The misplaced part:	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0
	• Sen. 1	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	9	17.3	43	82.7	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3						
	The rewritten sen.	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 1	4	7.7	48	92.3	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3						

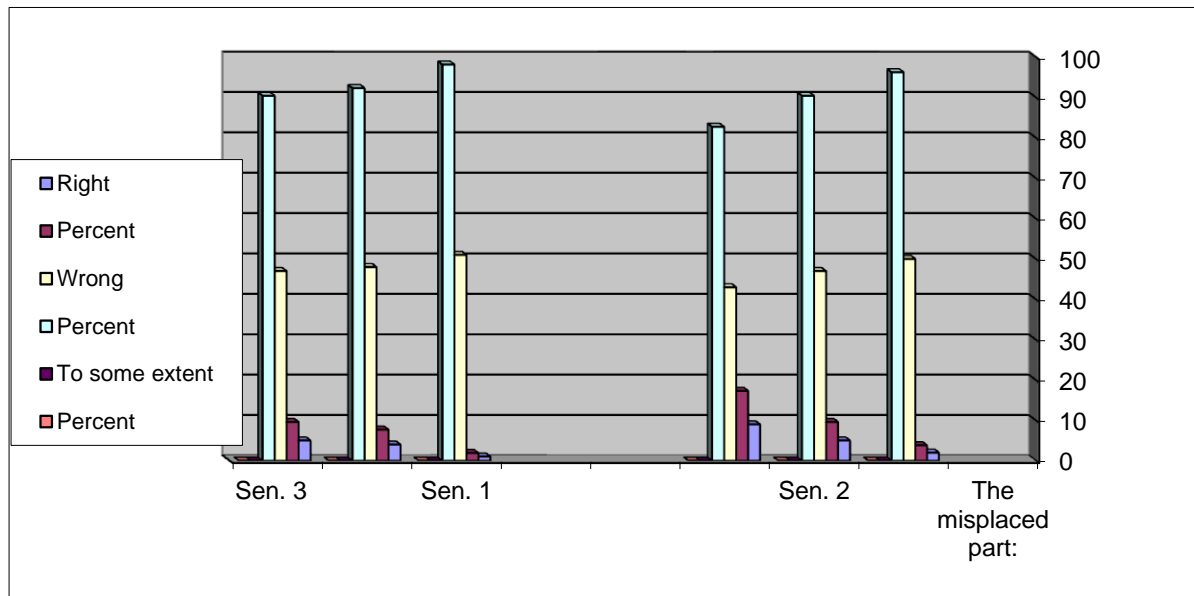


Figure (4.5) The misplaced words

Only two students (3.8%) underlined the misplaced word in the first sentence correctly, while the remaining 50 students (96.2%) were wrong. One student (1.9%) was able to rewrite the first sentence placing related words together, while the remaining 51 students who comprised 98.1% were wrong. In the second sentence, five students (9.6%) underlined the misplaced part correctly, while 47 students (90.4%) were wrong. Four students (7.7%) could rewrite the second sentence placing related words together. The remaining 48 students (92.3%) could not place related words together. Concerning the third sentence, nine students (17.3%) placed related words together, the rest of the students (82.7%) were wrong. As regards the rewritten sentence, five students (9.6%) were correct, while 47 students (90.4%) were wrong.

In view of these statistics, students lack the skill to place modifying words and expressions correctly in sentences. Hence, students failure to answer this question, as in question I (item A), broadly sustains the first hypothesis of this study which

suggests the ineffective communication that results from students' writing. Students failure to answer this question, similarly, sustains the idea implied by the second hypothesis which sees students as unable to achieve the structural unity and the unity of sense in writing.

The writer of this study believes that students at the Sudanese tertiary level are not exposed to developing sentence skills in the manner tackled under 2.3.2. For instance, students do not receive training to revise the sentences which contain unparallel structures with parallel ones. They also do not receive training to revise the sentences which contain long subjects at the expense of their predicates. Similarly, students are usually not trained to remove the redundancies from sentences and to revise the sentences which contain unclear references between pronoun and antecedent with sentences that contain clear references. Therefore, it is always necessary to reconsider the content of the writing syllabuses and to think of creative ways to teach the content of those syllabuses.

4.1.6: Q3(C) The sentence fragment:

Table (4.6) The sentence fragment

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q3,C	Underlining the sen. fragment:						
	• Sen. 1	4	7.7	48	92.3	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	6	11.5	46	88.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	10	19.2	42	80.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	9	17.3	43	82.7	0	0.0
	• Sen. 5	4	7.7	48	92.3	0	0.0
	Making fragments into reg. sen						
	• Sen. 1						0.0
	• Sen. 2	8	15.4	44	84.6	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 5	3	5.8	49	94.2	0	0.0
	• Sen. 5	3	5.8	49	94.2	0	0.0

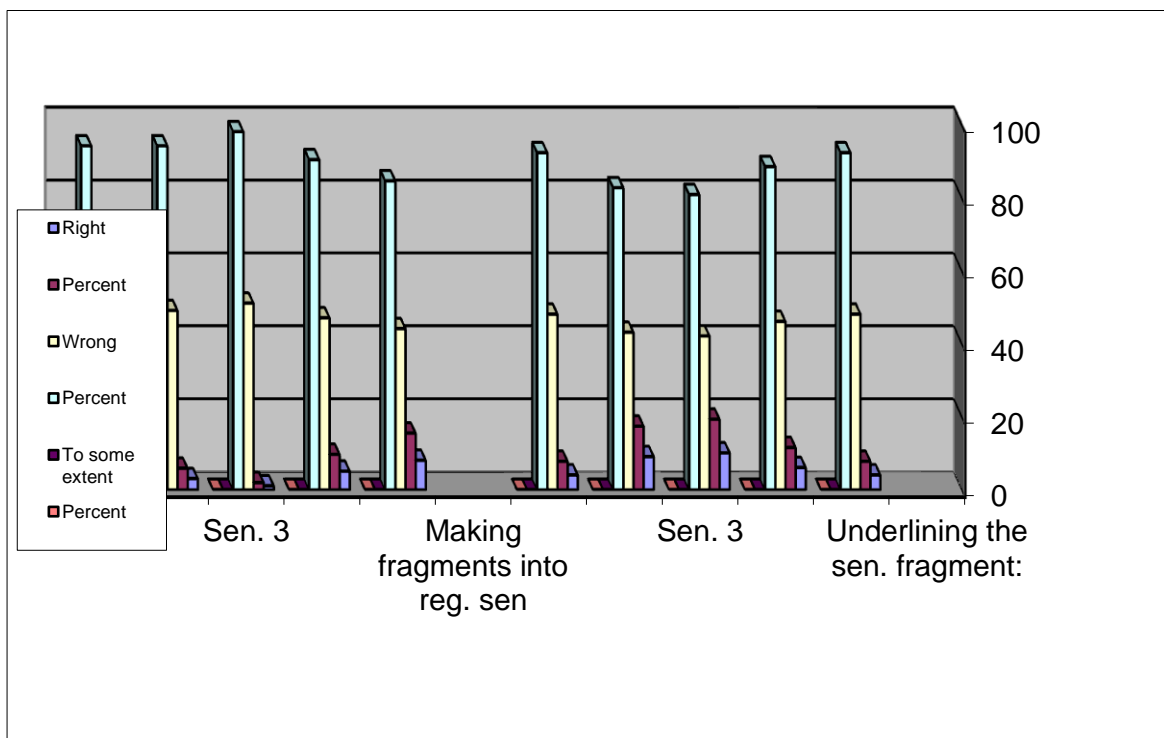


Figure (4.6) The sentence fragment

In the first sentence, four students (7.7%) underlined the sentence fragment correctly. The rest of the students who comprised 92.3% were wrong. Eight students (15.4%) could make the first sentence into a regular sentence, while the rest of the students (44) who comprised 84.6% were wrong.

In the second sentence, six students (11.5%) underlined the sentence fragment correctly. The remainder who comprised 88.5% failed to do so. Five students (9.6%) could attach the fragment to the other part, while 47 students (90.4%) were wrong.

Ten students (19.2%) were able to underline the fragment in the third sentence. The remainder who comprised 80.8% were wrong. Concerning the regular sentence, one student (1.9%) could attach the fragment to the other part, while the remainder (98.1%) failed.

Nine students (17.3%) underlined the fragment in the fourth sentence, the remainder (82.7%) failed to do so. Only three students (5.8%) succeeded to attach the fragment to the other part, the remainder who comprised 94.2% failed to do so.

As regards the fifth sentence, four students (7.7%) were able to underline the fragment, the remainder (92.3%) were wrong. To make this sentence into a regular one, three students (5.8%) were right, while the remainder (94.2%) were wrong.

It is clear from these statistics that students have weaknesses in both identifying fragments in writing and restructuring them into regular sentences.

Fragments are serious sentence errors. They distract readers and suggest that writers are careless or do not understand the structure of sentences. At times, identifying fragments in writing is a bit confusing. Thus, it is necessary to show students, how to determine whether a word group set off as a sentence is actually a complete sentence or a fragment.

To do this Fowler (1983: 208) suggests three ways. First, students should look for a verb in a group of words. If they can not find one, the word group is a fragment. A verb form must change at least once to show the difference in present, past and future times or else it will not be a sentence verb and the word group containing it will consequently be a fragment. In the first of the following examples the ing verb form 'standing' does not change to show different times, the second example revises it:

1. The statue standing by the door.
2. The statue is, was, will be standing by the door.

Second, when students find a sentence verb, they should look for its subject by asking who or what makes the assertion of the verb. If there is no subject, the word group is a fragment:

1. And closed the door quietly. (Fragment)
2. And he closed the door quietly. (Complete sentence)

Third, when students find a word group with a subject and verb, they should look at its beginning. If the first word is a subordinating conjunction, the word group is then a fragment because it does not express a complete independent thought. The following is an example:

As the plane lifted from the runway.

4.1.7: Q4 (A) The cleft sentence:

Table (4.7) The cleft sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q4,A	1.The cleft sen	23	44.2	29	55.8	0	0.0
	2. The sen needed in impressive contexts	11	21.2	40	76.9	1	1.9

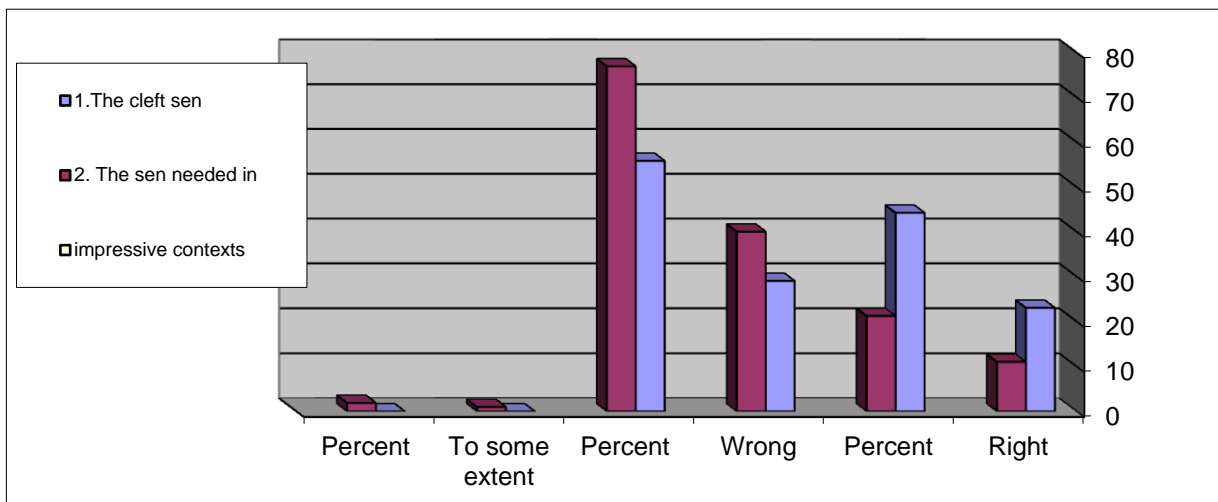


Figure (4.7) The cleft sentence

23 students (44.2%) were able to distinguish the cleft sentence from the other one. The remainder who comprised 55.8% were wrong. With regard to the other half of the question, 11 students (21.2%) supported the idea of the cleft sentence as the one needed in impressive and emphatic contexts, 40 students were wrong and one student (1.9%) gave a 'to some extent answer.'

Cleft sentences and their structures are types of grammatical sentences which, as previously stated, imply specific meanings. Students' unawareness of such sentences indicates their inability to notice the semantic implications and uses of sentences that go hand in hand with the grammatical formulation.

