

SELF-CORRECTION-AND- REWRITING TECHNIQUE: THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASPECT OF COMPOSITION TEST

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List of Abbreviations

SCRT	Self-Correction-and-Rewriting Technique
CC	Correction Codes
ER	Error Recognition
CG	Control Group
EG1	Experimental Group 1
EG2	Experimental Group 2

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to experiment the use of Self-Correction-and-Rewriting Technique as a more effective procedure that may help students get rid of the errors they make when they write which may seriously inhibit communication. It is also conducted to consolidate students' command of the language through developing the accuracy of their written performance, due to the instrumental value that writing has in the TEFL context. In the present study students are provided with a motivating opportunity to practise writing through weekly conducted composition tests in which students are aided to correct their own errors, learn from them, and gain confidence in their ability to write and, eventually, use the language communicatively.

In the present study, the researcher experiments the use of Self-Correction-and-Rewriting Technique in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests aiming at:

1. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing self-correction and rewriting technique with the teacher's correction codes as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.
2. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing self-correction and rewriting technique with the students' error recognition as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.

3. Finding out which is more effective in learning, aiding students to correct their errors by the teacher marking the place and type of these errors, or asking students to recognize and correct their own errors by themselves.
4. Deciding on a more reliable scheme for scoring students' composition test papers.

To attain the aims of the study, the researcher conducts an experiment in which three groups are involved, two experimental groups and a control one. The following procedures are followed:

1. Students in the three groups are given one composition test weekly.
2. Errors of the students in the first group are marked and labeled with certain codes previously made known to students so as to inform them about the type of each error. Test papers are given back unrewarded to the students who are asked to rewrite their compositions correcting their own errors. The new test papers are checked and rewarded.
3. With the test papers of the second group, sentences that have errors are only underlined and students are asked to recognize then correct the errors they have made and rewrite their compositions.
4. Test papers of the students in the control group are treated traditionally, i.e., errors are marked and corrected by the teacher himself.
5. The experiment is run for about 14 weeks with a composition test administered once a week.

6. A post-test is administered to the students in the three groups to find out any possible development in the accuracy of their written performance.

The findings of the study show that Self-Correction – and-Rewriting Technique with the teacher’s correction codes proves to be an effective training procedure that may develop students’ written performance when employed in continually conducted composition tests. It is found out also that Self-Correction –and-Rewriting Technique with students’ error recognition has no significant effect on the development of students’ written performance.

In the light of the study of related literature and analysis of results obtained through the procedures followed in the study, the researcher decides on a more reliable scoring scheme for scoring students’ composition tests papers, along with a number of pedagogical recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problem

One of the basic differences between the spoken form and the written form of language is that the former may have a variety of dialects, whereas the latter requires nearly a standard application of form, syntax, vocabulary and punctuation. Consequently, these items should receive greater emphasis on the part of the teacher when teaching and testing writing, and must be kept in mind on the part of the learners when performing any piece of writing.

Teachers of English at the college level in Iraq often notice distinct weaknesses in the students' written performance. Many studies have been carried out to investigate this problem through studying students' written compositions. Almost all of these studies have found out that these compositions are no more than a string of errors in spelling, punctuation, word formation, syntax, and vocabulary. (Ahmed1981,Dawood 1984, Surhan 1987, Jassim 1988, Abdul-Rahman 1989, AL-Saedi 1989, Hannonah 1990, Al-Azzawi1998,AL-Karkhi 1999). There is a real need, then, for adopting instructional techniques that

may be more beneficial in developing students' written performance.

On the other hand, asking students to write compositions is one of the basic techniques of teaching writing as well as testing it in mostly all TEFL institutions. Yet, little research seems to have been done on the effectiveness or otherwise of the ways in which students' compositions are corrected (Murphy, 1997).

However, when marking students' composition test papers, teachers in general tend to inform their students about the errors they commit and provide them with the correct forms of these errors (teacher correction). This tendency on the part of teachers seems to be global rather than local¹.

After spending a lot of time correcting students' errors in their composition test papers, teachers are often disappointed to see their students only glance at their grade and throw their papers away with the teacher correction left unnoticed on them. They may wonder what, if anything, their students have learned from their work (Wood, 1993:38).

So, in addition to being exhausting to the teacher and time consuming, teacher correction technique appears to be of little instructional value. Moreover, it does not correspond to the calls of mostly all modern methods of language teaching to help learners to be, as much as possible, responsible for their learning.

¹There was a vote on the Internet Web concerning the same issue. It was conducted by the BBC and the British Council in London. The results of the vote showed that 76% of teachers all over the world try to correct most/all of their students' errors, 21% correct some errors, and 3% do not correct any error. {<http://www.bbc.co.uk/teachingenglish/errors> (20 Sep.2003)}

However, it is assumed that, in some settings, students' self-correction of errors may be more effective than teacher correction in consolidating students' learning of the foreign language, yet "this assumption has neither been confirmed nor disapproved in the relevant literature" (Kavaliauskiene, 2004).

To the researcher's best knowledge, no alternative technique in error correction has, yet, been experimented upon in Iraq. This study is an attempt at bridging this gap in the literature.

1.2. Significance of the Study

The primary task of the teacher of EFL is to develop students' command of the language. This task cannot be achieved without helping students get rid of the errors they are likely to commit when they use the language. At the colleges of education, the need for developing students' accuracy of language use is greater since these colleges aim at producing competent and linguistically well-qualified teachers of English who are likely to be the main, if not the only, model that intermediate and secondary school students have.

It is commonly known that writing has a special place in the EFL context because of its instrumental value in the classroom (Pahuja, 1995:164). As a classroom activity it is "essential in learning a language since it reinforces what has been learned through oral methods" (French, 1963:71). A part

from its intrinsic value, writing also provides a variety in classroom procedures, in addition to "making possible individualized work in language classes"(Paulston & Bruder,1976:203). On the other hand, errors committed by foreign language students when performing any piece of writing can be viewed partly positively as a device by which students may learn the target language (Corder, 1974:69). Thus, the significance of the present study stems from the idea that it is directed to helping students get rid of the errors they make when they write, which may seriously inhibit communication. It is also conducted to consolidate students' command of the language through developing the accuracy of their written performance. It also provides students with a motivating opportunity to practise writing through weekly-conducted composition test in which students are aided to correct their own errors, learn from them, and gain confidence in their ability to write. Finally, even though the study is geared to the tertiary level, it is hoped to be of significance to EFL teachers at all levels of education since correction is one of the most serious problems any EFL teacher faces. It may also be helpful to

teachers of foreign languages in Iraq other than English since solving this problem will certainly be high on their agenda.

1.3. Aims of the Study

The present study aims at:

5. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing SCRT with the teacher's CC as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.
6. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing SCRT with the students' ER as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.
7. Finding out which is more effective in learning, aiding students to correct their errors by the teacher marking the place and type of these errors, or asking students to recognize and correct their own errors by themselves.
8. Deciding on a more reliable scheme for scoring students' composition test papers.

1.4. The Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. SCRT with teacher's CC in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests has no significant effect in developing the accuracy of students' written performance.
2. SCRT with students' ER in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests has no significant effect in developing the accuracy of students' written performance.

