ملخص

تركز معظم الدراسات الخاصة بمشكلات الطلبة العرب فيما يتعلق باللغة الإنجليزية المكتوبة على الجملة بشكل عام، ولكن هناك الوضع أن هذه المشكلات لا تقتصر على الجملة في المراحل المبكرة. فهي مرحلة التعليم المقدمة، وعليها أن تعالج النص الكامل لأن الاختلافات بين ما يقوم عليه من الوسائل البلاغية والطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية تلعب دوراً هاماً في خلق المشكلة. وقد تم بحث هذا الموضوع بطرق التفصيل في دراسة أخرى. وفي هذا البحث يصبح ما تم التوصل إليه في تلك الدراسة مع بحث الأسباب الأخرى المتشابهة والتي يعتقد أنها تساعد في خلق المشكلة واخيراً حاول وضع بعض المقترحات العملية لتحسين تعلم الكتابة للغرب في المستوى الثاني وما قبل الجامعة. اعتقد بأن هذه الدراسة ستوفر فائدة وأهميتها لمربي الطلبة ذوي الخلفيات اللغوية الأخرى.

Abstract

In dealing with the problem of Arab students with written English most studies have generally concentrated on the sentence level. But it is quite obvious that, at the advanced stage, these problems are not limited to this level. Here we have to deal with discourse, where the differences between the rhetorical principles underlying it and the devices and techniques employed in Arabic and English play an important role in creating the problem. This factor, however, has been examined in some detail in another study. In this paper we will summarize the findings of that study, but will deal with the several other causes believed to combine to create the problem. Finally, we will try to make a few practical suggestions to improve the teaching of writing to Arabs both at the secondary and tertiary levels. We believe that this study will also prove of some interest and usefulness to teachers of students with other linguistic backgrounds.
1.0 Introduction

Most studies dealing with the difficulties of Arab students learning English as a foreign language usually concentrate on the word and sentence levels. But those problems are not at all limited to this level, particularly at an advanced stage. "Teachers of academic writing will be familiar with the problems of the advanced Arab learner whose work is relatively free of gross grammatical error but which has a persistently un-English 'feel' to it" (Holes 1984: 228). In this paper we will, therefore, deal with the causes of those difficulties encountered at the intersentential (i.e. discoursal) level, with special reference to Arab learners of English. In spite of this special orientation, however, we believe that much of what will be dealt with here will also apply to other learners with different linguistic backgrounds. The problems encountered at this level are by nature more manifest in written English which will be the skill emphasized in this paper.

1.1 The Problem

Stated very briefly the problem is that, prior to adequate training which normally takes place at the tertiary level of learning E.F.L., students attempting to write a proper English discourse usually fail to do following:

- organize a passage / a discourse in terms of antecedents and references;
- use the devices normally used in writing: punctuation, capitalization, indentation, paragraphing, etc.;
- develop a paragraph appropriately in terms of unity, coherence, order of sentences and topicalization;
- use the various types of 'composition' development: processes, narratives, descriptions, analyses, comparisons, etc. or integrate several of these into one composition;
- develop a whole theme in several paragraphs of expository prose, in particular employing the logical techniques already well-established in Anglo-Saxon writing traditions.\(^1\)

1.2 Purpose of this study

Most aspects of the problem mentioned in the previous section are clearly rhetorical in nature. However, although differences between the rhetorics of English and Arabic can account for several of the difficulties encountered in writing English, we shall not deal with them in any detail here, as this has been the theme of another paper.\(^2\) The fact is that there are other causes of the problem, which, though more general in nature, are not less important, and should be taken into account if the problem under discussion is to be covered comprehensively. These causes have been only cursorily mentioned in the other paper, and will, therefore, be the focal point of the present one.
Furthermore, space did not allow us to include in that paper any detailed suggestions for teaching composition; these will, therefore, be included in this paper.

2.0 Causes of the Problem

In addition to the rhetorical differences between English and Arabic, the following are, in our view, the other main causes of the problem:
- nature of the teaching process;
- idealization of teaching materials;
- lack of motivation to write;
- limited exposure to authentic English;
- teachers' tolerance of discoursal mistakes, and
- inadequate command of the foreign language.

We will first deal very briefly with the rhetorical factor before we turn our attention to the other causes.

