

**The frequency of local and global errors in the writing skill of
undergraduate esl learners of pakistan**

Muhammad Rizwan

ID No. 111084011

Supervised by: Professor Rao Jalil Ahmed

Department of English Language and Literature (DELL)

University Of Management and Technology, Lahore

2015

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	07
Acknowledgement.....	08
Abstract.....	09
 Chapter 01	
Introduction.....	10
Problem Statement.....	17
Purpose Of the Study.....	18
Significance of the Study.....	18
Research Questions.....	19
Methodology.....	19
Nature of the Study.....	19
Research Design.....	19
Population and Sample.....	20
Instrument.....	20
Limitations.....	20
Delimitations.....	21
 Chapter 02 Literature Review	
Theoretical Framework.....	23
Defining Writing Skill and its Significance.....	25

Writing Skill Difficulties of Pakistan.....	27
Linguistic Difficulties.....	27
Non-linguistic and psycho-cognitive.....	30
Defining Cohesion and Coherence.....	33
Cohesion and Coherence in Writing Skill.....	41
Empirical Evidence of Cohesion and Coherence.....	45
Lexical and Orthographic Level Difficulties.....	49
Empirical Evidence of Grammatical Level Difficulties.....	57
Observation of Writing Tasks.....	62
Chapter 03 Methodology	
Nature of Current Research.....	69
Research Design.....	70
Population and Sample.....	71
Research Instrument.....	72
Piloting.....	73
Data Collection Procedure.....	74
Data Analysis.....	75
Validity and Reliability.....	76
Chapter 04 Data Presentation and Analysis.....	77

Chapter 05 Findings, Discussion and Conclusion	87
References.....	107
Appendices.....	127
Appendix A.....	127
Appendix B.....	128
Appendix C.....	129
Appendix D.....	130

List of Tables

Table 01 Error Frequency Recorded in Fifth Word Deletion Test.....	78
Table 02 Error Frequency Recorded by the Raters in Topic-based assessment Test.....	80
Table 03 Error Frequency Recorded by the Raters in Lexical Range Assessment.....	81
Table 04 Error Frequency in Intra- sentential coherence Assessment Test.....	83
Table 05 Summary of the Total Error Frequencies in each Feature.....	85
Table 06 Inter- sentential Coherence and Lexical Problems Pointed out by the raters.....	93

List of Figures

Figure 01.....	79
Figure 02.....	79
Figure 03.....	81
Figure 04.....	82
Figure 05.....	82
Figure 06.....	84
Figure 07.....	84
Figure 08.....	86
Figure 09.....	86

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents.

Acknowledgement

I would commence by expressing my sincere gratitude to ALLAH Azzu- wa- jal who surely blessed me with the most excellent resources and opportunity to embark on and carry out my course work without the least holdup. I am also grateful to Him for his provision of precious boon of my parents who invariably spread their praying hands before Him for my success and glorious career. I am equally indebted to my worthy and honorable teachers, especially Professor Rao Jalil, Professor Nazir Malik, Mrs. Saira Bano, and Dr. Maher Saeed and others who taught and guided me to accomplish all this. I have great regard for my family that somehow tolerated me and supported me to complete this work which was difficult and testing for me along with my pedagogical and family preoccupations. I am also thankful to my class fellows for their valuable discussions, assistance and motivation to complete this research project. I am greatly thankful to my supervisor, Professor Rao Jalil for his guidance, co-operation, patience, encouragement and interest during the course of this study. I am grateful to all the educators and learners who spared time to respond to the questionnaires with rectitude.

Muhammad Rizwan

Abstract

To investigate the nature of the writing skill problems of undergraduate learners at local and global levels, one hundred and twenty ESL male learners randomly selected from Government Postgraduate College Samna Abad, Faisalabad were asked to complete three writing skill tasks. In the first task, based on fifth word deletion test in expository and narrative writing, the learners were required to provide the missing cohesive ties and grammatical items. In the second task, the learners' topic-based discussion was rated by the language experts by focusing on four analytic scoring rubrics such as cohesion, coherence, lexical range and grammatical accuracy. The third task was related to intra-sentential coherence assessment through a paragraph of jumbled sentences and the learners were asked to form it as a unified piece of discourse. The statistical outcomes of the repeated measures regarding local and global errors indicated that the learners' rate of error frequency in cohesion was (N= 648), in coherence it was (N= 816), in lexical range it was (N= 730) and in grammatical accuracy it was (N=784). The learners made 54% errors in cohesion, 68% errors in coherence, 61% errors in lexical range and 65% errors in grammatical accuracy. Thus Coherence and grammatical accuracy were found most problematic areas in the writing skill of ESL learners. The study suggests changes in the current pedagogical methods, curriculum and syllabus designing.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter deals with the research problem and its context, objectives of the study, research questions, significance and nature of the study, research design, population and sample, instrument, limitations, delimitations and the work plan of the study.

Introduction

Proficiency in second language writing requires mastery in various areas such as grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence which are widely used as standard criteria to assess any piece of writing task. ESL learners often lack ability to perform in an effective way and commit errors in various writing skill tasks. This is specifically true in respect of L2 learners studying in public sector colleges of Pakistan. For instance, the study conducted by Hussain, Hanif, Asif, Rehman (2013) in connection with the writing skill errors of Pakistani ESL undergraduate learners of public sector colleges indicated that the learners make various types of errors such as verb, word choice, subject omission, articles, passive voice etc. in their writing skill. The vital role played by errors in the context of second language learning and teaching cannot be disregarded because errors reflect the learner's journey towards amelioration.