3. In SCRT there is no significant difference, concerning the effect on learning, between aiding students (with CC) to find out the place and type of the errors they have to correct, and asking students to find, recognize, and correct their errors by themselves (ER).

1.5. Limits of the Study

This study is limited to:

1. Evaluating the effectiveness of SCRT in composition test as an instructional procedure to develop students' writing accuracy.
2. Second year students of the Department of English, College of Education-Ibn Rushd, University of Baghdad during the first term of the academic year 2003-2004.

1.6. Definition of Basic Terms

1. Self correction and rewriting technique:

It is a technique in which students are given back their composition test papers unrewarded, asking them to rewrite their compositions, after correcting their own errors with or without the aid of their teacher. The new versions of compositions are to receive the marks.

2. Correction Codes:

They are a set of symbols used by the teacher to mark students' errors in a composition test. These symbols indicate the type of these errors so as to help students correct them.

3. Errors:

They are systematic deviations from norms made by students in composition test. They can be related to language use or to the general layout of composition.

4. Error Recognition:

It is the ability of students to recognize the errors they make in composition test as a step toward self-correcting these errors.

5. Composition Test:

It is a language assessment method in which students manipulate their skill in structuring words in order to produce linguistically accurate sentences that are linked to form a piece of continuous writing which successfully communicates students' thoughts and ideas on a certain topic(Heaton,1975:127). This piece of writing should be laid out in an accepted form.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Background

2.1. Testing and Instruction

Language tests in general form an essential part of the instructional process in its two main phases; teaching and learning. Language teachers realize that tests are effective means by which they can improve their teaching as well as stimulate and consolidate students' learning. Moreover, "language tests can be a valuable tool for providing information that is relevant to several concerns in language teaching" (Bachman & Palmer,2000:8).

However, classroom tests should serve at least two functions; evaluation and instruction. Teaching should involve evaluation, for without evaluation "the results of teaching would be foolish" (Eble,1972:41). It is impossible to carry on teaching over a period of time without evaluating the progress of students' learning. For the sake of evaluation, no other means that are both efficient and beneficial have been discovered yet instead of tests (Hyman,1974:324).

Unfortunately, many teachers view classroom testing exclusively as evaluation procedures, while they should realize

that the high mark often scored by a student in one skill or area of language such as reading , writing, translation .. etc, may overlook the probable fact that this student may be deficient in other areas of language. Thus, “emphasis on the mark rather than on learning is a drawback in our system of evaluation” (AL-Mutawa & Kailani,1989:160).

Teachers on the one hand, may view students’ results of a test as an indicator of their progress in learning, i.e., how well they are approaching the mastery of the content being taught. This, in turn, enables teachers to judge the effectiveness of their plans and teaching techniques, and modify them if necessary, to meet this progress. Basanta (1995:3) illustrates this clearly when she says that

There is the personal implication that I would call ‘the image in the mirror’. Testing puts you face – to – face with your own effectiveness as a teacher.

In this sense, tests can be as frightening and frustrating to the teachers as they are for their students.

The diagnostic feature of tests gives teachers also feedback about the strong and weak points in their students’ performance so that teachers can take remedial procedures and/or modify their classroom teaching techniques.

Moreover, tests play an apparently significant role in motivating students to learn and directing this learning because

they tend to work harder when they expect a test (Lewis,1982:57). The reason behind this is explained by Al-Mutawa & Kailani, who point out that “students endeavor to score high grades in order to be able to join higher institutes and to meet the psychological need of achievement”(1989:159).

Language tests can also be viewed as a tool for clarifying instructional objectives and evaluating their relevance along with the instructional materials and activities to the language use in the light of the needs of students involved in the programme of instruction(Bachman & Palmer,2000:8).

Finally , the most obvious instructional aspect of language tests is the feedback that has a direct mutual effect on both teaching and learning. It can be used as a teaching procedure through which the teacher can reinforce, guide, and modify students’ learning. If it is given positively (e.g. praise comments), it is likely to encourage students to involve in more practice of language and give them confidence in their performance. When it is negatively given (e.g. error correction), it has some undeniable value in helping students widen their linguistic perspectives, get rid of their errors, and ultimately master the language accurately.

Language tests, then, serve a multitude of purposes in the ELT context, and thus, indistinguishable from general instructional practice. So, it can be concluded that “in a comprehensive theory, tests are not merely part of the

instructional process; they are the essence of it” (Oller, 1987:45).

2.2. Composition Test

Students’ competence in writing and their acquisition of vocabulary items and grammatical structures via writing were traditionally assessed through translation tests. Thus, students were asked to translate paragraphs or separate sentences from the native language into the target one. Although these tests lent themselves to more reliable scoring, teachers and language experts, at a later stage, started to question their validity. However, it was very obvious that translation tests do not really test the writing skill (Valette,1967:219).

The communicative movement in language teaching highlights the significance of communicative competence, productive capacities and the ability of self-expression in language. What follows is an increasing interest in language tests that involve integrated performance on the part of learners. Such tests integrate knowledge of relevant systematic features of language within meaningful context. Accordingly, a distinction is made between integrative tests (best represented by composition writing) and discrete-point tests (best represented by multiple-choice test) which are viewed as “focusing too exclusively on knowledge of formal linguistic system for its own sake rather than on the way such knowledge

is used to achieve communication”(McNamara,2000:14). As a result, teachers start to rely heavily on the written test of communication; namely composition test.

The ability to express and organize ideas and experiences in the written form is regarded as one of the most important skills that any educational programme seeks to develop. This stems from the idea that in this activity “all of language skills are substantially interrelated” (Oller, 1979:382). Composition test, as the chief technique of assessing as well as developing this ability, enjoys a great prestige in language assessment and represent one of the basic indispensable classroom activities.

Composition test is mainly based on the idea that, since all authentic uses of language require some degree of comprehension, they can be regarded as language tests. This idea, in turn, stems from the fact that comprehension always implicitly involves a certain kind of evaluation (Oller,1987:43). Accordingly, any use of language to represent meaning that can be evaluated and graded may be viewed as a language test.

Scholars in the field of language and language teaching do not mostly view composition writing as a mere test of students’ ability to write, rather they consider it a sign of intelligence, education, and academic achievement as well (Lado,1964:162). Since it forces students to use their intellectual abilities, illustrate their ideas , organize what they know , and deal with mature topics rather than trivial details, it is “so essential for real-life communication’(Heaton,1975:135).

In addition to providing students with a real opportunity to practise the real use of language, composition test motivates students to involve in language learning better than any objective – type test may do. This is because students, when writing a composition, are supposed to write about topics that are related to their own life, explain their own ideas in their own words, and organize them in their own style.

Although composition test requires more work on the teacher as well as his/her students , it is well-known for being a profitable assessment technique, because ‘it offers a rich yield of diagnostic information concerning the learners developing use of language’(Oller,1979:381).

Finally , a composition test enjoys a high degree of validity in testing different areas of language not only writing. It can be used effectively in testing basic structures, grammatical relations, vocabulary items, in addition to different writing skills. Then, if a more reliable scoring scheme is followed, a composition test “would appear a far more valid test than any number of objective tests of grammar” (Heaton,1975:135).