2.1 Rhetorical Differences


In our own context a few short compositions written by Arab students in their first year at the English Department, Kuwait University, were given to ten native English speakers -- colleagues working at the same department -- who were asked to make their remarks on them. Most remarks made by those instructors have centered around the following deficiencies in the students' written discourse.
- absence of (or erratic) paragraphing of the whole discourse;
- disorganization of the paragraph or its organisation in a way different from what the English reader is used to;
- incoherence of ideas in the paragraph, i.e. lack of logical linear development of the theme, and abundance of irrelevancies and digressions;
- abundance of parallelism, repetition and redundancy;
- overuse of co-ordination, particularly the conjunction 'and';
- subjectivism and impressionism;
- abundance of overassertion and exaggeration;
and,
- vagueness of thought; or at least this is how the native English speaker felt because he was unable to follow a development of theme so different from what he is used to.
It was found (in the other study referred to above) that most of these characteristics of Arab students' writing can be accounted for by the differences between the two rhetorics. This conclusion was reached by conducting a contrastive study of two rhetorics, the Arabic part of which was based on original Arabic texts. Actual examples of the difficulties were given, having been collected from the writings of Arab students at the English Department of Kuwait University. Consequently, no more will be said about this factor here.

The other causes of the problem, that will be mentioned and briefly analyzed below, most belong to the elementary and intermediate levels of the EFL course taught in public schools. However, in order not to confuse these terms with the identical terms that indicate the first two stages of the Kuwaiti Educational ladder, we will be using the terms primary and secondary to refer to the two levels mentioned above. The term tertiary will be used to refer to EFL at the university level, particularly at the Department of English Language and Literature.

It is our belief that these causes apply to most other countries in the Arab World (and probably in other countries outside the Arab World too), although there may be a few other or different causes in other situations.

2.2 Nature of the Teaching Process

In spite of the developments that have taken place over the last half a century or so on the approaches to and methods of foreign language teaching, on classroom techniques, teaching media, curriculum design, and testing and evaluation, it is noticeable that the teaching procedures employed up to the end of the secondary level of EFL have not changed radically. Allowing for differences in different situations, it can be said that these procedures normally take place in the following order:

(1) Presentation of new teaching items: vocabulary, structures, and more recently, functions or motions. This presentation takes various forms, but whatever form it takes, it rarely departs from discrete items being exemplified in discrete, isolated sentence/utterances.

(2) Drilling of new items: This drilling assumes various forms, such as: repetition, stimulus-response, substitution, open-ended answers, using new items in sentences, and the like. By its very nature drilling is mechanical and intended to bring about a mastery of the discrete items as such.

(3) Practice: This is a more advanced step than drilling in the direction of actual use of language, though it remains a long way from it. It often starts with 'a reading passage' written with the sole aim of exemplifying the use (perhaps we had better say 'the usage') of the new items, followed by a set of questions. Or it may take the form of a very circumscribed type of dialogue. In most cases a
teacher rarely departs from what he or she is instructed (by the Teacher's Book) to do in order that the pupils may be given the opportunity to use the language freely and naturally.

(4) Consolidation: This step is intended to create a link between the new items taught and the previously taught items on the one hand, and to incorporate those new items into the learners' language repertoire on the other. It usually consists of revision exercises, extra reading and guided composition exercises.4

In spite of the world-wide popularity of these procedures, strangely enough, their shortcomings are very often overlooked. The main features of the weakness in these procedures are the following:

(a) Most of the practice given is limited to a language use at the sentence level, often manifested in practising isolated words or sentences.
(b) Because of the limitations imposed on language teaching and learning by the grading and selection of the material to be taught, naturalness is usually sacrificed for the sake of convenience or practicality. Even in the newly emerging 'communicative approach' language functions and notions are treated as if they were always equivalent to single sentences or utterances. Relations of association, collocation, and dependency between functions, as much as between structures, are generally ignored.
(c) There is usually no systematic preparation for composition proper, such as the use of intersentential connectors, accurate referencing, punctuation etc.
(d) The nearest thing to composition writing is the practice known as 'guided composition'. The type of guidance often given in teaching EFL takes the form of a set of guide-questions or guide-words. Such a practice usually yields only a set of disjointed, artificial sentences.

Byrne sums up the situation as follows: "It is often assumed that, once the learners have acquired a reasonable proficiency in written expression (at the sentence level) further practice in this skill can be given mainly through tasks in the form of some kind of 'composition' or 'essay'. The students are given a topic or theme and are expected to express themselves at some length on it in order to demonstrate their ability to write" (Byrne 1979: 97).