4.1.8: Q4 (B) The end-weight structure:

Table (4.8) The end-weight structure

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q4,B	The better and improved sen:						
	• Pair 1	21	40.4	31	59.9	0	0.0
	• Pair 2	28	53.8	24	46.2	0	0.0
	• Why	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0

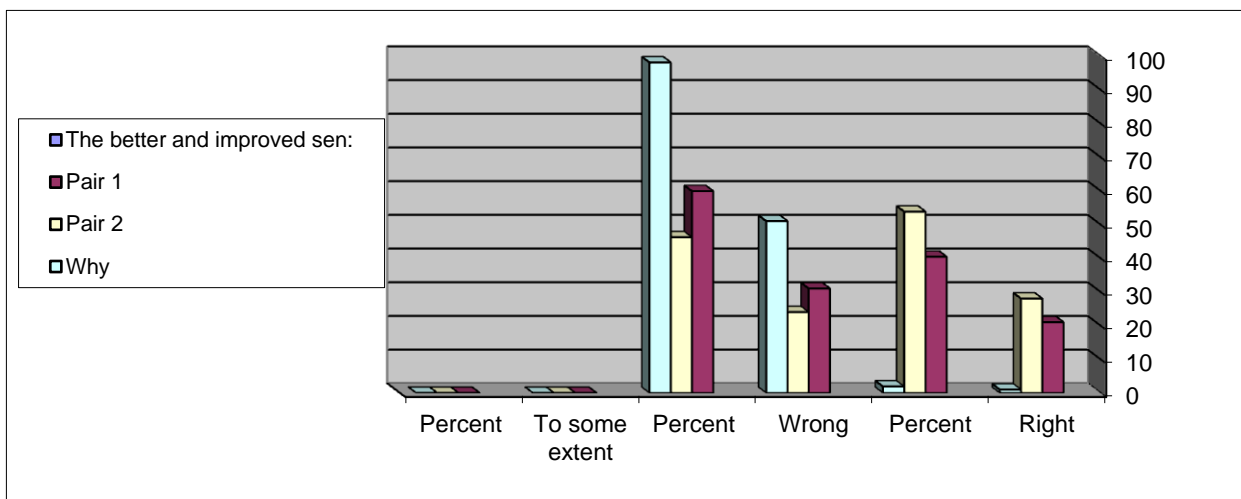


Figure (4.8) The end-weight structure

21 students (40.4%) in pair 1 chose the better and more improved sentence, the remainder (59.6%) were wrong. Concerning pair 2, 28 students (53.8%) were correct, while the rest (46.2%) were wrong. Only one student (1.9%) was successful to justify why the chosen sentences were better and improved, whereas the remainder who comprised 98.1% were unsuccessful.

Students, probably, have chosen the better and improved sentences randomly because only one student stated why the chosen sentences were better and improved. Hence, students are not fully aware that sentences with noticeably longer subjects than their predicates are awkward.

The subject and predicate can be described as a topic and a comment, what is being talked about (the subject) and what is being said about it (the predicate). The predicate, then, conveys a complete thought about the subject. Hence, it should naturally be longer than the subject in the extended sentences that include many words. Nevertheless, sentences, as explained in 2.3.1.C, may include multiple subjects and would seem to be appropriate. The following is an example of a bit longer subject than the one given in 2.3.1.C:

The boy, his sister and his dog went swimming.

Writing and reading are different ends of the same communication process. Therefore, for the sake of communicative writing, students should be directed to notice the previously mentioned awkward sentences in reading in order to develop skills to revise them and to avoid them in their own writing.

4.1.9: Q4 (C) Sentences without redundancy:

Table (4.9) Sentences without redundancy

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q4,C	Rewriting sen without redundancy:						
	• Sen. 1	19	36.5	32	61.5	1	1.9
	• Sen. 2	25	48.1	26	50.0	1	1.9
	• Sen. 3	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	7	13.5	45	86.5	0	0.0

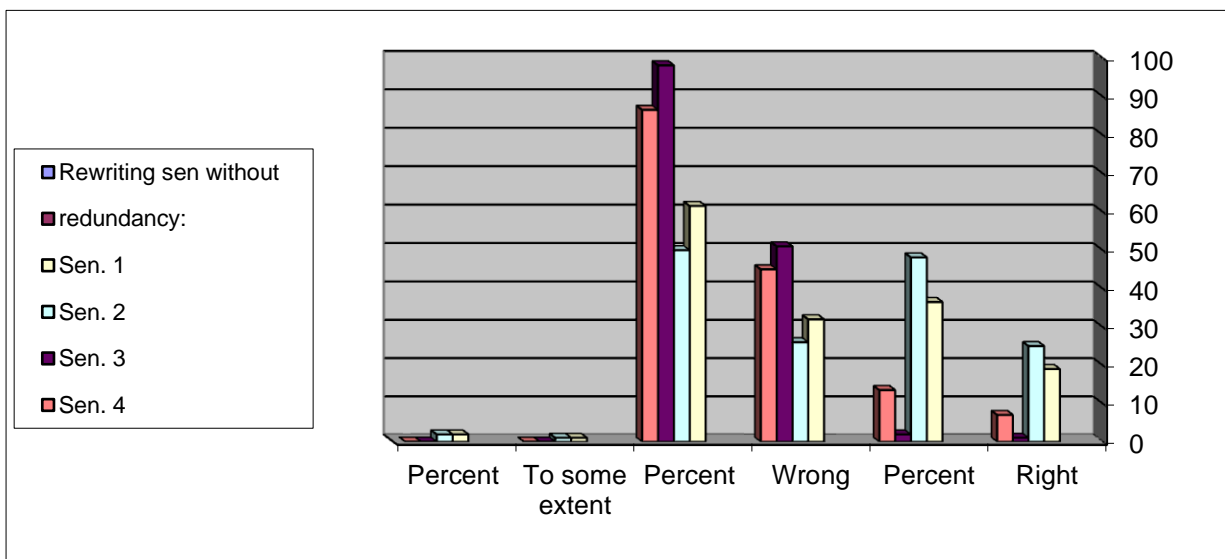


Figure (4.9) Sentences without redundancy

The sentences which students were asked to rewrite without redundancy tried to cover the three axes of redundancy. The first two sentences contained words that repeat the same idea. The third sentence contained a cumbersome phrase which can be replaced with a simpler and shorter alternative, while the fourth sentence contained a phrase which can be left out altogether.

19 students (36.5%) rewrote the first sentence without redundancy, while 32 students (61.5%) failed to do so. One student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer. 25 students (48.1%) rewrote the second sentence correctly, 26 students (50.0%) could not do so and one student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer. In the third sentence, one student (1.9%) could remove the redundant part, while the remainder (98.1%) failed to do so. Concerning the last sentence, seven students (13.5%) rewrote it correctly trimming the redundant part, while 45 students (86.5%) could not do so.

Students achieved some success in rewriting the first and second sentences correctly. So, they, to some extent, were able to distinguish expressions with overlapping words in meaning in writing. However, students general response to this question indicated their limited idea on redundant writing. This works against conciseness in writing and readability. In other words, being unaware of redundancy, students will not improve the flow of their writing and retain the interest of their readers. To reduce redundancy, Blau and Burak (2005: 38) maintain that writers should look carefully at the exact meaning of the words they use. For example, the meaning of 'repeat' includes the meaning of 'again' in the redundant phrase 'repeat again'. One can say, looking carefully at the exact meanings of words is particularly effective in avoiding the most common type of redundancy, words whose meanings overlap.

To reduce redundancy, students should also avoid some particular redundant clauses and phrases which are widespread in writing. Examples are: 'who' and 'which' clauses and 'of' phrases. Some 'who' and 'which' clauses are unnecessary and may be turned into modifiers placed before nouns. The following is an example:

1. The getaway car, which was stolen, turned the corner.
2. The stolen getaway car turned the corner.

As shown in the pair of examples below, 'of phrases' may be omitted or revised by using possessives, adjectives and verbs:

- A 1. At the time of registration students are required to make payment of their library fees.
2. At registration students must pay their library fees.
- B. 1. The producer fired the mother of the director of the movie.
2. The producer fired the movie director's mother.

The third hypothesis of this study confirms students unconsciousness of the sentence skills which they need to write efficiently. The correctness of this hypothesis is certified by this question and all the preceding questions that checked on the sentence skills which students need to write efficiently.

4.1.10: Q5 Pronouns and antecedents:

Table (4.10) Pronouns and antecedents

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q5	Pron reference:						
	• Sen. 1	3	5.8	49	94.2	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0

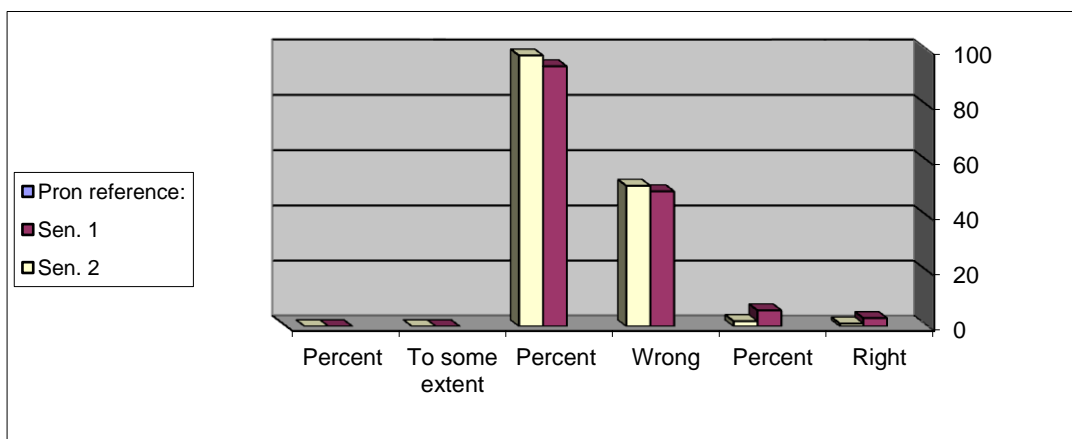


Figure (4.10) Pronouns and antecedents

Three students (5.8%) answered the first part of the question correctly. They could rewrite the sentence creating a clear relationship between the pronoun 'it' and 'room' as an antecedent. The remainder (49) who represented 94.2% were wrong. Regarding the second part of the question, only one student (1.9%) could restructure the sentence for a second time creating a clear relationship between the pronoun 'it' and 'furniture' as an antecedent. The remaining 51 students who represented 98.1% were wrong.

These statistics show students inability to restructure sentences with ambiguous pronoun reference into sentences that include clear relationships between pronouns and antecedents. In fact, students lack skills to prevent confusion and unclear reference between the numerous pronouns , dealt with in 2.3.2.F, and their antecedents. The unclear relationship between pronouns and their antecedents is, similarly, one of the common sentence errors. Students are usually not trained to revise such sentence errors with sentences that contain consistent and clear relationship between pronoun and antecedent. Thus, one can say, students resultant writing suffers from a problematic area in writing which marks it as unclear. One can, similarly, say, students response to this question sustains the ideas implied in the first and third hypotheses of this study. That is, students' writing does not communicate effective thoughts and they are unaware of the sentence or writing skills which they need to write efficiently.

4.1.11: Q6(A and B) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors:

Table (4.11) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q6,A	Correcting the comma splice error:						
	• Sen. 1	7	13.5	45	86.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	6	11.5	46	88.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0
Q6,B	Correcting the run-on sen. error:						
	• Sen. 1	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	7	13.5	45	86.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	4	7.7	48	92.3	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	2	3.8	50	96.2	0	0.0

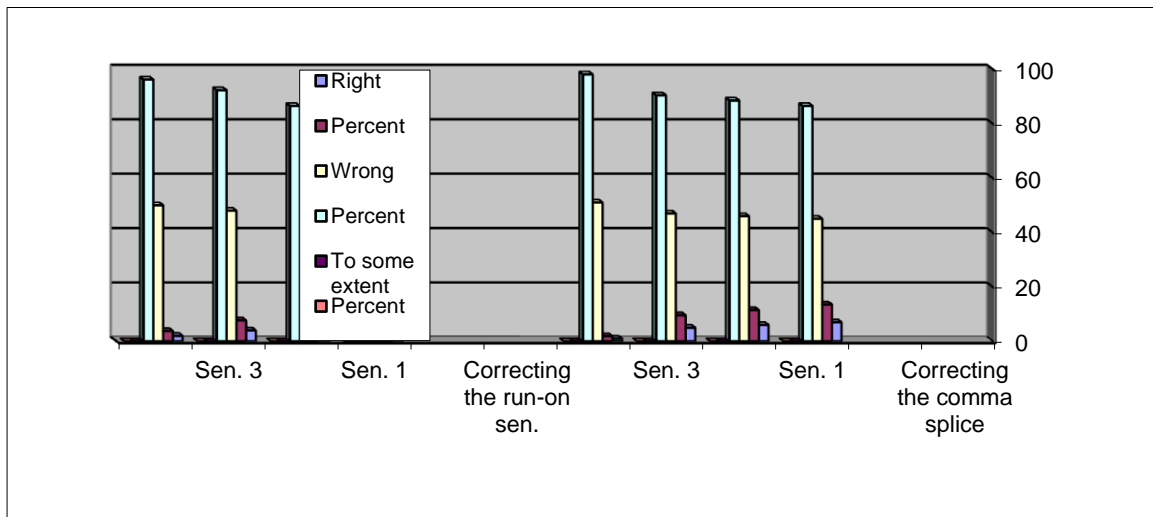


Figure (4.11) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors

As regards item A, the four options through which the students were asked to correct the sentence error were illustrated in 2.3.4.A. The researcher has made sure that no student, in both items, rewrote the sentence error repeating one of the four options twice.