2.2.1. Types of Composition Test

Composition tests are mainly of two types ; guided composition and free composition.

2.2.1.1. Guided Composition

In such tests, students are guided by their teacher, in one way or another, to write a paragraph or more about a certain subject. Students here should restrictively respond to the guiding cues provided by their teacher. These cues may take several forms:

1. Visual cues : filmstrip, silent movies or cartoons, series of pictures or diagrams.
2. Oral cues: interviews, message taking , story telling.
3. Written cues: skeleton diagrams, writing notes or letters, answering an advertisement, filling out an application and answering questions.

Since students are to respond to the same cues, they are expected to produce the same paragraph. Although this makes the scoring of a guided composition more objective and reliable, it cannot be regarded as a truly communicative activity. However, it is best used in the early stages of language learning or in the transition from a sentence exercise to an early stage of self-expression. Therefore, it is advisable that the teacher offers varied graded degrees of guidance through the course to develop students' written performance gradually until they manage to write free composition (Valette,1967:254).

Throughout the present study, 'composition test' is going to be used to refer exclusively to the second type of composition (Free composition).

2.2.1.2. Free Composition

Students are asked here to write a composition of more than one paragraph about a certain subject. They are provided only with the subject and usually with the acceptable size of composition (a range of the number of words). Students are also responsible for choosing a suitable title for the written script.

2.2.2. Problems of Composition Test

In spite of its invaluable profits in language teaching , a composition test, if not appropriately conducted and scored, is likely to yield problems. As a subjective-type assessment, the main problem in conducting composition test lies in its scoring. Although it is usually criticized for being time consuming and, therefore, tiring to the teacher, composition scoring is chiefly attacked on the ground of unreliability. Scoring reliability is regarded one of the characteristics of a good test. It refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same students when reexamined with the same test on a different occasion. It may also refer to the consistency of scores given by different scorers when grading the same performance of the same individual students (Anastasi, 1976:103).

It has long been believed that subjective ratings are less accurate than more objective scoring schemes. Therefore, the composition test, due to the dominant concerns for reliability, was discouraged in the 1950s and 1960s. Writing as well as other integrative types of performance were assessed by separate tests of control over the knowledge of grammatical system and vocabulary items. Supported by the advent of communicative approach to language teaching, with its emphasis being mainly on how linguistic knowledge is really used by learners, composition test has become indispensable in the evaluation of actual use of language as the art in which students- especially advanced ones- are expected to gain proficiency (McNamara,2000:15).

It is commonly known that the subjective nature of scoring is behind the probably unreliable scores yielded by a composition test. This subjectivity has been investigated by many scholars (Such as Harris1969, Heaton1975, Pilliner1976, Sesnan1988, Norman1990, McNamara2000, etc.). They mostly agree on the following as conceivable causes of subjectivity:

1. Scorers may award their marks according to different standards, for example, on what the student has written, the general layout of the script, or the previous impression about the student.
2. The awarded scores may differ in average standard or level, i.e., scorers may be different in their overall leniency.

3. Scores may show certain tendency of harshness or leniency in relation to one group of students rather than another, or one particular idea (expressed in students' scripts) rather than another.
4. Scorers are likely to differ from each other in the way they interpret the scoring scale they are employing.
5. The psychological and/or physical state of the scorer at the time of scoring may be another remarkable cause of subjectivity.

On the other hand, Oller (1979:394) believes that judges may truly differ widely in their awarding of the same written performance on the same rating scale, yet this does not necessarily prove that their judgments are unreliable. To illustrate his idea, Oller gives us an example in which two scorers are asked to grade composition test papers of three students. The grading scale allows for marks to be given between 0-10. Scorer1 is by nature more severe than scorer2. Their marks are as follows:

	<u>Scorer1</u>	<u>Scorer2</u>
Student A	3	10
Student B	2	9
Student C	1	8

Although scorer1 consistently awards much lower marks than scorer2, both of them rank students in exactly the

same order ,i.e., student A first, followed by student B and student C comes last. The judges, then, may have disagreed about how to calibrate the scale, but nonetheless, their evaluations are perfectly correlated.

Needless to say the high correlation among the arrays of marks given by different scorers does reflect high reliability in the test scoring procedures(Anastasi,1976:113).

However, more recent work on assessing language learners' written performance has shown that "even untrained raters tend to render fairly reliable judgments though trained do still better" (Oller,1979:392). Still , scoring reliability , as Heaton (1975:138) suggests, can be remarkably increased by the careful specification of an analytical scoring scheme, along with clear and specific direction for both students (how to perform) and teachers (how to grade).

2.2.3. Scoring Composition Test

Composition test is well known for being easy to conduct, for the teacher can simply provide the class with a topic asking them to write about. Yet, the teacher, after the test, is likely to face the difficult and time-consuming task of scoring students' test papers.

Reading, commenting on, and marking students' compositions cannot be simply done by counting the number of correctly spelled words and accurately structured sentences. The teacher should often use his/her own judgment in

considering what the student intends to say, rather than merely going by what appears in his/her composition. So, in addition to checking the accuracy of grammar and spelling, there are many questions to be raised by the teacher before awarding students' scripts. These can be like: is the message clear?, is it well organized?, are the words appropriately chosen?, is the text easily understood by a native speaker?, is the script written with an effecting style...etc (Richardson,2003:4). Answering these questions is often a bewildering task for the teacher who often experiences a period of hesitation about the mark that should be given to each script. And when grading is over, the possibility of being unfair to one of the students may also make the teacher feel uncomfortable.

The teacher , however, needs to consider, first of all, the purpose of the test . If it is conducted mainly to assess language mastery, the teacher should base his/her grading primarily on the form and only secondarily on the content (Tambini,1999:5).

Generally speaking, there are two main schemes of scoring composition test; the Holistic and the Analytic schemes of scoring.

2.2.3.1. Holistic Scoring scheme

It is often referred to as the “impressionistic” scoring because it involves the assignment of a single score to a piece of writing on the basis of an overall impression of it. It

looks at the entire written text as one unit of communication; therefore, individual features of the text such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and organization should never be viewed as separate entities (Terry ,1989:47).

Although holistic scoring has the advantage of being very rapid, it usually tends to be more subjective, and thus, yield quite unreliable results. However, if the test purpose is primarily to assess students' ability to use the language communicatively, the holistic scoring scheme is preferable (Gilfert,1999:17)

2.2.3.2. Analytic Scoring scheme

Recent research strongly suggests that scoring performance assessments, including composition test, by analytic procedure is likely to give more reliable results than those yielded by the global impressionistic method (Pilliner,1976:28) .

Analytic scoring consists of the teacher's attempt to separate the various elements of a composition for scoring purposes only. Each aspect , such as spelling , grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, organization ..etc, is allotted a mark out of some maximum. In addition to the virtue of being more reliable, this procedure is suitable for classroom situation. Since previously specified elements have been marked separately, each student is aware of how his/her mark has been achieved.

Heaton (1975:138) suggests the following as the most common aspects that can be evaluated separately in students' written performance :

1. grammar : the writing of grammatically correct sentences.
2. mechanics : the accuracy of punctuation and spelling.
3. fluency: the style and ease of communication.
4. relevance : the content in relation to the task demanded of students.
5. vocabulary: the suitability and range of the vocabulary used.