Although this statement applies to many situations in the Arab World (and probably elsewhere too), it does not fully apply to the situation in Kuwait. Here, there is a serious attempt to prepare the students for writing free composition by introducing them systematically to the concept of the paragraph, the principles underlying its organization and some of the techniques used in developing the main idea (cf. Crescent English Course Books 7 and 8). That there is still a gap between what is done at the secondary level of ELT and what is required at the tertiary level is due to several reasons, the English materials used not being one of them.
2.3 Idealization of Teaching Materials

"In preparing the language teaching materials the writer ... must ... sample the language... After sampling from the whole language corpus, then the writer, like the linguist, finds he must idealize... The selection form of sampling is the first stage of the idealization process that the writer employs. It is, of course, language learning that makes use of raw language data; language teaching of necessity samples and thereby initiates the idealization process" (Davies, 1973: 2).

What the above quotation says is that there are basic differences between the language used in various communicative situations and the language materials prepared by a course-book writer. While the former is real and natural, employing linguistic and non-linguistic features in real situations, the latter is unreal, unnatural, carefully selected and graded, and used in an unreal situation within the context of a school time-table. Furthermore, while the natural language is used as a means for conveying ideas, intonations, needs, etc. (i.e. as a means of communication) the idealized teaching material is intended for its own sake, a means of teaching and learning the language.

Various approaches have so far been used in selecting and grading materials for the teaching/learning process. The commonest approach has been the focussing on language structures and the grading of these on the basis of an allegedly simple-to-difficult scale. This has been the case with all structural syllabuses and materials and with the audiolingual approach to FL teaching. More recently, however, there has been grading by focus on language functions and/or situations and/or notions. Yet the basic assumption has remained the same: one structure/function/notion per sentence or utterance. The result of all this is a type of teaching material which, in Davies' words "is not situational at all but a tartered-up structural course. There is the pretence that language is being presented through situations but the reality is that the "situation is the sugar on the structure ..." (Davies, 1973:11), and we would add "or the function".

The drill-and-practice-exercises following reading texts, for instance, are even more "idealized" in the sense that they do not represent communicative situations but exemplifications of language structures. The result is that when learners have to use language at a higher level than the sentence they fail to do so correctly whether the task at hand is composition writing or an extended monologue or dialogue.

2.4 Motivation

Writing (compositions or essays) in its traditional sense constitutes the main "beyond-the-sentence" writing practice at the school and university levels. The content of this type of writing is in most cases limited to the ideas suggested by
the teachers, to non-realistic forms of expression and to general topics and themes such as "money, accidents, health, newspapers, etc.". In this type of writing, the student is not motivated by any need to communicate his ideas, but only to satisfy the requirements of an examination. This writing practice does not help the student to develop either different styles associated with various types of writing with a certain purpose in mind or various types of organization required in different contexts. Writing a letter (to a friend, a newspaper editor or a business company), or a report (on a scientific experiment or study case), filling forms, taking notes from materials read or from lectures heard and summary-making, expressing requests, suggestions, and invitations, are all different from each other and require different organizations. Moreover, if those pieces of writing are set in realistic situations with probable feedback from an audience, they will undoubtedly help motivate the student to do more of them in other realistic situations.

2.5 Limited Exposure to Authentic English

In the first place, in spite of the fact that the recent trend in TEFL is to introduce authentic English to the students as early as possible, it is neither feasible nor practical to do so before the sixth or seventh year of an ELT course; even then some editing, and probably simplification too, seems unavoidable, especially when it comes to written rather than spoken English. But when this becomes possible, the time during which the student is actually immersed in an English-speaking environment within the classroom situation is very limited, if we take into consideration the productive skills (speech and writing) in which each student in a 30-35 students class can actually be involved.

Moreover, this activity is interrupted, or rather comes to an almost complete stop, as soon as the class time -- usually less than one hour a day -- comes to an end. The medium of communication outside the classroom is, for all practical purposes, the mother-tongue. Consequently, there is no strong need to use English outside school. This does not mean that there is no further exposure to English at all. There is, of course, the T.V. and the cinema which probably help the receptive skill of listening comprehension. Conversing with English-speaking shop-assistants is limited to a few places, and reading labels, etc. on merchandise is now disrupted owing to the fact that Arabic is there too by special demand of the importers. Tourism and summer schools provide another opportunity to practise (and learn more) English, but this again is limited to a relatively small number of the student population in any one country. Reading English novels etc. outside school has decreased considerably under the influence of T.V. and the video in particular, and now does not constitute an important helping factor.

