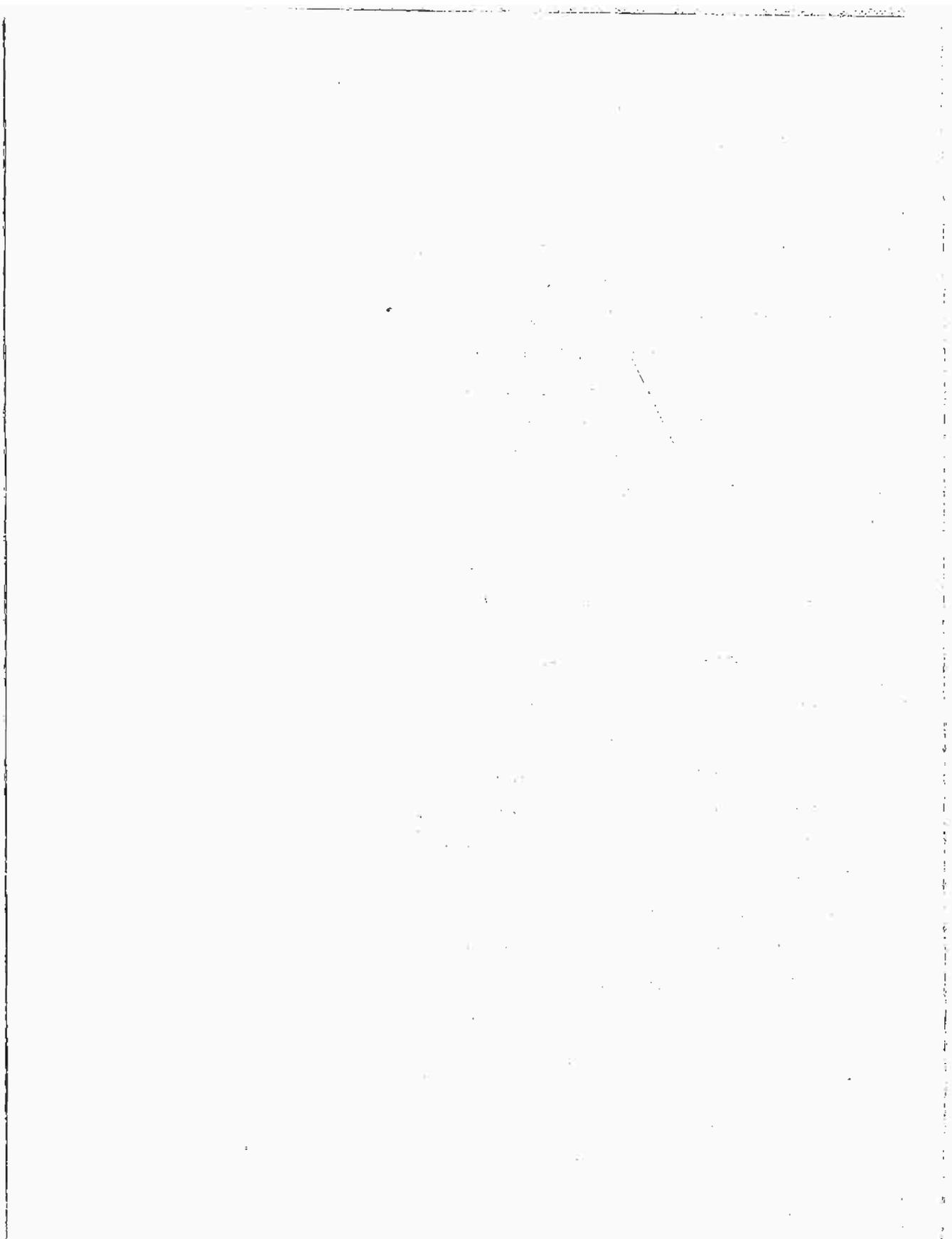# WRITING TO LEARN/LEARNING TO WRITE: VOCABULARY AND DISCOURSE-GENRES.

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the L2 writing of undergraduate students in the English department of the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria University. It tries to find through examining 30 compositions, what lexical choices these students make in writing when using the different discourse-genres of description, narration and comparison/ contrast. Since lexical patterning is one of the organising elements providing coherence in a text, we consider whether their lexical choices (erroneous and non-erroneous) contribute or detract from the coherence of their compositions.