To begin with, all students (100.0%) failed to name the sentence error (comma splice). Seven students (13.5%) could rewrite the comma splice with a correct option in the space provided for the first sentence, the remainder (86.5%) failed. Six students (11.5%) could fill the space provided for the second sentence with a correct option, while the remaining 46 students (88.5%) were wrong. Five students (9.6%) were successful to fill the space provided for the third sentence with a correct option, the remainder (47) who represented 90.4% were wrong. Finally, one student (1.9%) filled the space provided for the fourth sentence with a correct option, the remainder (98.1%) were wrong.

As regards item B, the same four options were used in correcting another sentence error. Similarly, all students could not name the sentence error (run-on sentence). Five students (9.6%) could rewrite the run-on sentence with a correct option in the space provided for the first sentence, the remainder (90.4%) failed. Seven students (13.5%) could fill the space provided for the second sentence with a correct option, while the remaining 45, students (86.5%) were wrong. Four students (7.7%) were successful to fill the space provided for the third sentence with a correct option, the remainder (48) who represented 92.3% failed to do so. Finally, two students (3.8%) filled the space provided for the fourth sentence with a correct option, the remainder (96.2%) were wrong.

These statistics have three indications. First, they indicate students' weakness to use punctuation properly to write sentences. The sound use of punctuation is the main feature which shows the correctness of the four sentences that revise the two sentence errors. About the importance of punctuation, Winterowd and Murray (1985: 606) state:

"Punctuation marks are like road signs that writers use to guide readers through their writing. The marks show readers when to pause or stop. They also connect ideas and clarify items of interest. Like drivers who must learn to read and follow road signs, writers use punctuation to avoid confusion and to make their writing flow more smoothly".

Below is an example which shows the effect of punctuation on the meanings of sentences. Punctuation has made the same sentence means two opposite things:

1. A woman, without her man, is nothing.
2. A woman: without her, man is nothing.

Second, these statistics show students' unacquaintance with the comma splice and the run-on sentence as serious sentence errors. Hence, students writing can be described as awkward since they are unacquainted with these sentence errors, their revision and the appropriate use of punctuation marks.

Third, these statistics, in view of the previous considerations, confirm the first, second and third hypotheses of this study.

4.1.12: Q7(A,B and C) The topic sentences:

Table (4.12) The topic sentences

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q7,A	The topic sen:						
	• Sen. 1	3	5.8	43	82.7	6	11.5
	• Sen. 2	2	3.8	41	78.8	9	17.3
	• Sen. 3	2	3.8	42	80.8	8	15.4
Q7,B	The focused topic sen:						
	• pair 1	18	34.6	34	65.4	0	0.0
	• Pair 2	14	26.9	38	73.1	0	0.0
Q7,C	Adding a topic sen to the par	0	0.0	52	100.0	0	0.0

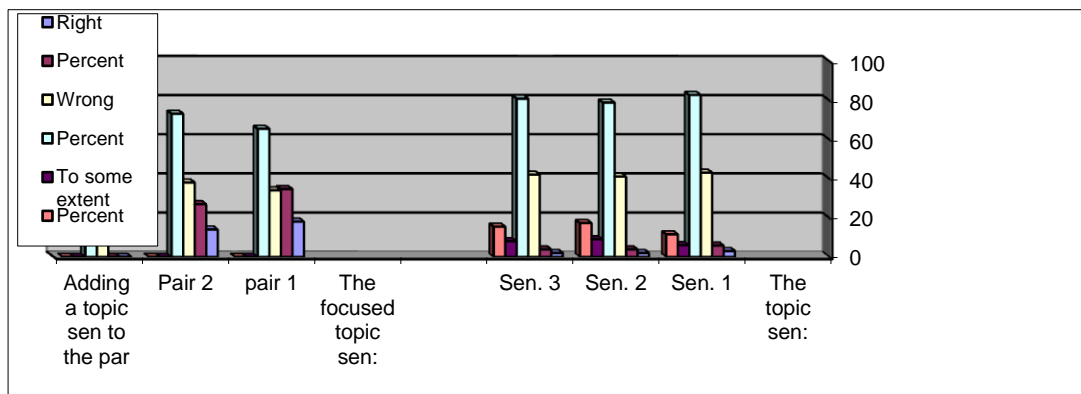


Figure (4.12) The topic sentences

In item A, three students (5.8%) wrote the first relevant topic sentence to the thesis statement correctly. 43 students (82.7%) were wrong and six students (11.5%) gave a to some extent answer. Concerning the second relevant topic sentence, two students (3.8%) were right, 41 students (78.3%) were wrong and nine students (17.3%) gave a 'to some extent answer'. As regards the third relevant topic sentence, two students (3.8%) were right, 42 students (80.8%) were wrong and eight students (15.4%) gave a to some extent answer.

In item B, 18 students (34.6%) could write a check mark beside the focused topic sentence in pair 1, the remaining 34 students (65.4%) were wrong. 14 students (26.9%) wrote a check mark beside the focused topic sentence in pair 2. The remaining 38 students who represented 73.1% were wrong.

Concerning item C, all the 52 students (100.0%) could not add a relevant topic sentence to the paragraph.

Thus, students have no skills to write relevant topic sentences to a thesis statement . Likewise, they have no skills to decide on focused topic sentences from pair of sentences and to construct topic sentences which harmonize with the supporting details of their paragraphs. This reality confirms that students are unfamiliar with how a topic may progress from a working thesis statement to focused topic sentences and then to supportive details that develop each of these topic sentences. In other words, students are unfamiliar with the logical sequence of writing as a string of thoughts that flow from the general idea to the supportive details. The researcher believes this understanding and organization of the writing process as representing the overall cohesive device for communicative writing. Consequently, students' writing lacks the main tools to be considered first in achieving communicative writing.

Since the previous understanding accounts for the overall cohesive device of communicative writing, students response to question seven confirms the correctness of all the hypotheses, in particular the fourth one which sees students as unable to write focused topic sentences and to develop paragraphs properly.

4.1.13: Q8 Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length:

Table (4.13) Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q8	Giving a brief idea about:						
	• Par development	0	0.0	52	100.0	0	0.0
	• Par unity	3	5.8	47	90.4	2	3.8
	• Par coherence	1	1.9	50	96.2	1	1.9
	• Par length	2	3.8	48	92.3	2	3.8

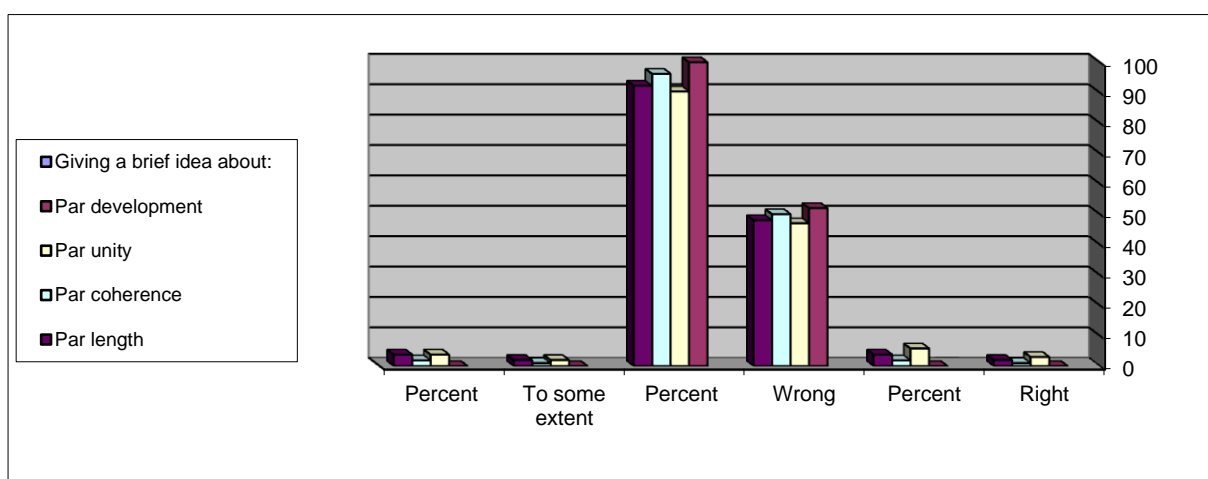


Figure (4.13) Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length

All the 52 students (100.0%) failed to state the idea of paragraph development in writing. Three students (5.8%) could give a brief idea about paragraph unity, 47 students (90.4%) were wrong and two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer. Concerning the meaning of paragraph coherence, one student (1.9%) was correct, 50 students (96.2%) were wrong and one student gave a to some extent answer. As regards students' understanding of paragraph length, two students (3.8%) were correct, 48 students who represented 92.3% were wrong and two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer.

These percentages show that students are unfamiliar with the concepts of paragraph development, unity, coherence and length. Having an idea about these concepts is the preliminary step to their application in writing. Also, lack of skills to carry into effect these concepts results in a poor writing which lacks the important properties, referred to in 2.2, of communicative writing. Hence, students' writing will make no sense. One, then, can say, it is incoherent because, as has been explained previously in 2.2, the capacity of texts to make sense characterizes coherent writing.

Similarly, as has been proved by question seven, students' response to question eight confirms the correctness of all the hypotheses, in particular, part of the fourth hypothesis which sees students as unable to develop paragraphs properly. Since students are unable to develop paragraphs, they will have no skills to produce unified paragraphs with suitable length to their general ideas.

4.2 The Post-test:

4.2.1: Q1(A) The regular, irregular and non-sentence:

Table (4.14) The regular, irregular and non-sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some Extent	Percent
Q1,A	1. Definition of reg. sen	34	65.4	14	26.9	4	7.7
	example	27	51.9	23	44.2	2	3.8
	2. Definition of irreg. sen.	32	61.5	16	30.8	4	7.7
	example	11	21.2	41	78.8	0	0.0
	3. Definition of non. sen	5	9.6	40	76.9	7	13.5
	example	30	57.7	21	40.4	1	1.9

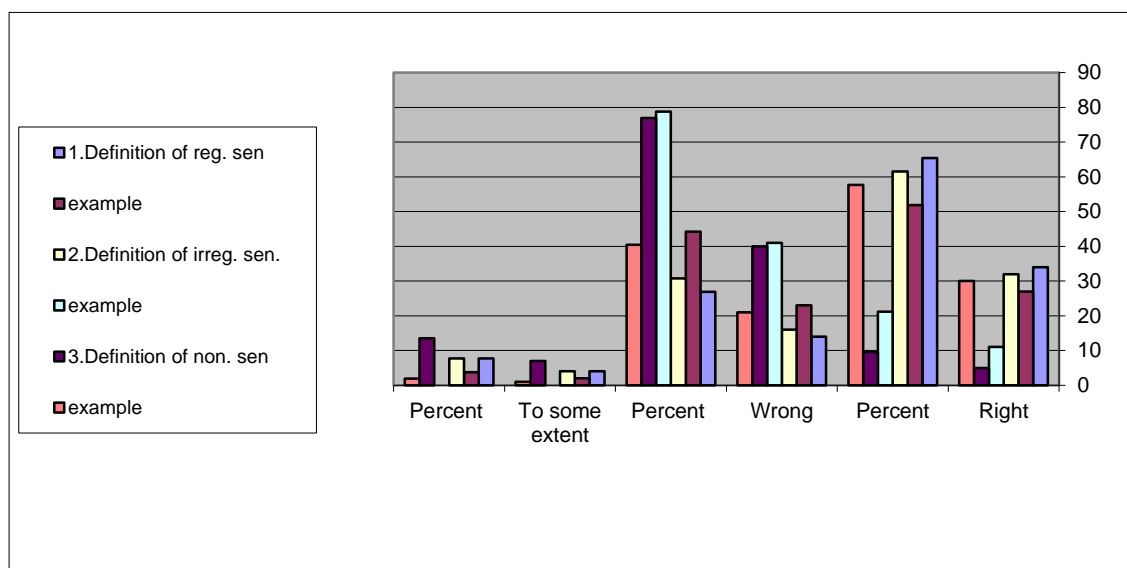


Figure (4.14) The regular, irregular and non-sentence

The students who succeeded to define the regular sentence were 34(65.4%).14 students (26.9%) were wrong, while four students (7.7%) gave a to some extent answer. The students who formulated correct examples of regular sentences were 27(51.9%), while those who failed were 23, their number comprised 44.2%. Only two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer.

This time students' sentences were grammatically and semantically acceptable. The students' correct examples nearly covered the simple and multiple sentence and indicated a skill to extend sentences to include as many grammatical words as possible.

The students who defined the irregular sentence correctly were 32 (61.5%), while 16 students (30.8%) were wrong. Only four students who represented 7.7% gave a to some extent answer. 11 students (21.2%) gave correct examples of irregular sentences, while 41 students who comprised 78.8% were wrong.