All in all, we would say that exposure to English outside school is still very limited and not always of very great help.
2.6 Teachers' Tolerance:

In teaching writing, even at the tertiary level, many teachers keep in mind an order of priority to which they implicitly adhere. This order reflects those teachers' interest in teaching first things first. In order of importance, the following are normally the areas that dominate teachers' thinking in both teaching and correcting students' written production:

(a) Mechanics of writing: (handwriting, spelling, capitalization and punctuation).

However, more often teachers' interest in this area excludes indentation, paragraphing, quotation marks, underlining, foot-notes and references. They often accept/tolerate a mistake in the latter areas, but not one in the former.

(b) Grammatical Mistakes

Teachers' main emphasis is laid on grammatical mistakes in the one sentence such as tenses, word-order, agreement, etc. Mistakes across sentence boundaries, such as: reference, transition markers, and connectors receive the least attention, and intersentential mistakes are often ignored.

(c) Topic Development

Arab teachers of English are usually satisfied with ideas "related to the subject". What rarely interests those teachers is how students organize these ideas into a coherent piece of writing. Coherent writing implies using varied types of connectors and logical devices for addition, comparison, contrast, enumeration, exemplification, summary, reformation, replacement, transition, etc. Mistakes in these areas usually go unnoticed or uncorrected by teachers.

2.7 Inadequate Command of the FL

It is only natural to expect that a student whose command of the basic constituents of English sentences is inadequate would pay much more attention to the fundamentals of the language than to those features which characterize discourse. Only when his command improves considerably can he start to do that. Consequently, his writing usually improves at the higher level of command and, of course, with the help of proper instruction in the special characteristics of English discourse. This usually takes place, if at all, at the tertiary level of an EFL course.

Now that most causes of the problem have been covered, the rest of the paper
will be devoted to the ways and means that may contribute to better teaching of the writing skill.

3.0 Suggestions for Teaching
3.1 General Suggestions

Many suggestions for solving the problems discussed in this paper are implied in the discussion itself. That a teacher should realize the nature of the problem, the sources of difficulty including interference from Arabic rhetoric is, in itself, a step in the right direction. However, the following general suggestions may help to minimize the students’ difficulties in writing English composition. Some of these tips may apply more to the tertiary level of an English course, but most of them can be useful to students at the secondary level too.

1. Students should be exposed, in reading and listening comprehension, to as much authentic English as possible at the discourse level.

2. The use of reading to show the various rhetorical devices used for coherence and cohesion purposes cannot be overemphasized. Reading is probably the best approach to writing, especially where the foreign language is not very commonly used by the community in which the student lives.

3. Students should be encouraged to use English in speech and writing at the discourse level even at the expense of less accurate English.

4. The teacher should emphasize transfer practice. That is, invite students to bring into class various types of outside materials, and point out their discoursal features to them.

5. He should also emphasize the use of organizational features of written discourse: paragraphing, punctuation, connectors within and across sentence boundaries, dividing a topic into beginning, middle and closing paragraphs, and logical or coherent expression of ideas.

6. We also agree with others (cf. 2.1 above) that, at an advanced stage, it is possible and rewarding to draw the students’ attention to those features of Arabic rhetoric that contrast with English in order to minimize interference. The practice of translating an Arabic text, analyzing it, and re-writing it in several stages may prove particularly helpful. At each stage one specific rhetorical feature is dealt with until the final version appears in the acceptable English form.

3.2 More Specific Suggestions
3.2.1. At the pre-university level
Since at this level students are not usually trained to write free composition, often not even a paragraph without great help, we believe that this is the stage in which a great deal of preparation for the later stage of free writing can be done. This can take the following forms:

(1) The constant use of the reading material to introduce the main rhetorical features of English. This training should not be limited to the cohesive devices employed but should also cover the overall organization of the paragraph and the various methods of developing the main idea, beginning with the simplest such as exemplification.

(2) One of the most important types of training at this level is the type of written exercise which requires the students to connect sentences together by means of the proper linking devices. "The use of subordination", says Yorkey, "especially the use of adverbial clauses of time, place, result, concession, cause, purpose or condition, is a matter which requires considerable instruction and practice" (Yorkey 1974: 17). This is almost unanimously recommended by everybody concerned with the teaching of composition; (for instance cf. Green 1967, Ross 1968, Bracy 1971, Kameen 1978, Buckingham 1979, Dehganpisheh 1979, Dubin and Olshatain 1980, Onaka 1984, etc.).