This examination of lexical choices shows that developing vocabulary for writing requires reference to the notion of words being 'core', 'non-core' and 'subject-core' (Carter, 1988). English Department students need to write expressively in some subjects using non-core and core vocabulary in their academic subjects. In teaching writing a balance should therefore obtain between writing appropriate to an academic subject using subject-core vocabulary (writing to learn) and writing which is expressive of the writer-student using core and non-core vocabulary (learning to write). The paper advocates a process approach for teaching both.

Findings show that better and more coherent writing is found in highly structured discourse-genres such as comparison/contrast helped by the use of subject-core vocabulary and the textual patterns' particular genre. The patterns are formed and organised by transitional words and 'organising' vocabulary. In the more loosely structured texts such as narration and description, there is more expressivity and more experimentation with core and non-core vocabulary. However there is also more chance for error. Rhetorical skills necessary for writing appropriately in the different discourse-genres contribute to text coherence.

Since the study is not quantitative, it is recommended that further quantitative research be carried out on a larger sample collected from the different English departments in Egyptian universities to prove whether our findings are valid for Egyptian learners. Qualitative and quantitative research should also be done using different discourse-genres and the role lexis plays in providing coherence in student writing where type and patterning are concerned.

WRITING TO LEARN/LEARNING TO WRITE: VOCABULARY AND DISCOURSE-GENRES INTRODUCTION

In the last twenty years, work in ESL/EFL has encouraged writing in a range of genres leading to language proficiency in a subject or field, for example, in ESP content-based approaches. However important writing in particular academic subjects may be, the individual expressivity of the learner as a producer of language and a recorder of experiences must be taken into account. This is even more important if the learner has to be proficient in a foreign language as well as in his subject specific field. Students in Departments of English in Faculties of Arts are examples of such learners. With particular reference to Alexandria University, the Department of English pioneered and branched into two different specialisations in the second year of undergraduate study, an English Literature section and a Language and Translation section. Students need to write well in their special subjects, Translation, General Linguistics etc. in the Language section and Novel, Drama, Criticism Classical Heritage, etc. in the Literature section. They also need to develop a mastery of, and an expressivity in the language of their specialisation. This involves command of grammatical and rhetorical structure as well as a vocabulary repertoire. It also involves an awareness and knowledge of writing in the relevant discourse-genres across the curriculum-genres that are related to their different subject specialisations. Carter (1988, 173) defines discourse-genres as genres of writing that in their stylistic constitution and organisation transcend particular subject-specific discourses. A report, for example, can be written about biology or linguistics. It will differ in field and therefore differ in register in each case, but it is still the same genre of report. Examples of discourse-genres are summary, argumentation, instruction, narration, description, explanation etc. They are not all necessary in all curricular domains. English Literature for example requires the genre of narration, description and report. This definition of discourse-genre is adopted in this paper.

Vocabulary development for writing, and errors in vocabulary production in foreign language learners' writing have had comparatively little treatment. Research has tended to focus on the isolation of the lexical item that is erroneous rather than to explore the nature of the

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Because applied linguistics is embedded in empirical tradition quantitative evidence in the research is expected. This study however is not quantitative. It is rather a probe into the interlanguage of 30 written compositions of different discourse-genres. Ten each of descriptive, narrative (narrative-descriptive) and comparison/contrast compositions are examined. The comparative/contrastive compositions deal with subject-specific topics based on readings students have done in their content courses.

The topics deal with "Ambition as it affects Macbeth and Lady Macbeth," "Greek and Roman Civilisation," "The Process of Reading Comprehension," and "English Grammar." The descriptive compositions deal with description of people and with description of a stage set out for a play. Narrative ones are about what happens during a typical day in Ramadan. The aim is not to look for error. That has been done and quantified in four other studies.

Rather the aim is to look at the positive elements of student writing, particularly what they do with vocabulary in discourse, i.e. in the actual context of their essays and in the co-text. The study is of the contextual analysis type showing how choice of item is influenced by genre, the purpose of the communication, the relationship of writer and reader, the message content, and the context in which the communication takes place.

Different genres use different grammatical forms. Similarly different lexical relations obtain in the different genres. We are reminded here that it is writers that select certain items more often than others, to carry out a description or write a report. We are interested in the learners' choice of vocabulary and their manipulation of relations between vocabulary items such as lexical cohesion to make their written texts coherent.