To what extent should the EFL teacher emphasize grammatical accuracy or communicative fluency in their evaluation of students' compositions is far from being resolved. In general, "there is still no definite agreement as to what should receive greater attention form or meaning" (Wasanasomithi, 1998: 23).

However, the specification of aspects to be awarded and the mark allotted to each primarily depends on the purpose of the test (Nasr,1972:173). In some cases all aspects are allotted equal weight, yet the relative significance of different aspects , as perceived by the teacher, is usually reflected in weightings allotted to the various aspects.

The idea of giving a number of scores makes scoring more reliable, because this usually involves balancing perceptions of a set of different aspects of the text. And it is

unlikely that the teacher will fail to award all these aspects appropriately (McNamara,2000:44).

Moreover, previous specification of aspects may enable the teacher, at the time of scoring , to consider certain aspects of students' performance which s/he might otherwise ignore. This may also increase the reliability of scoring.

Still, analytic scoring has two drawbacks. Firstly, it obviously takes longer time than the holistic scoring because the teacher often has several aspects to check. Secondly, due to the fact that the whole may be greater than the sum of its parts, analytic scoring "may be very reliable, but less valid"(Hughes,1989:62). The teacher's concentration on the different elements is likely to divert his/her attention from the overall effect of the scored script.

It can be concluded, then, that choosing one method of scoring rather than the other should be mainly determined by the purpose of the test itself. And that , if holistic scoring is chosen, the problem of reliability has to be faced, When choosing analytic scoring, the problem of validity has to be faced.

2.2.4. The Choice of Topics

In composition test, the choice of a topic should be especially given careful attention, for it may have a significant effect on students' written performance. It is strongly

recommended that, when writing a composition in a foreign language, students should not have to face difficulties of subject matter in addition to those of using the target language (Allen & Valette,1977:317).

The aim of composition test in EFL classes is to “elicit characteristic samples of every student’s writing and from these determine his proficiency at expressing himself in clear, effective, and grammatical prose”(Harris,1969:78). It aims also at providing students with generous opportunities to practise the real use of language in expressing the ideas they know and the facts they have already gathered for themselves in different contexts such as explanation, description, reasoning, persuasion ...etc. “Composition in a new language, therefore, is language practice”(Gurry,1973:139). Accordingly, it is recommended that topics involving a high degree of ingenuity and creativity which usually measure students’ creative power and require them to display fresh ideas are to be avoided. With such types of topics, students are likely to have trouble handling and, thus, instead of directing their efforts towards how to express themselves appropriately in the target language, they will have to spend much time searching for ideas and finding something to write (Valette,1967:257).

On the other hand, choosing topics within students’ command of language is particularly important in the mastery of the target language. This is based on the idea that asking students to compose a text of a certain size on too broad or too philosophical topic will leave them frustrated by their strong

desire to write at a quite satisfactory standard at a stage in which their linguistic sources of expression are still quite limited (Rivers,1968:253). Moreover, such complicated and unfamiliar subjects as the Work of the Legislation Assembly, What Steam Has Brought to Mankind, or the Purification of Water in Africa are known to invite errors. It was found that “the number of errors in students’ compositions was much greater when they were writing on subjects about which they know very little” (Gurry,1973:141). So , when they write about specific and familiar subjects , students’ performance will be characterized by much less errors.

In order to help students approach the target language easily and confidently through composition writing , the teacher should do all he can to inspire them to write. One way is to choose subjects that are clear, interesting , and realistic, i.e. related to the real life of students. The virtue of such types of subjects is that it makes the process of writing absorbing and enjoyable, for students will feel that they do have something worthwhile or interesting to say. They will have less difficulty in finding the suitable words and accurate forms to express their thoughts. If it is worked through to a final script, they will mostly feel proud in their work and wish to read it publicly (Ur ,1996:169). Subjects of this type may also enable students to direct their attention to correctness and well construction of language , because the ideas they communicate are readily flowing in their minds and even the weakest student will have something to say.

2.2.5. The Instructional Aspect

To be instructional means that the time given over to a classroom test is usually expected to provide a rewarding learning experience (Saleemi,1988:14). Accordingly, all assessment tasks are appropriate chances of instruction, though all instructional tasks are not necessarily appropriate for assessment (Valette,1967:4).

Being instructional, a test, as Bachman & Palmer (2000:165) suggest, may affect students in three main ways;

1. the experience of taking the test;
2. the feedback they receive about how they performed; and
3. the decisions that may be made according to their test results.

Sitting a composition test provides students with the valuable experience of demonstrating their abilities to use the target language meaningfully. And the preparation for such a test requires students to spend time in training themselves to communicate their ideas through their written performance. This is likely to develop their communicative ability which is the aim of mostly all foreign language courses.

Moreover, Performance tests in general are well-known for providing much better feedback than discrete-point tests (McNamara,2000:74). In this regard, Oller (1979:52) states that “it ought to be possible to use the test to enhance

the delivery of instruction in student's populations". Composition test, as a good representative of performance tests, can be primarily conducted as a motivating procedure to teach new material or as a device to reinforce what has been already learned by students. Due to the fact that it provides a maximum opportunity for students to practise the real use of language meaningfully, composition test saves teacher from the harmful influence of being teaching 'about' the language. In this sense, composition test "becomes a teaching procedure in the most obvious sense" (Ibid:52).

Another instructional task that can be accomplished by composition test is that of diagnosis. To get an accurate diagnosis, teachers usually have to be sure that the performance they are checking is the best their students can do. Since "we can motivate our students to do the best they can simply by giving them a test"(Wilhelms,1967:15),composition test, as one of the basic integrative tests, is likely to yield accurate diagnosis of the real problems that our students suffer from. This process involves the investigation or analysis of causes or nature of these problems. The result may be a clear image according to which teachers may take remedial actions and/or adjust their instruction continuously to match the discovered needs of students (Rubin,1982:11). Moreover, the teacher who marks students' scripts usually discovers a great deal about students' weaknesses and strengths in other areas of language such as grammar and vocabulary. Informing teachers who teach

grammar and comprehension of this valuable information will effectively help in developing students' progress and saving a lot of time and efforts on the part of teachers (Sesnan,1988:98).

Composition test may also help teacher individualize learning. By specifying and analyzing errors made by individual students, the teacher can inform each student separately of the areas of his/her mastery of the foreign language in which improvement is needed. If it is appropriately done, correction of students' errors in composition tests may help individual students overcome the weaknesses in their use of language. By marking and commenting on students' scripts in continually given composition tests, the teacher may be able to monitor the progress of individual students and direct them to what changes to make to improve their writing which ultimately improves their general use of language (Carbone,2003).

Generally speaking, teaching means changing the learner. And as s/he teaches, the teacher will always want to know how fruitful his/her teaching has been, i.e., how much students have been changed. In the EFL context, this change can be in several phases such as the amount of English students know, the quality of English they use, and their general ability to use English (Sesnan,1988:186). Composition test, however, is remarkably effective in doing all of this.

Still, to activate the function of composition test as a part of the teaching/learning process, students should know as soon as possible how well they performed in the test, in

other words , satisfactory performance is to be confirmed and errors are to be appropriately treated.