Students little development in providing examples of irregular sentences has two indications. First, it clarified students identification of how fragments occur in writing. Second, this identification denoted students liability to restructure fragments into regular sentences. Consequently, one can say, students have taken a step up the ladder in achieving familiarity with the regular patterns of the English sentence and noticing fragments as sentence errors in their future writing.

Five students (9.6%) could define the non-sentence, 40 students (76.9%) were wrong and seven students who represented 13.5% gave a to some extent answer. 30 students (57.7%) were able to produce correct examples of non-sentences, 21 students (40.4%) were wrong and one student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer.

The response to this question confirmed, added to the increased number of students who provided correct examples of non-sentences, the expectation of using this form of minor sentences in writing correctly by students, their ability to avoid spoken non-sentences in writing and finally their ability to approach a number of classifications of the English sentence which contributes to efficient writing.

4.2.2: Q1 (B) The types of sentences by purpose:

Table (4.15) The types of sentences by purpose

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q1,B	1.Adeclarativesen. is...	42	80.8	10	19.2	0	0.0
	2.An imperative sen. is...	41	78.8	11	21.2	0	0.0
	3.An interrogative sen. is...	42	80.8	10	19.2	0	0.0
	4.Anexclamativesen. is...	36	69.2	12	23.1	4	7.7

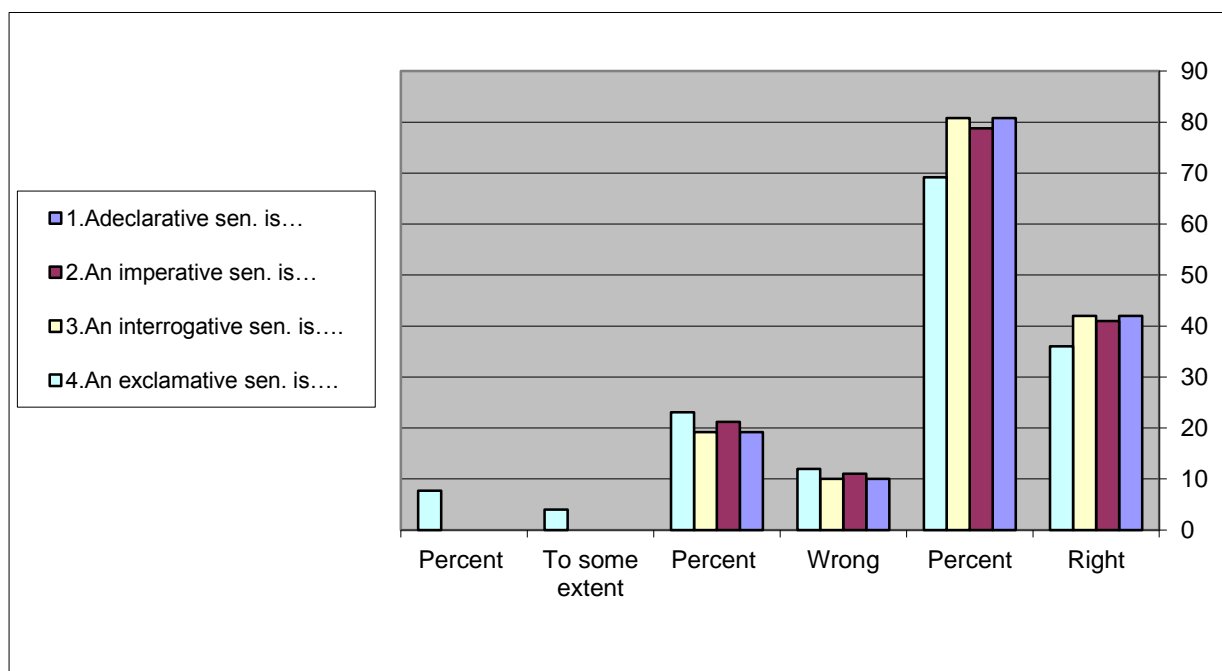


Figure (4.15) The types of sentences by purpose

42 students (80.8%) succeeded in completing the empty spaces to show the purpose of the declarative sentence. The remaining 10 students who represented 19.2% were wrong. 41 students (78.8%) were successful to show the purpose of the imperative sentence, while 11 students (21.2%) were wrong. 42 students (80.8%) could show the purpose of the interrogative sentence in writing, the remaining ten students who represented 19.2% were wrong. 36 students (69.2%) could show the purpose of the exclamative sentence in writing, 12 students (23.1%) were wrong, while four students (7.7%) gave a to some extent answer.

On the contrary to the pre-test, these statistics show a considerable change in students idea of the types of sentences by purpose. Hence, students have taken a step forward in both forming an idea about what these sentences denote in connected writing and using sentences meaningfully to convey effective thoughts.

4.2.3: Q2 The simple and multiple sentence:

Table (4.16) The simple and multiple sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q2	1.A simple sen. containing a comp. s.	27	51.9	23	44.2	2	3.8
	2.A simple sen. containing a comp. v.	20	38.5	29	55.8	3	5.8
	3.A compound sen with clauses joined by a coordinating conj.	19	36.5	31	59.6	2	3.8
	4.A compound sen. with clauses joined by a semi-colon.	20	38.5	30	59.6	2	3.8
	5.A compound sen. with clauses joined by advconj	15	28.8	33	57.7	4	7.7
	6.A complex sen. with a subordinate adv clause	10	19.2	38	63.5	4	7.7
	7.A complex sen. with a subordinateadj clause.	16	30.8	36	73.1	0	0.0
	8.A complex sen. with a subordinate n clause	5	9.6	47	90.4	0	0.0
	9.A compound complex Sentence	12	23.1	37	71.2	3	5.8

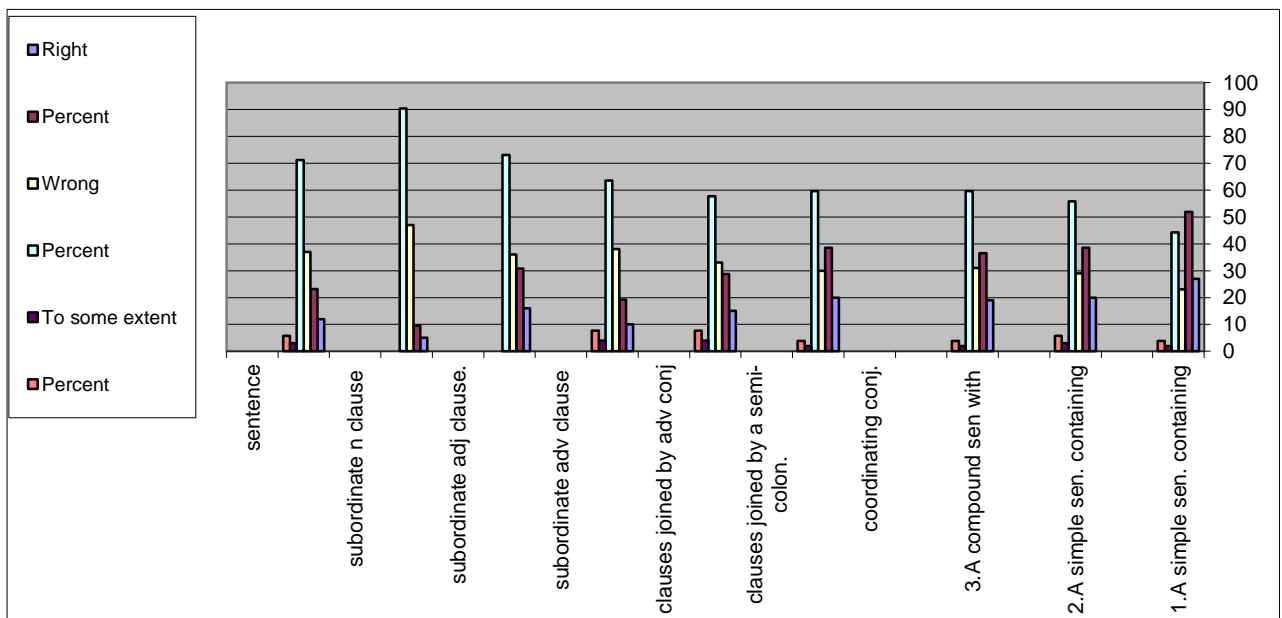


Figure (4.16) The simple and multiple sentence

27 students (51.9%) were successful in giving meaningful examples of a simple sentence containing a compound subject. 23 students (44.2%) were wrong, while two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer. 20 students (38.5%) gave correct examples of a simple sentence containing a compound verb, 29 students (55.8%) were wrong, whereas three students (5.8%) gave a to some extent answer.

19 students (39.5%) gave correct examples of a compound sentence with clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, 31 students (59.6%) were wrong, whereas the remaining two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer. Concerning the

compound sentence with clauses joined by a semi-colon, 20 students (38.5%) wrote correct examples, 30 students (57.7%) failed to do so, while the remaining two students (3.8%) gave a 'to some extent answer.' With regard to the compound sentence with clauses joined by an adverbial conjunction, 15 students (28.8%) wrote correct examples, 33 students (63.5%) were wrong, while four students (7.7%) provided a to some extent answer.

Ten students (19.2%) wrote sound examples of a complex sentence with a subordinate adverbial clause, 30 students (73.1%) were wrong, while four students (7.7%) provided a to some extent answer. Concerning the complex sentence with a subordinate adjectival clause, 16 students (30.8%) could build correct examples, while 36 students who represented 69.2% were wrong. With regard to the complex sentence with a subordinate noun clause, five students (9.6%) wrote correct examples, while 47 students who comprised 90.4% were wrong.

12 students who represented 23.1% were able to formulate correct examples of a compound complex sentence. 37 students (71.2%) could not formulate examples of a compound complex sentence, while three students (5.8%) provided a to some extent answer.

From these statistics one can say, students have achieved some development in writing the simple and multiple sentences and in using punctuation properly between the clauses of the multiple sentences. Also, one can say, students began to realize the semantic implications of transitional words used in these sentences.

To avoid the shortcomings in the writing skills which were seen in the pre-test, the researcher led a comprehensive way of teaching the aforesaid sentences. This teaching strategy adopted the inductive and deductive approaches. The researcher used to provide students with many examples from which they induce all the relevant details regarding these sentences. Also, the researcher stated the rules for writing such sentences and required students to deduce relevant examples. Added to the simple and multiple sentences, this effective teaching strategy contributed to the better performance in many items of the post-test. Celce-Murcia and McIntosh (1979: 219) are in favour of this teaching strategy. They see the course which meets the needs of students as the one which includes both inductive and deductive presentations of the language learning tasks.

4.2.4: Q3(A) Parallel structures:

Table (4.17) Parallel structures

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some Extent	Percent
Q3,A	The sen that reads smoothly and sounds more natural:						
	• pair 1	45	86.5	7	13.5	0	0.0
	• pair 2	34	65.4	18	34.6	0	0.0
	• pair 3	31	59.6	21	40.4	0	0.0

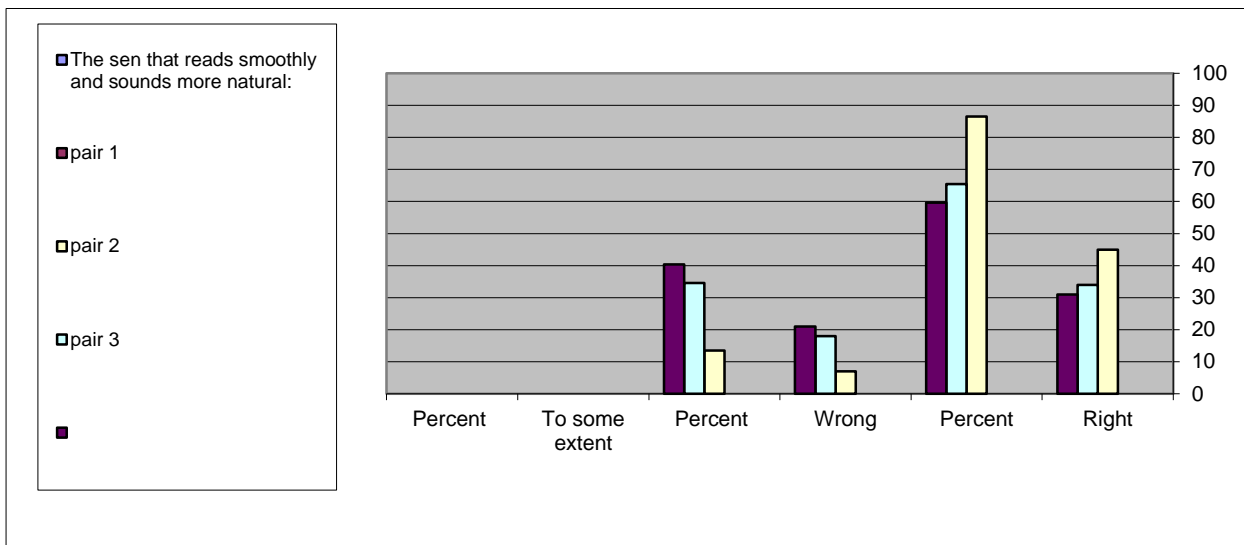


Figure (4.17) Parallel structures

In pair 1, 45 students (86.5%) wrote a check mark beside the sentence that reads more smoothly and sounds more natural, the remaining seven students (13.5%) were wrong. As regards pair 2, 34 students (65.4%) were able to tick the smooth and natural sentence, while 18 students (34.6%) failed to do so. Finally in pair 3, 31 students (59.6%) have ticked the correct sentence, the remaining 21 students who comprised 40.4% were wrong.