This can start the joining of two sentences by means of one co-ordinating or subordinating particle, but must be extended to cover more than two sentences with subordinating and coordinating techniques. At the beginning all the linking devices can be given and the words to be omitted indicated; e.g. Combine and condense the following sentences into one sentence. Drop all capitalized words found in those sentences. Joining words and punctuation marks in parentheses at the end of each line should be inserted into an appropriate place in that line. Replace the word SOMETHING with the appropriate information:

Example:

1. The students /* seemed happy. (Although) */
2. THE STUDENTS arrived early for the test. (who)
3. SOMETHING soon became clear to us. (IT ... THAT)
4. Many were hoping FOR SOMETHING. (THAT)
5. They would never have to study English again.

The outcome would be:

Although the students who arrived early for the test seemed happy, it soon became clear to us that they were hoping that they would never to study English again.

Then only some of the linking devices are given, e.g.
1. That is the leader.
2. THE LEADER is world famous.
8. THE LEADER'S country produces large quantities of Petroleum.
(WHose) (.)
4. PETROLEUM is the fuel. (WHICH)
5. THE QUANTITIES ARE large.
6. THE FUEL is most needed by the nations.
7. THE NATIONS ARE industrialized.

The sentence produced would be:

That is the world famous leader whose country produces large quantities of petroleum, which is the fuel needed by the industrialized nations (Kameen 1978: 395).

Later on only divisions showing each sentence that will be the outcome of combination will be given as in the following example:

/At the airport I always like to conjecture about the people. I see many people at the airport./ That lady is a grandmother. She is standing beside a jewelry counter. She is meeting a plane. Her daughter and two small children are on the plane./ That couple are newly married. I can tell this by their blissful faces. They are weighing in their luggage. They are buying their tickets. They are going on their honeymoon./ etc. (Ross 1968: 260).

(3) Punctuation exercises are also crucial at this stage. Except for capitalization at the beginning of the sentence, the fullstop, and the question mark, there is little emphasis on this feature before, and often at, the university. Punctuation marks should be systematically introduced with their functions explained, and intensively drilled. The importance of this device to Arabic-speaking students cannot be overemphasized. Several types of exercises in this area are possible, such as the following. These can be preceded by easier exercises concentrating on one or two punctuation marks at one time.

a. Supply appropriate punctuation marks in the following sentences.
b. Add appropriate punctuation marks (including dashes and parentheses) between and within sentences.
c. Rewrite the following paragraph, capitalizing wherever it is needed.

Underline or use quotation marks for foreign phrases and titles of articles, books and magazines as appropriate.

(4) Special exercises (in discourse/paragraph form) should be devised and practised by the students to train them in the use of proper referencing. This can be started with the analysis of referencing in reading texts, then followed by written exercises on the same.

(5) Another useful type of exercise at this stage, which should be within the students' ability, is to put scrambled sentences into the proper order. This can be started with narratives and descriptions, and later on used with expository paragraphs.
(6) A non-paragraphed text can also be worked on to be broken into two or more paragraphs. This exercise should be followed up at the university level.

3.2.2 At the Tertiary (university) Level

Most exercise types mentioned under (3.2.1) above are to be followed up at a higher level at the university, especially in an introductory intensive course, in case there is one. However, concentration at this level should be on the overall organization of the paragraph and the whole discourse and on the various methods of developing main idea. "The student needs to be taught the 'logic' which is reflected in the rhetoric in the same way that he has had to learn the 'logic' reflected in the grammatical patterns", (Kaplan 1967: 16). Therefore, all training at this level should be based on the paragraph as the smallest unit of the essay just as the sentence was taught as the smallest unit of the paragraph. This can be achieved in several ways some of which are mentioned below.

(1) The Use of Model Paragraphs

Model paragraphs each employing one rhetorical technique to develop the main idea embodied in the topic sentence are read and fully analyzed. In preparation for reproduction of the same paragraph from memory, or imitation of a similar one on another, several types of recognition and production exercises can be carried out. Here are some of the techniques suggested:

- Recognition and/or production of the topic sentence and of supporting sentences.
- Recognition and/or production of linking/transitional devices, and the function of each.
- Recognition and/or production of punctuation marks.
- Filling in blanks where parts of sentences, particularly subordinate clauses, have been left out.
- Recognition and/or production of variety at the beginning and in the structure of sentences in the paragraph.
- Agreement on the topic sentence of a new paragraph to be attempted.
- Ultimately new paragraphs based on other themes and employing one developing technique should be attempted.
- This type of training should be continued until all major rhetorical techniques of paragraph development are covered.