2.2.6. Improving reliability

The factors that affect the reliability of composition test may work in three phases; before, during, and after conducting the test. Once these factors are taken into consideration, reliability of scoring composition test can be improved considerably.

In the preparation phase, the most important step is the careful choosing of (a) suitable subject(s). Since all students are supposed to write about the same subject, the teacher should be quite sure that this subject is, as much as possible, familiar to mostly all students. In this way any deficiency in a student's writing may not be interpreted as a probable result of poor knowledge of the subject matter and vice versa.

When conducting the test, the teacher should inform the students in advance how their performance is going to be graded. When the teacher, for example, states in the test instruction specific elements of performance that will be evaluated and the mark allotted for each of these elements, this is likely to help test takers to understand what and how they are expected to write and hence perform at their best (Valette,1967:255). Test instruction should also include information about the criteria of correctness, the time allowed for the test , and the acceptable size of composition (the upper

and lower limits of the number of words). This may increase the reliability of the test since all students will write their compositions with the same criteria in mind.

However, Bachman & Palmer (2000:190) believe that the test instruction should be;

- a. simple enough for students to understand;
- b. short enough not to take too much of the test administration time; and
- c. detailed for students to know exactly what and how they are expected to write .

Scoring is the last phase in conducting the test. It received, and still receives, most of the attempts to improve the reliability of subjective tests (Pilliner,1976:28). The first point in this regard is that students' names on the test papers should be cut off or at least covered . This will help the teacher make sure that s/he is marking students' performance according to only the criteria specified without being affected by his/her personal subjective impression about students.

Since "marking gets more reliable when a student's performance is analyzed in much greater detail"(Harmer,2001:330), the teacher needs to follow an analytical scoring scheme that is previously prepared and illustrated in the test instruction. In this way, instead of just a general assessment, marks are given for different elements. These elements can be listed on small piece of paper along with the maximum mark allotted for each and an empty place for the mark awarded by the teacher as illustrated in Table1

below. This sheet of paper, sometimes called ‘grid’, can be attached to each student’s paper before starting the process of scoring. The scoring grid, however, is an effective classroom device as it helps the teacher maintain a consistent scoring procedure. At the same time, it enables students to know in advance the basis on which scoring will depend. In the teaching phase, scoring grid is likely to direct students’ attention to areas of strengths and weaknesses in their learning progress (Harris, 1969:79). It can also be used to hide the testee’s name on the test paper to ensure being unbiased.

Table (1)
Composition scoring grid

Composition elements	Max.	Awarded
Grammar	5	
Vocabulary	5	
Mechanics	5	
Fluency	5	
Relevance	5	
Total Mark	25	

However, McNamara (2000:37) believes that ;

If the rating category labels are clear and explicit, and the rater is trained carefully to interpret them in accordance with the intentions of the test designers, and concentrates while doing the rating, then the rating process can be made objective.

It is well known that scoring composition test papers is an exhausting task to be done by the teacher. It takes him/her relatively long time to read each sentence in each student's script. It also requires teacher, especially in large classes, to pay a great deal of mental effort to evaluate students' performance, specifying points of weaknesses and strengths in each script. So in order to make sure that the teacher is scoring the performance of individual students in the same manner, it is advisable that the teacher should time himself. If s/he starts to slow down marking fewer scripts per hour, s/he has to stop and resume marking later (Myers ,1999:25)

Finally , asking another scorer to mark students' compositions is another effective procedure by which the reliability of scoring can be checked and improved. Related literature has shown that the sum or the average of grades

rewarded by four independent scorers marking rapidly by impressionistic scoring scheme has a higher scoring reliability than that obtained by a single marker who follows an analytic scoring scheme (Chimombo, 1986:30). It is said that different scorers usually mark students' performance differently. This may affect the consistency of marks given to each student. To solve this problem a moderation meeting can be held after scoring a sample of three testees' compositions. At this meeting, the scorers are confronted with the probable differences between the marks they have given. Discrepancies are to be noted and discussed in detail with particular attention to the way in which composition components are being interpreted and awarded by individual scorers (Josephson, 1989:30).

2.3. Errors of EFL Learners

Dealing with students' errors is one of the basic responsibilities of teachers. However, teachers and scholars in the field of ELT view students' errors differently.

2.3.1. Error vs. Mistake

Brown (2000:217) believes that mistakes and errors are technically two different phenomena. He thinks that a mistake is basically related to performance. It takes place when a

(Gurrey, 1973:147). This habit is likely to be deeply rooted in students' linguistic performance if they are trained gradually and continuously to practise it starting from the early stages of language learning.

To develop their skill of error recognition, students should believe, in the first place, that all language learners make errors when performing something written, but “only ill-mannered ones leave any they can eliminate in something that other people are going to read”(Ibid:155).

Even when students do not fully acquire error recognition skill, the mere looking for errors is likely to help draw their attention to the basic structures, grammatical relations, and the mechanics they study in the other courses of their programme of study. This enables them to reinforce their linguistic knowledge and provides them with extra exercises to practise its use.

Moreover, Many errors of spelling and punctuation and a great deal of errors that are related to students' carelessness rather than their inefficiency can be recognized easily by average students and then corrected if they are given a real chance to reconsider their written performance (Lewitt,1990:9).

Although asking students to identify their errors provides them with real opportunities to reinforce and activate their linguistic knowledge, students are not the only ones who get benefit from it. In the long term, the teacher will find himself gradually doing less works in marking and correcting his students' errors (Gurrey, 1973:148).

2.3.5. Error Correction

Correction of students' errors is regarded as a basic part of the instructional function of the teacher. When left unchecked and/or uncorrected, students' errors are likely to become permanent and, then, irreversible. Such errors can lead to a complete breakdown in communication on a daily basis which might be arguably explained as an indicator of weakness in both students as well as their teacher (Makino,1993:337).

Still, when and how to correct students' errors is the greatest question puzzling EFL teachers. They find themselves pulled in many directions , not least by individual students' requirements, needs and personalities, and the practicalities of daily class management and limited time. Considering timing and methodology is of vital importance when correcting students' errors because mis-timing and/or inappropriate correction may be detrimental to class flow and students' confidence in their own ability as well as that of their teacher. When appropriately used, "correction can play an extremely important role in language learning"(Power,2003).

Research on error correction shows that students in general want and expect their errors to be corrected. It also shows that correction does improve the proficiency of EFL learners, yet it offers no conclusive linguistic or educational rules to apply. It seems that the classroom teacher only can take responsibility of the actual decisions of when and how to

3.4. Critique

The survey of the previous studies shows that all of them are related to the same subject, namely; composition writing in EFL/ESL context.

Concerning the purpose, two of the Iraqi studies aim at investigating the situation of teaching composition (Jassim and Abdul-Rahman). The other two (AL-Azzawi and AL-Kharkhi) aim at investigating the difficulties faced by students when writing composition in English, while one of the foreign studies aims at discovering the cohesive and coherence strategies used by students in writing composition(Mahmoud). The purpose of the other three studies is to evaluate the effect of teacher's feedback and correction on students' writing skill (Makino, Murphy, and Hyland). None of these studies is experimental and all of them deal with composition as a teaching activity. The present study differs in aiming at evaluating the instructional aspect of composition test by conducting an experiment in which composition test is used as a training procedure to develop students' writing skills and ultimately their mastery of language. The present study shares most of the previous studies in collecting the required data through a test in composition writing except for Jassim and Abdul-Rahman in which questionnaire is the basic tool for data collection.