Staging the information in a text through fronting of certain items is also looked at for coherence, where key-words fill theme and rheme position in the essays. If the learner uses certain items well, and certain others erroneously, we can capitalise on what he does well, and through teaching of vocabulary in context help him learn how to write in the different genres.

Because the aim is not to analyse lexical errors in Arab students' writing, a survey of research previously carried out on Arab learners' writing and lexical errors is given for the benefit of the reader. Our findings apply only to this study and to the situation in which it was set.

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The 30 compositions were collected during the academic year 1993/1994 from students in the second year Language and Translation and Literature sections. They were part of the students' work in the writing class given to the teacher for comment and not considered as a 'test'. The students had 60 minutes to write at home, i.e. they were timed assignments.

The research was prompted by the constant complaints of writing and other subject teachers of the poor quality of the written work of students, particularly in the exam questions in their special subjects at the end of the year. The students themselves claimed they did their best but needed help in how to organise their material in answering an exam question and put it down in writing using correct vocabulary.

Cohesion and Coherence

Concepts such as cohesion and coherence have been identified as two major standards of 'textuality.' Cohesion provides 'texture' and coherence is how well a text hangs together. They are necessary to writing and writing quality and should be defined for the purposes of this paper.

Cohesion

Texts must have a certain structure which depends on factors quite different from those required in the structure of single sentences. Some of those factors are described in terms of cohesion or ties and connections which exist within texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 4) define cohesion as a semantic concept referring to "relations of meaning that exist within a text ad that define it as a text". Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. A single instance of cohesion is a "tie" which is a term for one occurrence of a pair of cohesively related items (ibid: 3). Cohesion is one of the resources English uses for creating 'texture'. By providing texture cohesion helps to create texts as it expresses continuity that exists between one part of the text and another. The continuity consists of expressing at each stage in the discourse the points of contact with what has gone before. This is done through the use f cohesive devices. It is the continuity provided by cohesion which enables the reader/listener to supply all the missing pieces which are not present in the text but are necessary for its interpretation; i.e. cohesive devices play an important part in the reader's active role in creating coherence. Cohesion is classified into two major categories: grammatical and lexical. The

former consists of the sub-categories of reference, substitution and ellipsis and the latter consists of reiteration and collocation. Conjunction is a borderline case in being mainly grammatical but with a lexical component in it. In this paper we shall deal with lexical cohesion which Halliday and Hasan (1976: 274) define as "the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary". Conjunction will be touched upon where necessary. Analysis of cohesive links within a text gives us some insight into how writers structure what they want to say and may be crucial factors in our judgments on whether something is well written or not. Conventions of cohesive structure differ from one language to another and may be one of the sources of difficulty in written language production in L_2 or in translating texts.

Coherence

By itself cohesion is not sufficient to enable readers to make sense of what they read as 'connectedness' is not simply a connection between words. The factor which leads us to distinguish connected texts which make sense from those which do not is coherence. The key to the concept of coherence is not something which exists in language but which exists in people; it is people who interpret what they read and hear and bring it into line with their experience of the way the world is. Coherence is attained by calling up generic scripts that fit the communication situation, by knowing the structure of speech events and, in the written language, by recognizing the way information may be formatted in the various rhetorical genres. Coherence is how well a text hangs together. The intimate bond between topic development and the choice, modification and reworking of lexical items used in the text makes for coherent text development. This is why teachers of writing place emphasis in their teaching and evaluation of composition on text cohesion and coherence. In terms of developing the written production of L_2 students and of vocabulary development for writing in the various discourse-genres and producing coherent texts, the notions of cohesion and coherence are important.

LEARNERS' NEEDS AND WRITING INSTRUCTION

It is worthwhile remembering that what learners believe about what they are learning and about what they need to learn strongly influences their receptiveness to learning. Our

teaching of writing in the Department of English in both sections is based on the assumption that what is taught and learned in these classes will help students function well in their writing tasks across the curriculum. This means that we believe that we are helping students get ready for written assignments across the two disciplines (literature, criticism and civilisation courses in the Literature section and language, translation and linguistics in the Language & Translation section). However, we are not focusing on what is required in the discourse-genres assigned in content courses.