Though students response to this question was to some extent good in the pre-test, it was even better in the post-test as shown by the previous statistics. Thus, students began to get familiar with the idea of repeating the sentence structure as a cohesive device which distinguishes clear writing.

4.2.5: Q3(B) The misplaced words:

Table (4.18) The misplaced words

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q3,B	The misplaced part:						
	• Sen. 1	27	51.9	25	48.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	24	46.2	28	53.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	24	46.2	28	53.8	0	0.0
	The rewritten sen.						
	• Sen. 1	27	51.9	25	48.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	24	46.2	28	53.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	27	51.9	25	48.1	0	0.0

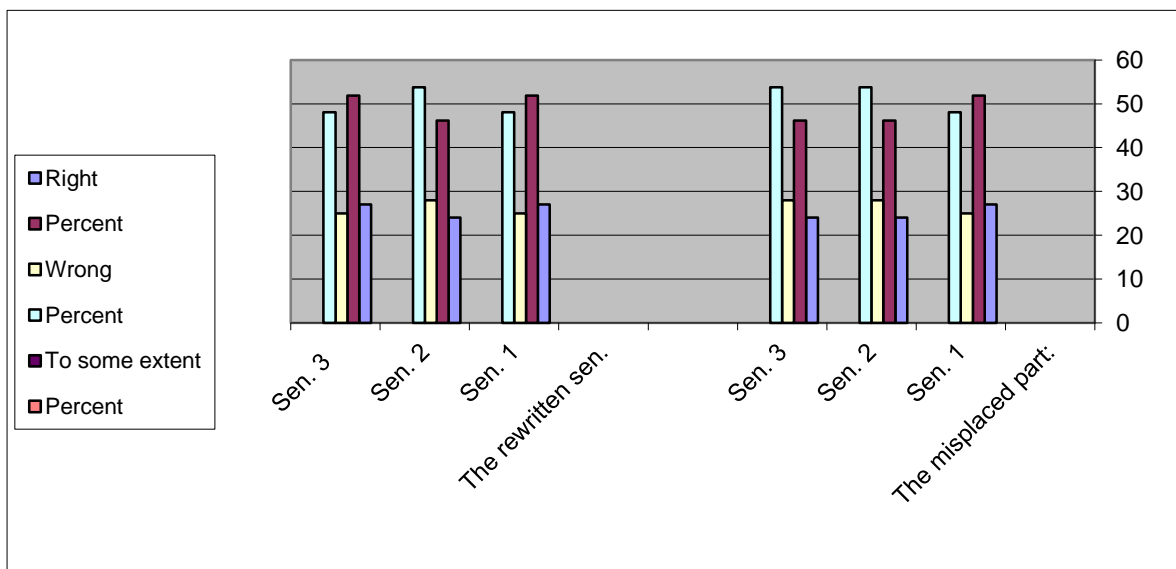


Figure (4.18) The misplaced words

27 students (51.9%) underlined the misplaced word in the first sentence correctly, while the remaining 25 students (48.1%) were wrong. 27 students (51.9%) were able to rewrite the first sentence placing related words together, while 25 students (48.1%) were wrong. In the second sentence, 24 students (46.2%) underlined the misplaced part correctly, while 28 students (53.6%) were wrong.

24 students (46.2%) could rewrite the second sentence placing related words together, the remaining students (28) who represented (53.8%) were wrong. As regards the third sentence, 24 students (46.2%) placed related words together, while 28 students who represented 53.8% were wrong. Concerning the rewritten sentence, 27 students (51.9%) were correct, whereas 25 students (48.1%) were wrong.

The percentage increase in the number of correct answers denoted students progress in placing modifying words and expressions correctly in sentences. Hence, students began to realize the correct word order and one type of the serious sentence errors which they are not usually trained to avoid.

4.2.6: Q3(C) The sentence fragment:

Table (4.19) The sentence fragment

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q3,C	Underlining the sen. fragment:						
	• Sen. 1	18	34.6	34	65.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	14	26.9	38	73.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	13	25.0	39	75.0	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	14	26.9	38	73.1	0	0.0
	• Sen. 5	8	15.4	44	84.6	0	0.0
	Making fragments into reg. sen						
	• Sen. 1	20	38.5	32	16.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	10	19.2	42	80.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	13	25.0	38	73.1	1	1.9
	• Sen. 4	13	25.0	37	71.2	2	3.8
	• Sen. 5	8	15.4	44	84.6	0	0.0

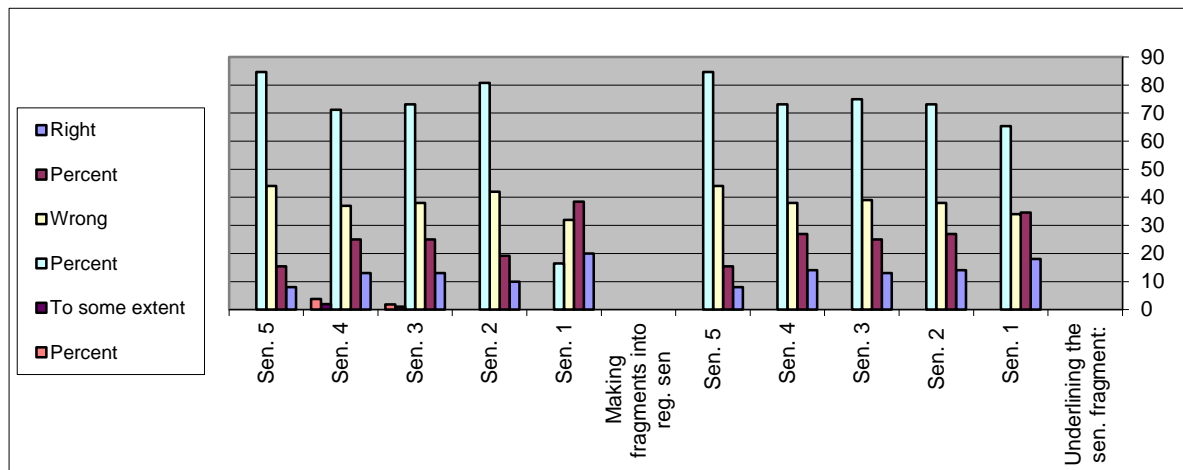


Figure (4.19) The sentence fragment

In the first sentence, 18 students (34.6%) underlined the sentence fragment correctly. The rest of the students (34) who comprised 65.4% were wrong. 20 students (38.5%) could make the first sentence into a regular one, while the remaining students (32) who comprised 61.5% were wrong.

In the second sentence 14 students (26.9%) underlined the sentence fragment correctly. The remainder (38) who comprised 73.1% failed to do so. Ten students (19.2%) could attach the fragment to the other part, while the remainder (42) who comprised 80.8% were incorrect.

13 students (25.0%) were able to underline the fragment in the third sentence. The remaining 39 students (75.0%) were incorrect. Concerning the regular sentence, 13 students (25.0%) were right, 38 students (73.1%) were wrong, whereas one student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer.

14 students (26.9%) underlined the fragment in the fourth example, the remainder (38) who represented 73.1% failed to do so. 13 students (25.0%) succeeded to attach the fragment to the other part of the sentence. 37 students (71.2%) could not attach the fragment to the other part, while two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer.

As regards the fifth sentence, eight students (15.4%) were able to underline the fragment, the remaining 44 students (84.6%) were wrong. To make the sentence into a regular one, eight students (15.4%) were correct, while 44 students (84.6%) were incorrect.

Opposite to what occurred in the pre-test, these statistics show a percentage increase in the number of students who were able to underline the fragments and to make them into regular sentences by attaching them to the preceding written parts. Students, thus, are developing skills in avoiding careless writing which distracts readers.

4.2.7: Q4(A) The cleft sentence:

Table (4.20) The cleft sentence

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q4,A	1.The cleft sen	40	76.9	12	23.1	0	0.0
	2. The sen needed in impressive contexts	13	25.0	38	73.1	1	1.9

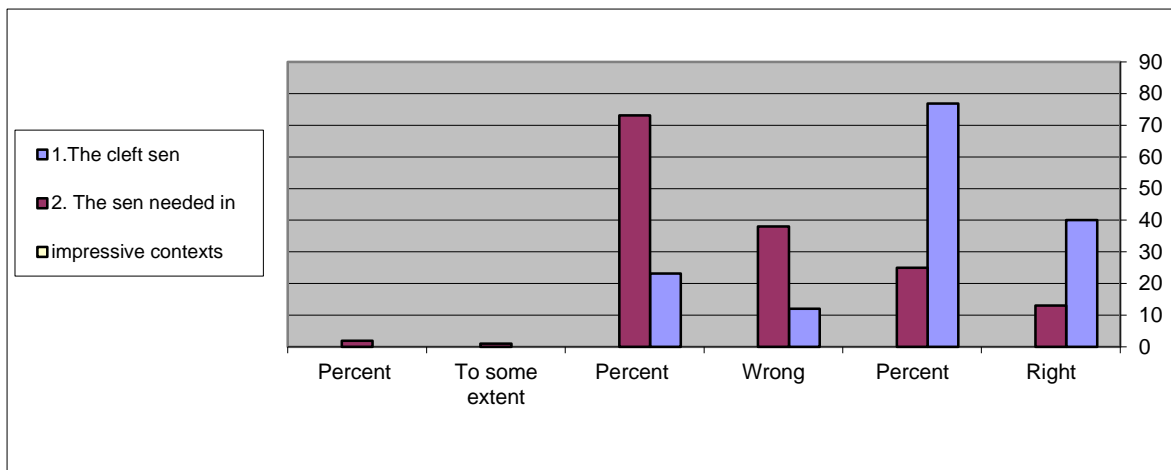


Figure (4.20) The cleft sentence

40 students (76.9%) were able to distinguish the cleft sentence from the other one. The remainder (12) who comprised 23.1% were wrong. With regard to the other half of the question, 13 students (25.0%) supported the idea of the cleft sentence as the one needed in impressive and emphatic contexts, while 38 students who represented 73.1% were incorrect. One student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer.

How students responded to this question certified the idea they began to entertain, the uses of sentences that go hand in hand with their grammatical constructions.

4.2.8:Q4(B) The end-weight structure:

Table (4.21) The end-weight structure

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q4,B	The better and improved sen:						
	• Pair 1	38	73.1	14	26.9	0	0.0
	• Pair 2	38	73.1	14	26.9	0	0.0
	• Why	10	19.2	38	73.1	4	7.7

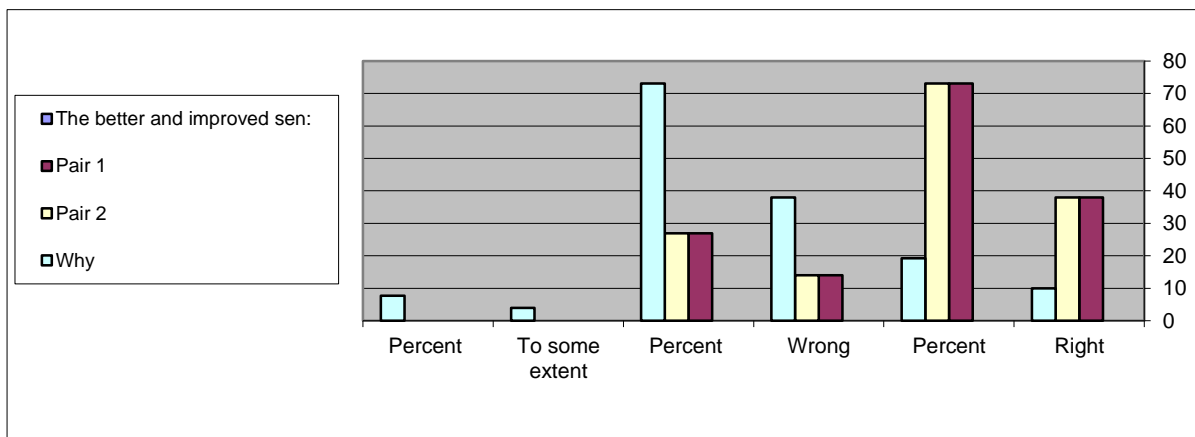


Figure (4.21) The end-weight structure

38 students (73.1%) in pair 1 chose the better and more improved sentence, the remainder (14) who represented 26.9% were unable to do so. Concerning pair 2, also, 38 students were correct, the rest 14 students were incorrect. Ten students (19.2%) were successful to state why the chosen sentences were better and improved, whereas the remainder (38) who represented 73.1% were unsuccessful.

Hence, these percentage indicate students' progress in differentiating between the awkward sentences which contain long subjects and the better and smooth ones which avoid long subjects at the expense of their predicates.