The present study shares Jassim, Abdul-Rahman , Murphy, Makino, and Hyland in being mainly concerned with the effect of teacher's techniques in developing students

Components	Very good (3marks)	Good (1marks)	Fair (1marks)	Weak (0mark)
Form				
Punctuation				
Basic structures				
Grammatical relations				
Vocabulary accuracy & range				
Spelling accuracy				
Fluency				
Relevance of ideas				
Total mark	24			

2. This scoring scheme can be photocopied on small pieces of papers. These sheets of paper, sometimes called ‘grids’, can be attached to student’s paper before starting the process of scoring. The scoring grid, however, is an effective classroom device as it helps the teacher maintain a consistent scoring procedure. It can also be used to hide the testee’s name on the test paper to ensure being unbiased.

5.1.2. Hypotheses-Related Results

The three hypotheses in this study read as follows:

1. SCRT with teacher's CC in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests has no significant effect in developing the accuracy of students' written performance.
2. SCRT with students' ER in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests has no significant effect in developing the accuracy of students' written performance.
3. In SCRT there is no significant difference, concerning the effect on learning, between aiding students (with CC) to know the place and type of the errors they have to correct, and asking students to find, recognize, and correct their errors by themselves(ER).

With reference to hypothesis 1, it is found that students who practise SCRT aided by the teacher's CC in continually conducted composition tests develop their written performance considerably. This does not confirm this hypothesis so, accordingly, it is refuted.

Concerning hypothesis 2, no significant difference is found between the written performance of students in the EG1 and those in the CG. It can be concluded, then, that employing ER with SCRT proves to have no effect on developing students' written performance. This conclusion confirms hypothesis 2.

With reference to hypothesis 3, the development in written performance of students who practise SCRT aided by the teacher's correction codes outweighs that achieved by students who practise SCRT after self recognition of the errors committed. This does not confirm hypothesis3, which is refuted.

5.2. Recommendations

In the light of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. Traditional scoring procedures, such as teacher correction, should be scrapped and SCRT, as an effective instructional procedure, should be adopted in scoring composition test.
2. ELT teachers as well as students should be trained to view committing errors as a natural phenomenon as students approach the learning of a foreign language. With appropriate correction procedures, this positive attitude may help in enabling students to get rid of their errors gradually and encourage them to practise language confidently.
3. EFL teachers should view their students' errors positively, i.e. as good chances for learning. This is likely to guide EFL teachers to adopt effective instructional procedures that may help students overcome any shortcoming in their linguistic performance.

4. EFL teachers should be aware of the conceivable sources of errors. This may help them choose the most appropriate techniques to be followed in dealing with the different types of these errors. This , in turn, is likely to enable students to correct the knowledge of the linguistic forms and idioms they usually misuse.
5. SCRT, as an effective instructional procedure, may be employed in other different types of assessment.
6. In composition tests, the first version of students' scripts has to be viewed only as an attempt. The mark should be given to the rewritten version. This is based on the idea that correction , in all its types, has but little value if students are not given “ an opportunity to redo whatever they were doing and get it right”(Clandfield and Foord,2001).
7. Developing Self correction tendency in students should be viewed as an important step towards students' centeredness of language learning.
8. Using SCRT with teacher's CC in composition test as an instrument for continuous assessment may help individualize language learning and provide the most effective form of practice.
9. Employing composition test as an instrument for continuous assessment may yield a great deal of diagnostic information. The composition teacher should inform teachers of other courses, like grammar and comprehension, of students' weaknesses. This is likely to help these teachers take

suitable remedial actions to overcome the diagnosed weaknesses.

10. Developing an efficient analytical scoring scheme is likely to help teachers reduce the subjective influence in scoring students' composition.
11. It is advisable to ask students to write compositions on subjects of their own choice. This is to ensure that students are mostly willing to write and that even weak students will have something to say.
12. It is preferable that marking students' errors and commenting on their test papers should not be in red colour, for "nothing is more discouraging to a student than to find his or her paper covered with red marks" (Valette, 1977: 317). This is so because red is known to be the most aggressive colour possible.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Study

The following suggestions for further study are put forward:

1. Conducting an experimental study to evaluate the instructional value of self-correction technique in oral tests.
2. Carrying out an experimental study in which the instructional effect of different types of correction (self-correction, teacher-correction, peer-correction, etc.) is investigated.
3. Conducting empirical studies to investigate the instructional aspects of other types of tests.

4. Investigating the effectiveness of self correction technique in other study levels.

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Appendix (1)

**University of Baghdad
College of Education-Ibn Rushd
Department of Educational &
Psychological Sciences**

To The Jury Members

Dear Sir./Mam.

The researcher intends to carry out a study about using self-correction-and-rewriting technique in composition test as a training procedure to develop students' written performance. To achieve the aims of the study, the researcher is to conduct an experiment in which three groups are involved, two experimental groups and a control one . Students in the experimental groups are to be exposed to certain types of training procedures.

As you know, the exposing of students to the new procedures (independent variable) should be preceded by a pre-test and followed by a post-test in order to evaluate the effect of the independent variables. Since the best way of checking students' ability to write is by asking them to write, both pre and post tests will be composition tests. Aiming at reducing the subjectivity of scoring its reliability, the researcher is to consider the following:

1. General Consideration:

- a. The subjects of the two composition tests are chosen by the students themselves so as to ensure that mostly all students are motivated to take the test willingly.
- b. Students should be informed of the marking scheme before they start writing.
- c. Students should be informed of the time allowed for the test.
- d. Students should be informed of the acceptable size of composition (the upper and lower limits of the number of words).
- e. The scorer is to time himself. If he starts to slow down, marking fewer scripts per hour, he has to stop and resume marking later.

2. The Choice of Subjects:

The researcher has surveyed the subjects that students in the three groups involved in the study would prefer to write compositions on. The following list of subjects is concluded from this survey. Please encircle the two subjects that you think most appropriate to serve the aim of the study.

- a. A dream that came true.
- b. War and peace.
- c. Teaching as a profession.
- d. A satellite system at home.
- e. What does the concept of happiness mean?

f. The accident I can't forget.

3. Scoring Scheme:

Since marking gets much more reliable when students' performance is analyzed in much greater detail, the researcher is to follow an analytical scheme of marking in which each component of the composition is to be graded separately. A scale of (very good, good, fair, weak) is to be used as follows:

Components	V.good (3marks)	Good (2marks)	Fair (1mark)	Weak (0mark)
Form				
Punctuation				
Basic structures				
Grammatical relations				
Vocabulary accuracy and range				
Spelling Accuracy				
Fluency				
Relevance of ideas				
Total mark	24			

4. Reliability of Scoring:

To check the reliability of scoring scheme of the tests, the researcher intends to apply the scoring scheme in a pilot test. Thirty students are to be asked to write composition on

one subject (My family). Students' test papers are to be photocopied. The researcher and another scorer are to score the two copies independently. Then, correlation coefficient of the two sets of scores is to be computed in order to judge the reliability of the prepared scoring scheme.