The courses on writing that are taught in the general preparatory year (first year) are concerned with paragraph organisation, development into three or four paragraph essays of the narrative and descriptive type, with a great deal of remedial work on mechanics and grammar. In the second year, although the students of both sections need to know how to write a well organised, well developed piece of writing, they also need to know how to write academic essays that fit the expectations of their respective disciplines. Whereas for example, an essay type question in linguistics will require content of the informative type showing that the student knows his material, the linguistic concepts and all other relevant details, an essay on a literary topic will require analysis of themes and ideas in a text, analysis of ideas of one or two critical sources, comparing them and reaching some evaluation using the appropriate critical and analytical style of the discipline. Both types of essays require the students to identify differences in interpretations and uses to which evidence has been put in the framing of these interpretations and finally, however tentatively form and argue a judgment of their own. But to prepare students for the above tasks both sections are taught only how to write comparative/contrast essays, argumentative essays and reflective essays in correct English. This of course falls short of students' needs. As a result, students faced with any essay topic, in any discipline, generally proceed to answer the questions in the same way. They assume that questions have one single correct answer (not true of literature or arguments about theories in linguistics) and go about the task by finding and summarising the information they have taken down in their lectures and perhaps one or two sources if they feel their notes are incomplete. The answers they provide are general and in some cases not relevant to the essay question but can be the answer to any question on the topic (or perhaps the novel) being examined. This is not the students' fault. We are

teaching essay writing in isolation from the actual context of the disciplines being studied and out of the context of the actual assignments we set students in the different courses.

We as curriculum planners and writing teachers must help our EFL writers in two ways; firstly we must assist the student to understand the adjustments that must be made in his thinking, his study habits and his writing to meet the expectations of the course lecturer and the demands of the discipline. This can be done by teaching essay writing within the context of the actual assignments that the specialised courses require of him. This will in turn help him to - adapt to the academic culture of the university and to approach topics with a radically different understanding and a different set of strategies than those that he had successfully used at school before. Secondly, we have to help him make a major switch from the intellectual behaviour in which he has been trained in his own culture (this is a major switch in style of thinking and learning (Ballard, 1985; 49) to intellectual traditions of the West in order to deal with English. In our schools and culture, students are brought up on respect of the teacher's authority and knowledge, rote learning and passive classroom behaviour. The shift we require must be on taking active part in discussion in class and an analytical and critical approach to study and writing. We believe with Ballard (1985) that successful academic training is related to cultural adjustment and that writing can most effectively be acquired in the context of the academic sub-discipline each student is facing and the academic culture of which they are part.

DISCOURSE COMMUNITY (AUDIENCE) AND TOLERANCE OF ERROR

Discussions of ESL/EFL writing have focused on the writer, the writer's processes, on academic context and on the reader's expectations (Raimes, 1991: 704) Developing an ability to address an audience is essential to successful communication. Therefore, intended audience, its interests and values are an important factor in the shaping of students' written texts. Generally speaking, readers read texts with varying expectations. A teacher of English evaluates according to how well the student met the standards of a handbook notion of an essay. A subject content instructor evaluates according to the depth of exposure to new knowledge (Faigley & Hansen, 1985: 148). In most types of academic writing, conformity to standard English conventions of grammar, lexis and mechanics is assumed and writing instructors in higher education need to

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make students aware of the expectations of academic discourse communities. That is no easy matter. Johns (1993: 84) notes that although engineering specialists required their grant proposal writers to talk like "experienced engineering researchers" in their texts, grammatical perfection was not required. Leki (1992: 103) indicates that non-English faculty members are able to overlook errors made by foreign students, especially if they are local not global errors that interfere with meaning. Janopoulos (1992) investigating faculty tolerance of error finds that members of different faculties are more tolerant of non-native speakers' errors than native speakers errors. This does not mean that specialist audiences are not irritated by errors: they can overlook grammatical errors but not lack of maturity of thought and f rhetorical style (Leki, ibid). In our English departments we have a unique situation where audience expectations are concerned. The subject teachers and the language teachers expect correct grammar, appropriate lexis and mechanics. After all, the students specialisations are in English Language, Translation and English Literature. They also expect sound knowledge of content. All teachers expect material to be well organised and presented. In other words, they expect good written expression with little or no errors in grammatical and language structure, a sound conceptual grasp of the content and firm control over the material expressed in the development of argument/reasoning in well developed paragraph units. Teachers forget that students are non-native speakers and that not all their language errors are a result of careless proofreading. They may not recognise certain structures as errors as they have an interlanguage version of English, which differs in varying degrees from that of native speakers.