4.2.9: Q4 (C) Sentences without redundancy:

Table (4.22) Sentences without redundancy

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some Extent	Percent
Q4,C	Rewriting sen without redundancy:						
	• Sen. 1	42	80.8	10	19.2	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	73	71.2	15	28.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	6	11.5	46	88.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	13	25.0	39	75.0	0	0.0

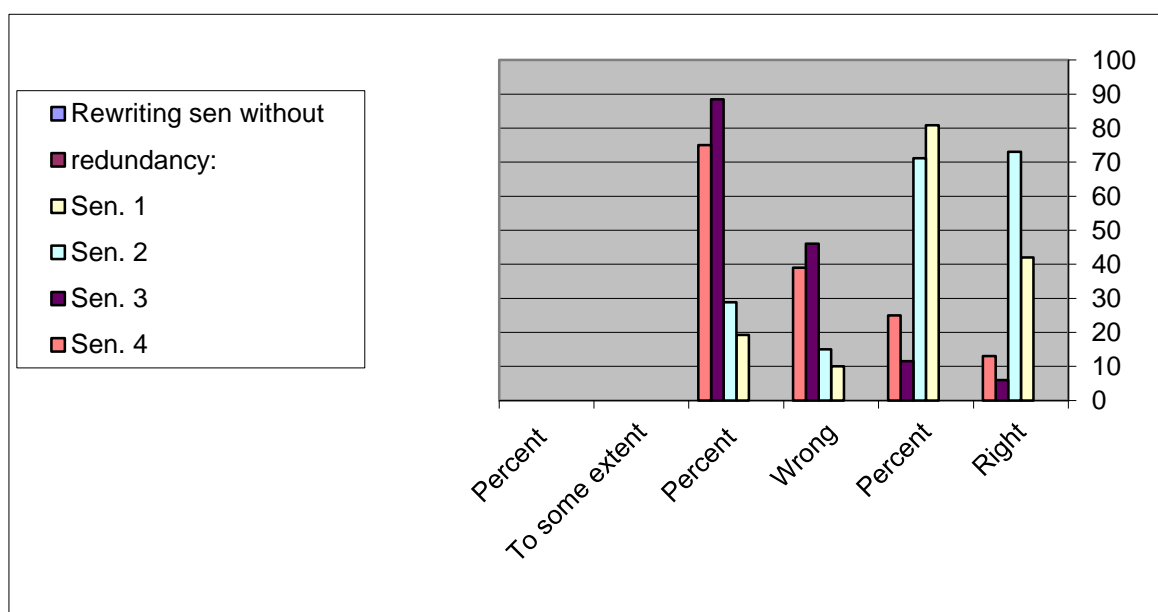


Figure (4.22) Sentences without redundancy

42 students (80.8%) rewrote the first sentence without redundancy, while ten students (19.2%) failed to do so. 37 students (71.2%) rewrote the second sentence correctly, the remaining 15 students (28.8%) were incorrect. In the third sentence, six students (11.5%) could remove the redundant part, while the remainder (46) who represented 88.5% failed to do so. As regards the last sentence, 13 students (25.0%) could trim the redundancy, while 39 students (75.0%) could not do so.

Similarly, as occurred in the preceding questions, the percentage increase in correct answers suggests students' advancement in recognizing the three axes of redundant writing.

4.2.10: Q5 Pronouns and antecedents:

Table (4.23) Pronouns and antecedents

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q5	Pron reference:						
	• Sen. 1	13	25.0	39	75.0	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	10	19.2	42	80.8	0	0.0

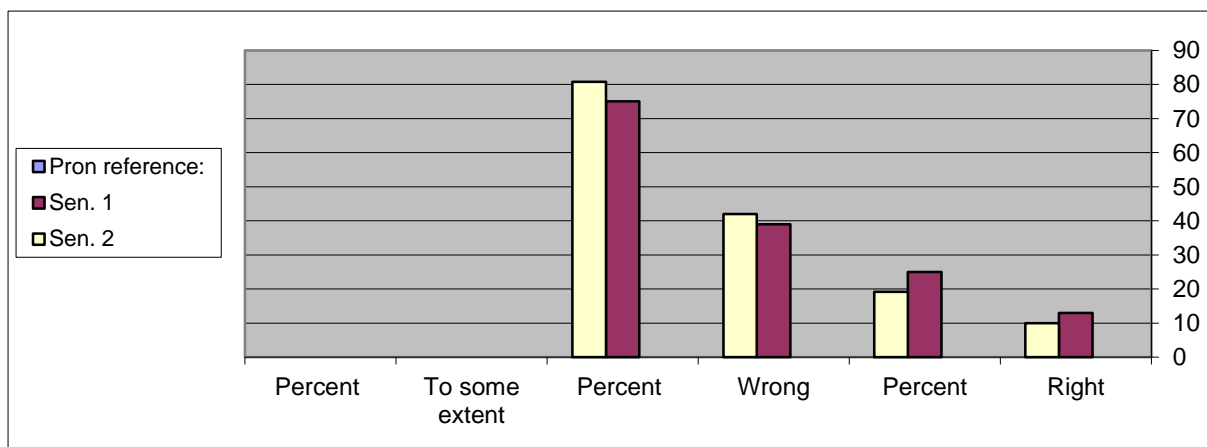


Figure (4.23) Pronouns and antecedents

13 students (25.0%) answered the first part of the question correctly. They could rewrite the sentence creating a clear relationship between the pronoun 'it' and 'room' as an antecedent. The remainder (39) who represented 75.0% were wrong. Concerning the second part of the question, ten students (19.2%) could restructure the sentence for a second time to create a clear relationship between the pronoun 'it' and 'furniture' as an antecedent. The remainder (42) who comprised 80.0% were wrong.

Though the percentage increase in correct answers is not great, it really shows students realization of restructuring sentences with ambiguous pronoun reference into sentences with unambiguous relationships between pronouns and antecedents. Students will take a step forward to write communicatively through the continuous practice of restructuring sentences in such a manner.

4.2.11: Q6(A and B) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors:

Table (4.24) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q6,A	Correcting the comma splice error:						
	• Sen. 1	37	71.2	15	28.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	38	73.1	14	26.9	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	36	69.2	16	30.8	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	30	57.7	22	42.3	0	0.0
Q6,B	Correcting the run-on sen. error:						
	• Sen. 1	22	42.3	30	57.7	0	0.0
	• Sen. 2	31	59.6	21	40.4	0	0.0
	• Sen. 3	33	63.5	19	36.5	0	0.0
	• Sen. 4	29	55.8	22	42.3	1	1.9

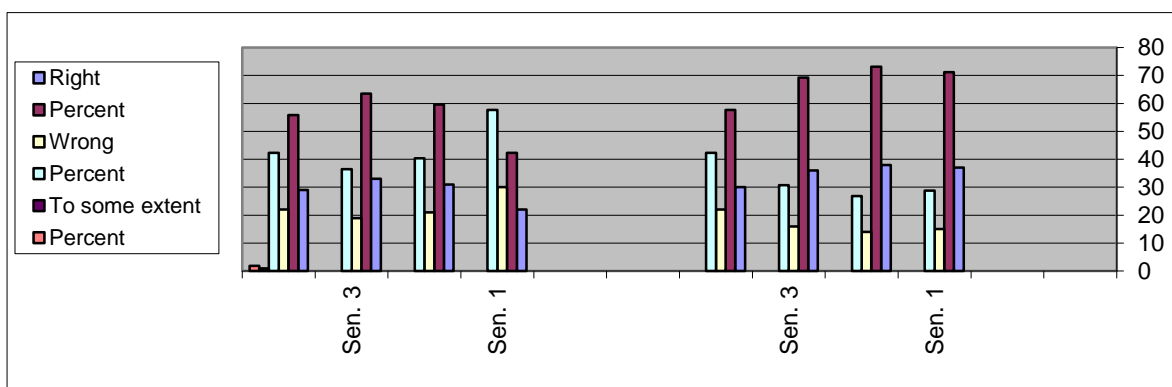


Figure (4.24) The comma splice and run-on sentence errors

37 students (71.2%) could rewrite the comma splice with a correct option in the space provided for the first sentence, the remainder (15) who represented 28.8% failed to do so. 38 students (73.1%) could fill the space provided for the second sentence with a correct option, while the remaining 14 students (26.9%) were wrong. 36 students (69.2%) were successful to fill the space provided for the third sentence with a correct option, the remainder (16) who represented 30.8% were wrong. Finally, 30 students (57.7%) filled the space provided for the fourth sentence with a correct option, the remaining 22 students (42.3%) were wrong.

Concerning item B, 22 students (42.3%) could rewrite the run-on sentence with a correct option in the space provided for the first sentence, the remaining 30 students (57.7%) were wrong. 31 students (59.6%) were successful to fill the space provided for the second sentence with a correct option, the remainder (21) who represented 40.4% were wrong. 33 students (63.5%) could fill the place provided for the third sentence with a correct option, while the remaining 19 students who represented 36.5% were wrong. Finally, 29 students (55.8%) filled the space provided for the fourth sentence with a correct option, while 22 students (42.3%) were wrong. One student (1.9%) gave a to some extent answer.

Also, the percentage increase in correct answers here confirms students progress in proficient writing since they became acquainted with the comma splice and run-on sentence errors.

4.2.12: Q7(A, B and C) The topic sentences:

Table (4.25) The topic sentences

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q7,A	The topic sen:						
	• Sen. 1	3	5.8	44	84.6	5	9.6
	• Sen. 2	4	7.7	43	82.7	5	9.6
	• Sen. 3	3	5.8	43	82.7	6	11.5
Q7,B	The focused topic sen:						
	• pair 1	38	73.1	14	26.9	0	0.0
	• Pair 2	19	36.5	33	63.5	0	0.0
Q7,C	Adding a topic sen to the par	0	0.0	50	96.2	2	3.8

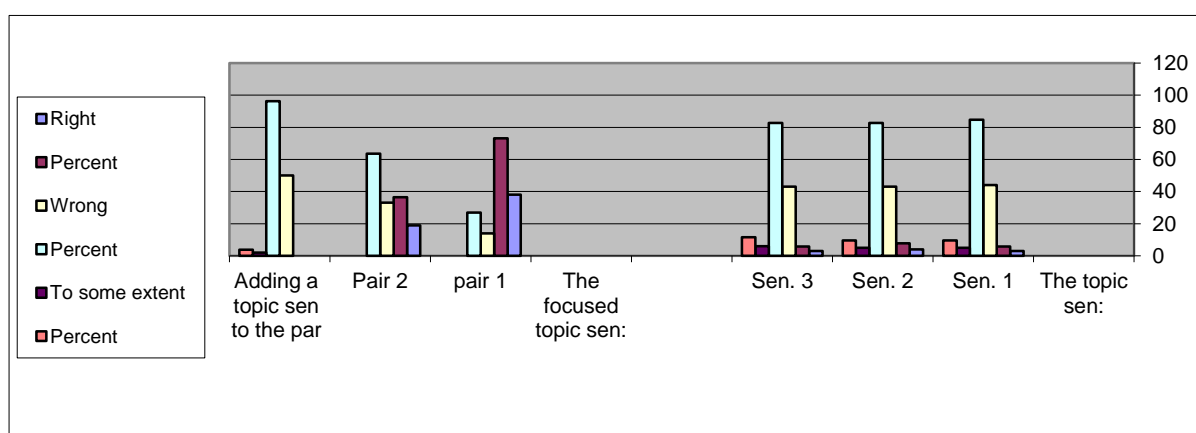


Figure (4.25) The topic sentences

In item A, three student (5.8%) wrote the first relevant topic sentence to the thesis statement correctly. 44 students (84.6%) were wrong, while five students (9.6%) gave a to some extent answer. With regard to the second relevant topic sentence, four students (7.7%) were right, 43 students (82.7%) were wrong and five students (9.6%) provided a to some extent answer. Concerning the last relevant topic sentence, three students (5.8%) were correct, 43 students (82.7%) were incorrect and six students (11.5%) gave a to some extent answer.

In item B, 38 students (73.1%) could write a check mark beside the focused topic sentence in pair 1, the remaining 14 students (26.9%) were wrong. 19 students (36.5%) wrote a check mark beside the focused topic sentence in pair 2, the remainder (33) who represented 63.5% were wrong.

Concerning item C, 50 students (96.2%) could not add a relevant topic sentence to the paragraph the remaining two students (3.8%) gave a to some extent answer.

In comparison with the pre-test, there is no much progress in students' response to item A but they have achieved a little progress regarding their response to item B and C. It is possible to say, however, students began to realize how a topic should progress from a working thesis statement to focused topic sentences and then to supporting details. Thus, in contrast to what was figured out in the pre-test, students are becoming familiar with the logical sequence of writing that flows from the general to the particular.

In fact, students need considerable time and practice to write in the previously mentioned manner. Nevertheless, they began to develop an understanding of this manner of writing. This is partially due to the through treatment of this writing manner during the time students were taught the writing skills which were dealt with in this study and partially due to their responses in the post-test.