Appendix (2)

The Correction Codes

Symbol	Type of Error
Cap	Capitalization
P	Punctuation
Sp	Spelling
X	Omit this
A	Add a word
Ph	Paragraph
SV	Subject-verb agreement
VT	Verb tense
VF	Verb form
WC	Word choice
WF	Word form
WO	Word order
Frag	Sentence fragment
Con	Connect this
?	Unclear

Appendix (3) Pilot Test Scores

Students	Scorer1	Scorer2
1	12	10
2	2	3
3	6	8
4	5	6
5	12	15
6	7	5
7	8	4
8	10	12
9	3	5
10	16	19
11	8	7
12	2	6
13	5	10
14	12	12
15	17	14
16	6	4
17	8	10
18	5	8
19	4	4
20	8	10
21	9	12
22	3	5
23	17	13
24	6	6
25	15	10
26	4	6
27	17	16
28	8	10
29	9	5
30	5	8

Appendix (4)

Pre-test Scores

Control Group	Experimental group 1	Experimental Group 2
8	9	10
2	3	2
6	4	4
4	6	3
12	12	12
14	17	17
5	14	16
12	13	12
2	3	3
15	14	14
5	7	6
3	2	2
12	11	11
9	12	10
15	14	8
14	13	12
17	16	4
6	4	9
16	10	12
3	9	13
8	8	2
12	12	15
4	3	4
12	14	12
5	7	14
10	2	12

Control Group	Experimental group 1	Experimental Group 2
12	3	10
7	7	8
3	8	6
4	15	2
13	12	6
7	8	8
12	7	11
8	5	
6	2	
8	8	
	10	

Appendix (5)

Post-test Scores

Control Group	Experimental group 1	Experimental Group 2
11	11	17
4	6	4
8	20	14
8	19	4
7	18	16
12	19	13
6	18	12
4	16	17
5	7	4
12	20	18
8	21	12
9	10	8
17	14	10
13	19	9
16	18	7
14	12	4
12	19	12
9	8	6
8	14	8
9	16	10
15	19	12
8	17	19
12	21	9
3	19	7
6	7	12
5	12	16

Control Group	Experimental group 1	Experimental Group 2
4	10	8
3	4	12
11	17	16
8	19	11
8	12	14
12	13	12
14	19	9
19	17	
12	15	
14	2	
	18	

خلاصة البحث

الدراسة الحالية هي محاولة لتجريب استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة بوصفه أكثر فاعلية في مساعدة الطلبة على التخلص من الأخطاء التي يقعون فيها عندما يكتبون ، والتي قد تمنع حدوث التواصل بشكل جدي. كما إنها أجريت لاجل تقوية وتعزيز تمكن الطالب من اللغة من خلال تطوير دقة الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة، نتيجة للقيمة التعليمية التي تتمتع بها الكتابة في سياق تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية. وقد تم في الدراسة الحالية تزويد الطلبة بفرصة تحفيزية ليمارسوا الكتابة في اختبارات إنشاء أسبوعية يتم خلالها إعطاء الطلبة بعض المساعدة لتصحيح أخطائهم والتعلم منها والحصول على الثقة بقدرتهم على الكتابة ومن ثم استخدام اللغة بشكل تواصل.

لقد قام الباحث بتجريب استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة في التعامل مع أوراق الطلبة في سلسلة من اختبارات الإنشاء المستمرة التي تهدف إلى:

1. تقويم فاعلية استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة مع رموز التصحيح

التي يقدمها المدرس بوصفه إجراء تدريبيا لتطوير الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة.

2. تقويم فاعلية استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة مع تشخيص الطلبة

الذاتي لأخطائهم بوصفه إجراء تدريبيا لتطوير الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة.

3. معرفة أي الأسلوبين أكثر فاعلية في التعلم : مساعدة الطلبة على تصحيح أخطائهم

من خلال تأشير المدرس لمكان ونوع هذه الأخطاء ، أم جعل الطلبة أنفسهم يشخصون أخطاءهم و يصححونها.

4. تحديد خطة من شأنها جعل تصحيح الأوراق الامتحانية لكتابة الإنشاء أكثر ثباتا.

ولتحقيق أهداف الأطروحة أجرى الباحث تجربة تدخل فيها ثلاث مجموعات :

إحداها ضابطة والأخرىان تجريبتان ، واتبعت فيها الخطوات الاتية:

1. أجري للطلبة في المجموعات كلها اختبار واحد في كتابة الإنشاء كل أسبوع.

2. تم تأشير الأخطاء التي وقع فيها طلبة المجموعة التجريبية الأولى وتعليمها برموز

اعلم بها الطلبة مسبقا لغرض مساعدتهم على معرفة نوع كل من هذه الأخطاء. بعد

ذلك أعيدت الأوراق الامتحانية من غير درجات إلى الطلبة الذين طلب منهم إعادة

كتابة إنشاءاتهم مصححين تلك الأخطاء. يقوم المدرس بعد ذلك بقراءة الإنشاءات الجديدة واعطاء الدرجة الملائمة لكل إنشاء.

3. أما بخصوص الأوراق الامتحانية للمجموعة التجريبية الثانية فقد وضعت فقط خطوط تحت الجمل التي تحتوي على أخطاء وطلب منهم معرفة هذه الأخطاء وتصحيحها واعادة كتابة الإنشاءات ثم تسليمها للمدرس لغرض قراءتها ووضع الدرجة التي يستحقها كل إنشاء.

4. الأوراق الامتحانية للمجموعة الضابطة تمت معاملتها بالأسلوب التقليدي حيث تصحح الأخطاء من قبل المدرس فتعطى الدرجة مباشرة.

5. استمرت التجربة حوالي أربعة عشر أسبوعا باختبار واحد في كتابة الإنشاء يجرى مرة واحدة في الأسبوع.

6. اجري اختبار بعدي للطلبة في المجموعات الثلاث لمعرفة أي تطور ممكن في دقة أدائهم الكتابي.

أظهرت النتائج أن أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي واعادة الكتابة مع رموز التصحيح المقدمة من قبل المدرس قد اثبت انه إجراء تدريبي اكثر فاعلية من شأنه أن يطور الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة بصورة ملحوظة عندما يستخدم في اختبارات كتابة الإنشاء المستمرة. كما أظهرت الدراسة إن أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي واعادة الكتابة مع ترك تشخيص الأخطاء على عاتق الطلبة ليس له اثر ملحوظ في تطوير أدائهم الكتابي.

وفي ضوء الدراسات ذات العلاقة ، وتحليل النتائج المستخلصة من خلال إجراءات هذه الدراسة ، حدد الباحث من خلال التجربة العملية خطة من شأنها أن تجعل تصحيح اختبار الإنشاء اكثر ثباتا وموضوعية. وقدم عددا من التوصيات ذات العلاقة.

أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة: الجانب التعليمي لاختبار الإنشاء

أطروحة مقدمة إلى

مجلس كلية التربية-ابن رشد / جامعة بغداد
وهي جزء من متطلبات درجة دكتوراه فلسفة في
التربية (طرائق تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية)

تقدم بها

سلام حامد عباس التميمي

بإشراف

الأستاذ المساعد الدكتور
عبد اللطيف علوان الجميلي شيماء عبد الباقي البكري
الدكتورة

ذو الحجة 1425 هـ

شباط / 2005 م

خلاصة البحث

الدراسة الحالية هي محاولة لتجريب استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة بوصفه أكثر فاعلية في مساعدة الطلبة على التخلص من الأخطاء التي يقعون فيها عندما يكتبون ، والتي قد تمنع حدوث التواصل بشكل جدي. كما إنها أجريت لاجل تقوية وتعزيز تمكن الطالب من اللغة من خلال تطوير دقة الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة، نتيجة للقيمة التعليمية التي تتمتع بها الكتابة في سياق تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية. وقد تم في الدراسة الحالية تزويد الطلبة بفرصة تحفيزية ليمارسوا الكتابة في اختبارات إنشاء أسبوعية يتم خلالها إعطاء الطلبة بعض المساعدة لتصحيح أخطائهم والتعلم منها والحصول على الثقة بقدرتهم على الكتابة ومن ثم استخدام اللغة بشكل تواصل.

لقد قام الباحث بتجريب استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة في التعامل مع أوراق الطلبة في سلسلة من اختبارات الإنشاء المستمرة التي تهدف إلى:

1. تقويم فاعلية استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة مع رموز التصحيح التي يقدمها المدرس بوصفه إجراء تدريبيًا لتطوير الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة.
2. تقويم فاعلية استخدام أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي وإعادة الكتابة مع تشخيص الطلبة الذاتي لأخطائهم بوصفه إجراء تدريبيًا لتطوير الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة.
3. معرفة أي الأسلوبين أكثر فاعلية في التعلم : مساعدة الطلبة على تصحيح أخطائهم من خلال تأشير المدرس لمكان ونوع هذه الأخطاء ، أم جعل الطلبة أنفسهم يشخصون أخطاءهم و يصححونها.
4. تحديد خطة من شأنها جعل تصحيح الأوراق الامتحانية لكتابة الإنشاء أكثر ثباتًا. ولتحقيق أهداف الأطروحة أجرى الباحث تجربة تدخل فيها ثلاث مجموعات :
إحداها ضابطة والأخريان تجريبيتان ، واتبعت فيها الخطوات الآتية:
1. أجري للطلبة في المجموعات كلها اختبار واحد في كتابة الإنشاء كل أسبوع.
2. تم تأشير الأخطاء التي وقع فيها طلبة المجموعة التجريبية الأولى وتعليمها برموز اعلم بها الطلبة مسبقا لغرض مساعدتهم على معرفة نوع كل من هذه الأخطاء. بعد ذلك أعيدت الأوراق الامتحانية من غير درجات إلى الطلبة الذين طلب منهم إعادة

كتابة إنشائاتهم مصححين تلك الأخطاء. يقوم المدرس بعد ذلك بقراءة الإنشاءات الجديدة واعطاء الدرجة الملائمة لكل إنشاء.

3. أما بخصوص الأوراق الامتحانية للمجموعة التجريبية الثانية فقد وضعت فقط خطوط تحت الجمل التي تحتوي على أخطاء وطلب منهم معرفة هذه الأخطاء وتصحيحها واعادة كتابة الإنشاءات ثم تسليمها للمدرس لغرض قراءتها ووضع الدرجة التي يستحقها كل إنشاء.

4. الأوراق الامتحانية للمجموعة الضابطة تمت معاملتها بالأسلوب التقليدي حيث تصحح الأخطاء من قبل المدرس فتعطى الدرجة مباشرة.

5. استمرت التجربة حوالي أربعة عشر أسبوعا باختبار واحد في كتابة الإنشاء يجرى مرة واحدة في الأسبوع.

6. اجري اختبار بعدي للطلبة في المجموعات الثلاث لمعرفة أي تطور ممكن في دقة أدائهم الكتابي.

أظهرت النتائج أن أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي واعادة الكتابة مع رموز التصحيح المقدمة من قبل المدرس قد اثبت انه إجراء تدريبي اكثر فاعلية من شأنه أن يطور الأداء الكتابي لدى الطلبة بصورة ملحوظة عندما يستخدم في اختبارات كتابة الإنشاء المستمرة. كما أظهرت الدراسة إن أسلوب التصحيح الذاتي واعادة الكتابة مع ترك تشخيص الأخطاء على عاتق الطلبة ليس له اثر ملحوظ في تطوير أدائهم الكتابي.

وفي ضوء الدراسات ذات العلاقة ، وتحليل النتائج المستخلصة من خلال إجراءات هذه الدراسة ، حدد الباحث من خلال التجربة العملية خطة من شأنها أن تجعل تصحيح اختبار الإنشاء أكثر ثباتا وموضوعية. وقدم عددا من التوصيات ذات العلاقة.

ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to experiment the use of Self-Correction-and-Rewriting Technique as a more effective procedure that may help students get rid of the errors they make when they write which may seriously inhibit communication. It is also conducted to consolidate students' command of the language through developing the accuracy of their written performance, due to the instrumental value that writing has in the TEFL context. In the present study students are provided with a motivating opportunity to practise writing through weekly conducted composition tests in which students are aided to correct their own errors, learn from them, and gain confidence in their ability to write and, eventually, use the language communicatively.

In the present study, the researcher experiments the use of Self-Correction-and-Rewriting Technique in dealing with students' papers of continually conducted composition tests aiming at:

1. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing self-correction and rewriting technique with the teacher's correction codes as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.
2. Evaluating the effectiveness of employing self-correction and rewriting technique with the students' error recognition as a training procedure to develop students' written performance.

3. Finding out which is more effective in learning, aiding students to correct their errors by the teacher marking the place and type of these errors, or asking students to recognize and correct their own errors by themselves.
4. Deciding on a more reliable scheme for scoring students' composition test papers.

To attain the aims of the study, the researcher conducts an experiment in which three groups are involved, two experimental groups and a control one. The following procedures are followed:

1. Students in the three groups are given one composition test weekly.
2. Errors of the students in the first group are marked and labeled with certain codes previously made known to students so as to inform them about the type of each error. Test papers are given back unrewarded to the students who are asked to rewrite their compositions correcting their own errors. The new test papers are checked and rewarded.
3. With the test papers of the second group, sentences that have errors are only underlined and students are asked to recognize then correct the errors they have made and rewrite their compositions.
4. Test papers of the students in the control group are treated traditionally, i.e., errors are marked and corrected by the teacher himself.

5. The experiment is run for about 14 weeks with a composition test administered once a week.
6. A post-test is administered to the students in the three groups to find out any possible development in the accuracy of their written performance.

The findings of the study show that Self-Correction –and-Rewriting Technique with the teacher’s correction codes proves to be an effective training procedure that may develop students’ written performance when employed in continually conducted composition tests. It is found out also that Self-Correction –and-Rewriting Technique with students’ error recognition has no significant effect on the development of students’ written performance.

In the light of the study of related literature and analysis of results obtained through the procedures followed in the study, the researcher decides on a more reliable scoring scheme for scoring students’ composition tests papers, along with a number of pedagogical recommendations.