Students struggle while writing, not knowing which form might be correct. This struggle appears to occur especially with choice of vocabulary. Since errors are a natural part of the L2 learning process and writing teachers at advanced level have turned to the non-error focus of the process approach to writing, error tolerance has become a requisite.

With the conviction that students do their best we look at their written compositions and examine them knowing that the present writing classes neither help them to write for different purposes nor teach them how to use vocabulary suitable for the various subjects and discourse audiences.

WRITING AND THEORY

Ability to write well is not only integral to academic success but it is also necessary for the demonstration of such achievement. It is through written assignments and/or some form of written text (i.e. essay type exam questions, short answer questions, research papers/ assignments etc.) that we normally evaluate students at the university level. It is also through written assignments that we evaluate the student's adaptation to university life, to university intellectual and analytical ways of thought, and to his main subject of study and its sub-disciplines. Successful academic training is therefore related to university cultural adjustment.

Current theories in writing, particularly in ESP/EAP, consider ESL/EFL learning not only the acquisition of language but also the socialisation in language in specific community, context or genre (Johns: 1991). This consideration of learning as a socialisation process is seen in a similar change of focus in research on L1 composition. Composition research is moving from an emphasis on cognition to an emphasis on the social construction of meaning (Conner, in press). Writing is still considered a cognitive activity (Flower & Hayes, 1981); it is also considered a situationally determined activity, a social activity. Writing behaviour being socially structured, topics, rhetorical means and linguistic conventions echo previous literate practice as well as the literate practices of discourse communities.

LEXIS AND THEORY

Our choice of examining lexis in students' written work is based on several reasons. Firstly, lexis is an organising as well as a unifying element in text, signalling and showing coherence which is a crucial element in the interpretation of discourse. Secondly, the learning of vocabulary lies at the heart of language learning. The learner oriented approach has given rise to investigation of learners' needs and the latter have shown that lexical problems might be even more important than those of syntax and phonology. Meara (1984) has found that Swedish students' errors in English lie more in the lexical area than the grammatical, outnumbering them by three to one. He therefore believes that lexical errors are more serious, especially that learners themselves claim that lexis is their area of difficulty. Most Egyptian learners, at the advanced level particularly, make the same claim. Communicative language teaching and its principles

have also shown that there can be no fluency without a solid vocabulary base. Lexical errors a: there fore more serious and more disruptive to meaning in discourse. That is why most Egyptia and other learners find it difficult to convey their ideas in writing. From an applied perspectiv the ability to write using correct lexis is a necessary requirement for all learners, those wh require English for academic purposes and others. Thirdly, underlying the renewed interest i the role of lexis in language learning and teaching there is a complementary shift in emphasis i current theoretical descriptions of language structure.

'Lexicase' (Starosta: 1987) and 'Word Grammar' (Hudson, 1984, 1986, 1990) (in Robinson: 1990 276) identify a large part of the grammar with, or in Hudson's case, entirely within the lexicon Hudson's psycholinguistic work breaks with the frameworks of constituency based theories lik transformational grammar where the role of the lexicon is largely restricted to filling out structural strings and where the lexical theory is part of the theory of grammar. He is in favour o: an all embracing theory of linguistic and non-linguistic structure based on 'frame theory' whict takes the word as the optimum sized unit necessary in his description. He argues that the structures of grammar and other kinds of structures have the same formal properties. Recent word-based grammars are therefore asserting themselves as a basis for descriptive frameworks. Whereas previously language teaching and acquisition research have followed linguistic theory and made a distinction between lexis and grammar, developing a structural competence which is then filled out lexically thus delaying lexical acquisition, nowadays lexis is receiving greater attention with respect to its facilitative role in developing structural knowledge. Widdowson (1988) argues that 'the function of grammar depends on its being subservient to lexis' and that we should 'begin with words and show how they need to be grammatically modified to be communicatively effective' (ibid: 154). Allwright et.al. comment that students in class follow 'a natural process of grammar acquisition through the natural process of inquiring about words' (1986: 187). Fourthly in linguistic studies, interest has shifted from the study of sounds and structures to meaning, discourse, and speech acts, which all involve an adequate use of words. To investigate and exploit discourse structure lexical cohesion is vital. The Halliday & Hasan 1976 model has been developed by Hasan (1984) and Halliday & Hasan (1985) to account more systematically for the underlying coherence of a text. Here, Hasan assigns a more even

distribution to the role of lexis and grammar and recognises more explicitly their necessary interdependence and interaction in longer stretches of text (Carter, 1988; 162). Again, within systemic linguistic there has always been a tendency to view lexical and syntactic patterning as distinct but inter-related levels of structure. This was apparent where studies in collocation and colligation are concerned. Mitchell (1971) says 'lexical particularities derive their formal meaning not only from contextual extension of a lexical kind but also from the generalized grammatical pattern within which they appear.' Thus lexis is very important in written discourse.