4.2.13: Q8 Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length:

Table (4.26) Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length

Item		Right	Percent	Wrong	Percent	To some extent	Percent
Q8	Giving a brief idea about:						
	• Par development	24	46.2	19	36.5	9	17.3
	• Par unity	28	53.8	17	32.7	7	13.5
	• Par coherence	3	5.8	27	51.9	22	42.3
	• Par length	9	17.3	23	44.2	20	38.5

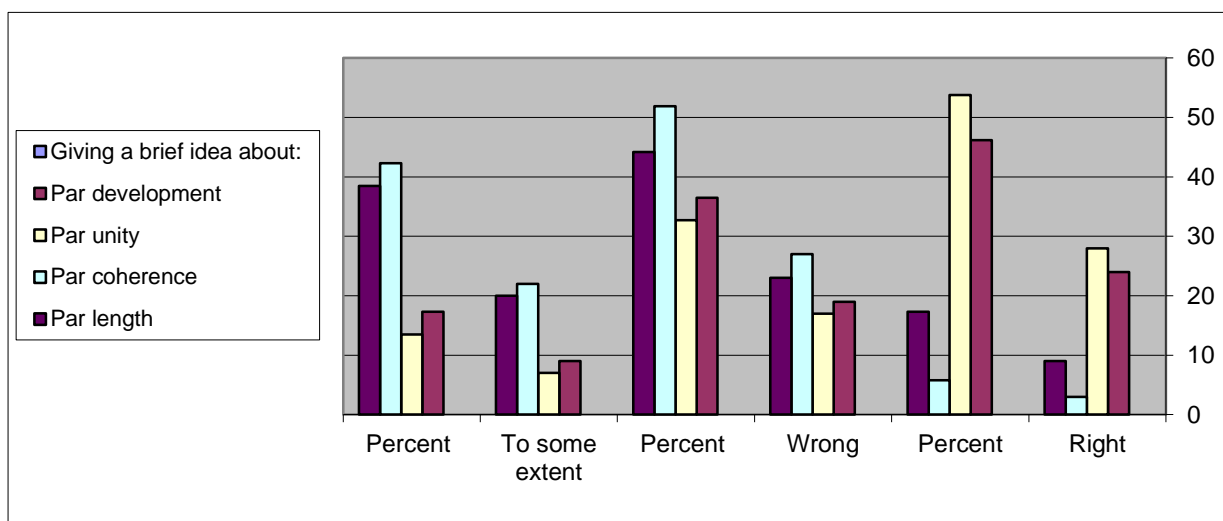


Figure (4.26) Paragraph development, unity, coherence and length

24 students (46.2%) could state the idea of paragraph development in writing, while 19 student, (36.5%) were wrong. The remainder (9) who represented 17.3% gave a to some extent answer. 28 students (53.8%) succeeded to give a brief idea about paragraph unity, 17 students (32.7%) were wrong whereas seven students (13.5%) gave a to some extent answer. Concerning the meaning of paragraph coherence, three students (5.8%) were correct, 27 students (51.9%) were wrong and 22 students (42.3%) gave a to some extent answer. As regards students idea of paragraph length, nine students (17.3%) were correct, 23 students who comprised 44.3% were wrong and 20 students (38.5%) gave a to some extent answer.

These percentage emphasize that students began to understand the meaning of paragraph development, unity, coherence and length. Consequently, students began to realize the tentative and most important aspects which will enable them to produce a communicative writing that makes sense.

4.3 Verifying the Hypotheses:

The two hypotheses below were necessary in verifying the hypotheses of this study:

- 2- $H_0: H_0 = 0$
- 3- $H_1: H_1 \neq 0$

Hypothesis No.1 is called the Null Hypothesis. Concerning this hypothesis, the P.value should be greater than 0.05. If the result was to accept the Null Hypothesis, that is to say, the P.value was greater than 0.05, the hypothesis suggested by the study would be incorrect and should be rejected.

With regard to hypothesis No.2, the opposite is correct. It is called the Alternative Hypothesis where the P.value should be less than 0.05. If the result was to accept the Alternative Hypothesis, the hypothesis suggested by the study would be correct and should be accepted.

To prove the correctness of each hypothesis, as seen from table (4.27) to table (4.32), the researcher has chosen parts of the test's items upon which the test's statistics were carried out.

1. The first hypothesis:

The Sudanese tertiary level students do not communicate effective thoughts when they write.

The value of Personal Chi-Square in table (4.27) (26.9 – 22.7 – 44.5) and the level of significance or P.value (0.00) prove that the hypothesis is significant. In other words, rejecting The Null Hypothesis and accepting the Alternative Hypothesis emphasize the correctness of the first hypothesis of the study.

Table (4.27) Test Statistics

	Define-Regular sentence	Define- Irregular or sentence fragment	Define-Non sentence
Chi-Square ^a	26.923	22.769	44.577
df	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.3.

2.The second hypothesis

When they write, students are unable to achieve cohesion, the structural unity, and coherence, the unity of sense or meaning.

The value of Personal Chi-Square and the level of significance (P.value) in table (4.28) and table (4.29) prove that the hypothesis is significant. To phrase it differently, rejecting the Null Hypothesis and accepting the Alternative Hypothesis emphasize the correctness of the second hypothesis of the study.

Table (4.28) Test Statistics

	A simple sentence containing a compound subject	A simple sentence containing a compound verb	A compound sentence with clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction	A compound sentence with clauses joined by a semi-colon
Chi-Square ^a	20.808	20.115	24.500	23.231
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp.Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.3.

Table (4.29) Test Statistics

	A compound sentence with clauses joined by an adverbial conjunction	A complex sentence with subordinate adverbial clause	A complex sentence with a subordinate adjectival clause	A complex sentence with a subordinate noun clause	A compound complex sentence
Chi-Square ^b	24.731	38.000	7.692	33.923	35.808
df	2	2	1	1	2
Asymp.Sig.	.000	.000	.006	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.3.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 26.0.

3. The third hypothesis

Students lack the necessary writing skills which they need to write effectively.

The value of Personal Chi-Square and the level of significance (P.value) in table (4.30) and table (4.31) prove that the third hypothesis of the study is significant, correct and statistically acceptable.

Table (4.30) Test Statistics

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Why
Chi-Square ^{a,b}	11.077	11.077	38.000
Df	1	1	2
Asymp.Sig.	.001	.001	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 26.0.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.3.

Table (4.31) Test Statistics

	q51	Q52
Chi-Square ^a	13.000	19.692
df	1	1
Asymp.Sig.	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 26.0.

4. The fourth hypothesis

Students do not usually write focused topic sentences and develop paragraphs properly.

The value of Personal Chi-Square (44.3) and the level of significance (0.00) in table (4.32) prove that the fourth hypothesis of the study is significant, correct and statistically acceptable.

Table (4.32) Test Statistics

	Add A topic sentence to the following paragraph
Chi-Square ^a	44.308
df	1
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 26.0.

The following chapter concludes the study and presents the findings and recommendations.

5. CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction:

This chapter concludes the study. It provides a summary of the findings which are reached from the analysis and discussion of students performance in the pre-test and the post-test. In view of these findings, the chapter similarly suggests necessary recommendations. It finally suggests what might be examined by future research.

5.1 Conclusion:

The aim of this study has been to try to explore the possible ways for developing the writing skill at the Sudanese tertiary level by acquainting students with some sentence and writing skills. The researcher does not claim to have exhausted all what enables those students to overstep their weaknesses in the writing skill. In fact, the complex range of tasks involved in producing a communicative piece of writing, referred to in 2.2, emphasize that investigating all the ways and ideas for enhancing the writing skill can be a ramified issue. However, the researcher hopes that he has made clear some acceptable answers for the questions of this study.

5.2 Findings:

The findings of this study have something in common with the findings discussed within previous studies. However, the study's pre-test findings differ in some respects. They certify students weakness in both identifying some unfamiliar serious sentence errors and their inability to correct them.

The findings of the pre-test are generally in support of the hypotheses and show students weaknesses in the aspects of the writing skills which are treated by this study. These findings can be summarized as follows:

- a. Students have weaknesses in writing both correct regular sentences and the types of sentences by purpose.
- b. Students weaknesses to write correct regular sentences and to identify the types of sentences by purpose imply their inability to express the meanings and uses which are associated with the simple and multiple sentence as grammatical entities.
- c. Students have no skills to identify the clauses between the multiple sentence.
- d. Students are unaware of the semantic implications of transitional words which are used between the clauses of the multiple sentence.
- e. Students pay a little attention to creating smooth sentences by using parallel structures.
- f. Students are unconscious of the necessity of grammatical structures such as cleft sentences and there-structures in impressive and emphatic writing.
- g. Students writing does not communicate effective and competent thoughts because it is usually made awkward and distorted by some sentence errors.
- h. Students are neither aware of these sentence errors, nor able to revise the sentences which include them into better ones. Examples are: sentence fragments, sentences with long subjects at the expense of their predicates, sentences with misplaced modifiers and expressions, redundant sentences, sentences which include unclear relationship between pronoun and antecedent, the comma splice and run-on sentence.
- i. Students have no skills to write focused and relevant topic sentences to thesis statements and paragraphs. They are also unable to develop paragraphs properly with adequate supportive details.
- j. Students are unaware of the concepts of paragraph development, unity, coherence and length. Thus, they usually produce poor writing which lacks the properties of communicative writing.

The findings of the post-test show students development in the aspects of the writing skills which are treated by this study:

- a. Students began to show a genuine liability to develop skills to write communicatively.
- b. Students liability to develop skills to write communicatively is attributable to the effective way of teaching before the post-test and the creation of a friendly educational environment which considers students' individual differences.

5.3 Recommendations:

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the study:

- a. The educational authorities should consider effective writing syllabuses that satisfy the needs of students at the Sudanese tertiary level.
- b. Teaching methods should be implemented in away that considers individual differences and leads to students progress in the writing courses which they receive at the Sudanese tertiary level.
- c. Contemporary approaches to the study of language at the Sudanese tertiary level should look at the study of grammar from a semantic and communicative viewpoint. This will considerably contribute to good writing.
- d. Teachers should acquaint students with the different classifications of the English sentence in the manner adopted by this study. This will be helpful in writing proper sentences.
- e. Writing syllabuses at the Sudanese tertiary level should lay emphasis on the global and local errors to pave the way for students to avoid these errors in writing.
- f. Among the global errors, it is also equally important to place a particular emphasis on the errors which students are usually not exposed to.
- g. Generally speaking, to reduce the writing errors, it is necessary to direct students to read extensively.

- h. To reduce the misplaced modifiers and expressions in writing, in addition to reading extensively, students should think about the word order in their native language in order to become aware of any patterns that they might incorrectly transfer into English.
- i. Teachers should implement effective methods of teaching writing which consider the strategies for writing paragraph types in the sequence referred to in 2.4.1 until students acquire skills in free writing.
- j. Teachers should guide students to achieve consistent writing through the effective use of transitional words. Likewise, teachers should draw students' attention to the implications of these transitions on the meanings of sentences. This is a crucial factor to be considered in coherent writing.
- k. Teachers should place emphasis on the overall cohesive device for communicative writing. That is to say, the development of writing from a workable thesis statement to topic sentences and then to supportive details.

5.4 Suggestions for future Research:

Future research might thoroughly examine some serious sentence errors which result in unclear writing. Examples are: fragments, sentences with long subjects at the expense of their predicates, sentences with misplaced modifiers and expressions, redundant sentences and sentences with unclear relationship between pronoun and antecedent. As previously stated by the researcher, students are not exposed to these errors. Also, teachers do not correct these errors in students' writing. Hence, it might be of great benefit to communicative writing if a thorough treatment of these sentence errors is carried out by subsequent research.

REFERENCES

- [1] Alexander L G. (1965). *Essay and Letter Writing*. Longman. Singapore.
- [2] Alkhuli M A. (1983). *English as a Foreign Language: Linguistic background and teaching methods*. Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- [3] Anonymous. (1989). *McDougal, Littel English*. McDougal, Littel & Company. Printed in the United States of America.
- [4] Bindon R. (1999). *Shared and Guided Reading and Writing 2*. (GHPD (Ginn Heinemann Professional Development. Great Britain.
- [5] Blanchard K; Root C. (1994). *Ready to Write*. Addison. Wesley Publishing Company.
- [6] Blaw S & Burak K. (2005). *Writing in the Works*. Houghton Mifflin Company. The United States of America.
- [7] Bright J.A & McGreger G P. (1970). *Teaching English as a Second Language*. Longman. Singapore.
- [8] Brodkey L. (1987). *Academic Writing as a Social Practice*. Temple University Press. Philadelphia.
- [9] Bushara M M Z. (2006). *Investigating EFL Learners' Paragraph Writing Skills*. M.A Research. University of Khartoum. Sudan.
- [10] Carillo J A. (2008). *English Plain and Simple*. The Manila Times Publishing Corp. Manila, Philippines.
- [11] Celce. Murcia M & McIntosh L. (1979). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Newbury House Publishers. The U.S.A.
- [12] Colonna M R & Gilbert J E. (2006). *Reason to Write*. Oxford University Press. The United States.
- [13] Cottrel S. (2003). *The Study Skills Handbook*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. China.
- [14] Crouch W G & Zetler R L. (1954). *A Guide to Technical Writing*. Pittsburgh. Pennsylvan.
- [15] Crystal D. (1995). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press. Printed in Italy.
- [16] Cunningsworth A. (1984). *Evaluating and Selecting EFL Material*. Heinemann Educational Books, London. Great Britain.
- [17] Davidson R. (1964). *Concise American Composition and Retic*. Charles Soriboner's Sons New York.