(2) Other models of paragraphs developed by means of more than one rhetorical technique should then be attempted and dealt with in a similar manner. Emphasis in this introductory stage should be laid on mastering the art of writing one paragraph in accordance with the rules of English rhetoric. Any common deficiency in using the proper linking devices, referencing, punctuation, etc. should be minimized or eliminated by the use of exercises mentioned under (3.2.1) above.
This might be the proper place to employ contrastive rhetoric in order to help the students get rid of the habits acquired through writing in their mother tongue particularly if transfer of such habits to the writing of English is clearly noticed by the teacher. The first step in this direction should be taken here before the students proceed in their training to write longer than one-paragraph compositions. This has to be followed up later, of course, in order to deal with the problems of paragraphing and transitional devices employed in longer discourse. The contrastive rhetoric training may be helped by the use of translated Arabic passages as mentioned above.

The process of expanding the theme into several paragraphs should be slow and systematic. This is an area which does not normally receive sufficient attention from instructors. The assumption that a student who can compose a proper paragraph is also capable of writing a longer piece of discourse without further training is as erroneous as that which says that, once the student has mastered the syntactic structures of English, he is also capable of writing a proper paragraph. The training required here can make use of some of the techniques already advocated in connection with the paragraph above. But other techniques are also necessary.

a. Thus model passages starting with three paragraphs may be employed to help the student recognize the overall structure of the discourse, the transitional and referential devices between paragraphs, the function of each paragraph, the various devices including syntactic and lexical devices used to ensure coherence, etc.

b. Exercises similar to those recommended for the paragraph, this time at the level of longer discourse, may be employed.

c. The outline technique should constitute the backbone of training at this level, first by making the students outline passages read and discussed, and later filling in the missing parts in an outline prepared by the teacher. Finally, they should be able to do their own outlines for the essay they are asked to write.

d. At a higher level the students should be trained to distinguish between different registers and styles. Levels of formality, modes of address, use of lexical items etc. differ between one culture and another, and are, therefore, subject to training too. The different types of discourse appropriate for a personal, an official or a business letter; for an article, a short item, an editorial or an essay in a newspaper; for scientific as opposed to literary writing, and for a research paper, a report, a thesis or other types of academic writing all deserve special treatment. The introduction of and training on writing one or more of those different types depend on the particular situation and specialization of each group of students, so that they get what they actually need.

Finally, as has already been mentioned, any piece the student writes should have a purpose and address a certain audience. As far as it is practically possible, the student should feel that he is actually writing something which has a special function and which will generate a certain reaction from an audience. Actual feed back is a very strong motivating factor.
Footnotes

1This has been shown in some detail in another paper. (Cf. Kharma, forthcoming). The reader is advised to consult that paper, if it is available to him/her, prior to reading the present one. The two papers together try to cover the most important dimensions of the problem.

2 Ibid.

3 There is a great deal of literature on these developments, which cannot naturally be listed here. However, a very good survey has been recently made by Roberts (cf. Language Teaching 15/2 and 3 April and July 1982).

4 Reference must be made here to the great efforts expended by everyone involved in the guidance and supervision of ELT in Kuwaiti schools to change these procedures. The Crescent English Course used in schools is communicatively oriented, but a certain amount of failure in implementing its detailed instructions is only to be expected of many teachers who themselves find difficulty in communicating freely in the foreign language. Moreover, in the early stages of the course the pupils' repertoire of vocabulary in particular imposes severe limits on natural communication. Nevertheless, some improvement is quite evident.


6 Some of the well-known names connected with the new orientation are: Van Ek, Wilkins, Candlin, Widdowson, Munby, Johnson, Brumfit, Savignon, and Krashen (cf. References).

7 This type of composition applies, at the university levels, mostly to the Faculty of Arts students and particularly to those at the English Department. In other faculties ELT is usually oriented to the specialized courses of study such as business, science, engineering, medicine, etc. where ESP is taught. This usually requires other types of written discourse though the basic principles of paragraph writing remain almost the same.

8 These remarks are made as a result of examining a large number of essays collected after correction and grading from a number of my colleagues. In fact some of those papers do not have a single correction on them; they are simply graded, and usually returned like that to the students. The reason is often the fact that the sections taught by those colleagues are so overcrowded - up to 45 students in each - that it is impossible to do any correction of any sort.
Bibliography