- [18] Davies P & Pearse E. (2000). Success in English Teaching. Oxford University Press. Hong Kong.
- [19] Dewsbury A. & Bindon R. (1999). Shared and Guided Reading and Writing 1. GHPD (Ginn Heinemann Professional Development. Great Britain.
- [20] Fenton N. (2003). Improving your Technical Writing Skills. Queen Mary, (University of London. London.
- [21] Fowler H R. (1983). The Little, Brown Handbook. Little, Brown and Company. The United States of America.
- [22] Glenn C; Miller R K; Webb S S & Gray L. (2006). The Aggie Writer's Handbook. Thomson Wadsworth. The United States of America.
- [23] Goshgarian G, Krueger and Mine J B. (2000). An Argument Rhetoric and Reader. Longman. The United States.
- [24] Grabe W & Kaplan R B. (1996). Theory and Practice of Writing. Longman. Printed in Malaysia.
- [25] Greenbaum S. (1991). An Introduction to English Grammar. Language. Hongkong.
- [26] Hairston M. (1982). Contemporary Rhetoric. Houghton Mufflin Company. The U.S.A.
- [27] Hamad H A. D. (2006). The Manifestation of Cohesion and Coherence in the Written English of Palestinian Senior University Students. A Textual Analytic Study. Ph.D Research. University of Science and Technology. Sudan.
- [28] Hamp-Lyons L & Heasley B. (2006). Study Writing. Cambridge University Press. The United Kingdom.
- [29] Harlmann P. (1999). Quest, Reading and Writing. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Printed in Singapore.
- [30] Harmer J. (1991). The Practice of English Language Teaching. Longman Group U.K Limited. Singapore.
- [31] Hartfiel V F; Hughey I B; Wormuth D R; & Jacobs H L. (1985). Learning ESL Composition. Newbury. House Publishers, Inc. The U.S.A.
- [32] Henning G. (1987). A Guide to Language Testing. Heinle and Heinle Publishers. Printed in the U.S.A
- [33] Holt, Rinehart & Winston. (1995). English Workshop. Harcourt Brace Company. The United States of America.
- [34] Ibrahim A M. (1999). An Investigation of the Writing Difficulties in English as a Foreign Language. M.A Research. University of Gezira. Sudan.
- [35] Karadawi E A. (1994). Deficiency of English Composition Writing in the Sudanese Final (Third) Year of the Higher Secondary School. Ph.D Research. University of Khartoum. Sudan.
- [36] Lane J & Lange E. (1999). Writing Clearly. Heinle and Heinle Publishers. The United States of America.
- [37] Langan J. (2008). Sentence Skills, Form A. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. New York.
- [38] Lauer J; Lunsford A; Atwill J; Clemens T; Hart-Davidson W; Jacobs D; Langstraat L; Miles L; Peeples T. and Uber-Kellogg N. (1991). Four Worlds of Writing, Inquiry and Action in Context. Pearson Custom Publishers, Addison Wesley Longman. Printed in the United States of America.
- [39] Littel J. (1985). Basic Skills in English. MacDougal, Littel and Company. Printed in the United States of America.
- [40] Lunsford A & Connors R. (1996). The St. Martin's Handbook St. Martin's Press. The United States of America, New York.
- [41] Markstein L & Hirasowa L. (1998). Developing Reading Skills. Heinle and Heinle Publishers. Manufactured in the United States of America.
- [42] McCrimmon J M. (1967). Writing with a Purpose. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. Printed in the U.S.A.
- [43] Mohammed M Y. (1995). Communication Strategies in Written Productions of the Preliminary Year Students in the University of Khartoum. M.A Research. University of Khartoum. Sudan
- [44] Morris W. (n.d). The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. American Heritage Publishing Company. America.
- [45] Norrish J. (1983). The Language Learners and their Errors. The Macmillan Press Limited. Hong Kong.

- [46] Nuttal C. (1982). Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language. Heinemann. Great Britain.
- [47] Oshima A & Hogue A. (2006). Writing Academic English. Pearson Longman. Printed in the United States of America.
- [48] Palmer F R. (1981). Semantics. Cambridge University Press. Great Britain.
- [49] Panda M. (2007). Enrich Your Grammar, Words and their Usage. Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd. New Delhi.
- [50] Peck J & Coyle M. (2005). The Students Guide to Writing. Palgrave Macmillan. China.
- [51] Quirk, R.&Greenbourn S. (1973). A concise Grammar of Contemporary English. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Great Britain.
- [52] Redman S. (2003). English Vocabulary in Use. Cambridge University Press. United Kingdom.
- [53] Sebranek P; Meyer V & Kemper, D. (1997). Write for College. Houghton Mufflin Company. The United States of America.
- [54] Segal M. K.Pavlik C. (1996). A Writing Process Book. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Printed in Singapore.
- [55] Shaughness M. P. (1997). Error and Expectation. Harcourt Inc. New York.
- [56] Smalley R. L.&Ruetten M. K.(1995). Refining Composition Skills.Heinle&Heinle Publishers. The United States of America.
- [57] Smith W. F.&Liedlich R. D. (1968). From thought to theme. Brace and World Inc. New York.
- [58] Swan M. (1980). Practical English Usage. Oxford University Press. Hong Kong.
- [59] Tadros A. A. (1966). An Analysis of the Interference Errors in the Written English of the Sudanese Students. M.A Research. University of Khartoum. Sudan.
- [60] The Department of English, Allama Iqbal Open University (n.d). The Language Skills. Block A, Units 1-8. Printing Packaging and Paper Converting Corporation. Islamabad.
- [61] The Department of English, Allama Iqbal Open University. (1988). The Language Skills. Block B, Units 9-18. Printing Packaging and Paper Converting Corporation. Islamabad.
- [62] The Editorial Team. (2008). O.Level English Model Compositions. Singapore Asian Publications (S) Pte Ltd. Singapore.
- [63] Thornbury S. (2006). Beyond the Sentence. Macmillan. Great Britain.
- [64] Trimbur J. (2002). The Call to Write Longman. The United States.
- [65] Veit R; Gould C & Clifford J. (2001). Writing, Reading and Research. Allyn and Bacon. The United States of America.
- [66] Wegmann B & Knezevic M P. (1996). A Reading Skills Book. The McGraw.Hill Companies. Singapore.
- [67] Williams E. (1984). Reading in the Language Classroom. Macmillan.
- [68] Winterowd W. R.&Murry P. Y. (1985). English, Writing and Skills. Coronado Publishers. Printed in the United States of America.
- [69] Wyrick J. (1993). Steps to Writing Well. Harcourt Brace College Publishers. The United States of America.
- [70] Yarber, M. L. and Yarber, R. E. (2004). Reviewing Basic Grammar. Pearson, Longman. The United States.
- [71] Yorkey R. (1982). Study Skills for Students of English. McGraw-Hill. Singapore.
- [72] Yule G. (1996). The Study of Language. Cambridge University Press. Great Britain.

APPENDIX - A

The National Ribat University

College of Languages and Translation

Batch 4- Semester 5

Test on the Writing Skills

Question(1)

A) Define the following and illustrate each definition with one example:

1. Regular sentence.

.....
.....

2. Irregular or sentence fragment.

.....
.....

3. Non sentence.

.....
.....

B) Fill in the empty spaces to show the purpose of each sentence type below.

1. A declarative sentence is a statement which.....

.....

2. An imperative sentence is a directive which.....

.....

3. An interrogative sentence is a question which.....

.....

4. An exclamative sentence is a statement which.....

.....

Question (2)

For each of the following, give a well-constructed and meaningful example.

1. A simple sentence containing a compound subject.

.....

2. A simple sentence containing a compound verb.

.....

3. A compound sentence with clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.

.....

4. A compound sentence with clauses joined by a semi-colon.

.....

5. A compound sentence with clauses joined by an adverbial conjunction.

.....

6. A complex sentence with a subordinate adverbial clause.

.....

7. A complex sentence with a subordinate adjectival clause.

.....

8. A complex sentence with a subordinate noun clause.

.....

9. A compound complex sentence.

.....

Question (3)

A) In the pair of sentences below, write a check mark beside the sentence that reads more smoothly and sounds more natural.

Pair 1

.....1 One option Sue had was to stay in the Air Force, the other was returning to university.

.....2 One option Sue had was to stay in the Air Force, the other was to return to college.

Pair 2

.....1 For an athlete, playing fairly should be as important as winning.

.....2 For an athlete, playing fairly should be as important as to win.

Pair 3

.....1 Because the examinations will begin next week, I shall have time for neither watching T.V nor to go no a picnic.

.....2 Because the examinations will begin next week. I shall have time for neither watching T.V nor going on a picnic.

B) Underline the misplaced word or words in each sentence. Then rewrite the sentences placing related words together to make the meaning clear.

1. The lost child was finally found wandering in a frozen farmer's field.

.....

2. They knew what I mean quite well.

.....

3. Sarah returned the hamburger to the supermarket that was spoiled.

.....

C) Underline the sentence fragment in each example below. Then make each example into a complete regular sentence by attaching the sentence fragment to the other part.

1. Isabel ran down the corridor. And looked into rooms and closets

.....

2. The decision seems perfectly correct and fair. Although I can not say I like it.

.....

.....

3. He backed closer and closer to the diving board. At last falling into water

.....

4. She was still beautiful two years later. After seven operation.

.....

5. When I was a child, my favourite relative was an old uncle. A retired teacher who always told me stories of the life in his youth.

.....

.....

Question (4)

A) Below are two sentences, encircle the number of the cleft sentence. Then tell which sentence is needed in impressive and emphatic contexts in the space provided.

1. It was human error that caused the explosion.
2. A human error caused the explosion.

.....
B) In the pair of sentences below, encircle the number of the better and more improved sentence. Then tell why the chosen sentences are better and improved in the space provided.

Pair 1

-1. The value to identify the problem and to provide the tools necessary to make the education of these children a success is not questioned.
-2. No one questions the value of trying to identify the problem and to provide the tools necessary to make the education of these children a success.

Pair 2

-1. It is very possible that the recession will be longer, deeper, and more painful than was expected only a few weeks ago.
-2. That the recession will be longer, deeper, and more painful than was expected only a few weeks ago is very possible.

.....
C) The sentences below are redundant (wordy). Rewrite each one without redundancy.

1. Students should circle around the letter of the correct answer.
.....
2. The building was surrounded in all sides by soldiers.
.....
3. There is a reasonable expectation that he would teach us this semester.
.....
4. Legislators are already in the process of reviewing the statutes.
.....

Question (5)

In the sentence below, the pronoun 'it' does not clearly refer to one antecedent. Rewrite the sentence twice so that the pronoun 'it' can clearly refer once to 'room' and once to 'furniture'.

The men removed all the furniture from the room and cleaned it.

- 1.....
- 2.....

Question(6)

A) In the sentence below, joining the two main clauses with a comma resulted in a sentence error. Name the error and rewrite the sentence to correct the error using four different options.

Rain had fallen steadily for sixteen hours, many basements were flooded.

- 1.....
- 2.....

3.....

4.....

B) In the sentence below, joining the main clauses without a punctuation or a conjunction resulted in a sentence error. Name the error and rewrite the sentence to correct the error using four different option.

Many people would be lost without television they would not know how to amuse themselves.

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

Question (7)

A) For the following thesis statement, write topic sentences for supporting body paragraphs.

My mother is very kind to me.

1.....

2.....

3.....

B) In the pair of sentences below, write a check mark beside the focused topic sentence.

Pair 1

.....1. Too many people treat animals badly in experiments.

.....2. The cosmetic industry often harms animals in unnecessary experiments designed to test their products.

Pair 2

.....1 Getting the right job can lead to an improved sense of self-esteem.

.....2 Getting the right job is important and can lead to rewarding experiences.

C) Add a topic sentences to the following paragraph.

.....Famous inventor Thomas Edison, for instance, did so poorly in his first years of school that his teachers warned his parents that the would not achieve any success. Similarly, Henry For, the father of the auto industry, had trouble in school with both reading and writing. But perhaps the best example is Albert Einstein, whose parents and teachers suspected that he was retarded because he responded to questions so slowly and in a stuttering voice. Einstein's high school record was poor in everything but math, and he failed his college entrance exams the first time. Even out of school the man had trouble holding a job-until he announced the theory of relativity.

Question (8)

Give a brief idea about the following in paragraph writing :

1.Paragraph development

2.Paragraph unity.

3.Paragraph Coherence.

4. Paragraph length .

.....
.....