Recent Research into writing: comparing written native speakers' production with second language learners' production.

Recently, EFL writing practitioners have been advised to adopt practices from L_1, writing. There is evidence that both L_1 and L_2 writers employ in broad outline similar processes such as recursive composing processes involving planning, writing and revising to develop their ideas and to find appropriate rhetorical and linguistic means to express themselves. However, a closer look reveals salient differences especially in sub-processes of composing and in features of written text (Silva, 1993: 657).

Silva (ibid: 668) found that overall L_2 composing is more constrained, more difficult and less effective than L_1 composing. L_1 writers do less global and local planning, have difficulty with setting goals and generating and organising material. Their transcribing is more laborious, less fluent and less productive, reflecting a lack of lexical resources. Silva (ibid) also found that L2 writers use less words, are less accurate and have more errors and lower holistic scores. Their orientation of readers is less appropriate and acceptable than that of L_1 speakers. A full bibliography of these research findings is found in Silva (1993) who discusses fully the implications of the studies and findings.

In the studies above, Arabic speaking learners of English featured in 12 out of 41 studies comparing native English speakers' writing with L_2 writers, and 3 out of 27 studies comparing l1 and L_2 studies of the same EFL subjects. Almost all the studies were undertaken in the last 10 years, with one third done in the last five years. It is interesting to note the special weaknesses of Arab students . Where composing processes are concerned Krapels (1990) finds that Arab

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students have more difficulty and are more concerned with vocabulary, they do more revision, which is usually focused on grammar, than their native speaker peers . This concern and preoccupation with revision ties in with what Al-Makhzoumy & Al Shorafat (1993) have found to be the most serious of Arab students' problems, mainly the fear of making errors, which in turn detracts from their motivation to write. Their L_2 texts are less effective and receive lower holistic scores than their L_1 peers' "texts because they are shorter, with more accuracy errors (Kamel: 1989) more lexico-semantic errors, and more errors with verbs, prepositions, articles and nouns (Benson et al, 1992). Where written text features are concerned they use fewer lexical ties and collocations (Mahmoud: 1983) and shorter and vaguer words (Reid: 1988). Their grammar and morphosyntactic features are characterised by more but shorter T-units (Kamel: 1989), fewer subordinate and more coordinate conjunctions, fewer prepositions and prepositional phrases (Reid: 1988) and more initial and fewer medial transitional devices.

Where discourse is concerned Atari (1983) finds that Arabs more often precede their topic sentences with a broad statement about general state of affairs and have fewer audience adaptation units (Kamel: 1989) addressing the audience less often (Ouaouicha: 1986). They use distinct organisational patterns and give arguments of equal weight, and are inclined to restate their position rather than support their argument and develop their position (Mahmoud: 1983) Mahmoud also reports less paragraphing, less rhetorical connectedness looser segmental structure (introduction—discussion—conclusion) and less explicit formal closure. Ouaouicha (1986) makes the point that they use fewer claims and backings for their positions although they provide more data.

The above comparative research was done in the West, mostly in the States on Arab students studying in American universities Studies carried out recently in the Arab world take as subjects students and pupils studying in Arab schools and universities. The studies are not comparative and show how Arab researchers views their students' problems in the area of L2 writing, particularly where lexis in written texts of students is concerned.

RECENT RESEARCH ON ARAB STUDENTS' USE OF LEXIS IN WRITING:

Khalil (1989) uses as data 20 English one paragraph expository compositions written by Arab freshmen students at Bethlehem University for a study on cohesion and coherence in writing. The analysis of cohesion showed that the students overused reiteration of the same lexical item as a cohesive device but underused other lexical and grammatical cohesive devices. The evaluation of coherence showed that students failed to supply sufficient information about the assigned topic and the subtopics, such as providing no backing and no specifics. Kharma (1989) classified Arab EFL learners errors into two categories: word formation and word meaning. Word formation included errors in inflections, compounding and derivatives. Word meaning included phrasal verbs, idioms, parts of speech, homonyms, antonyms and collocation, confusibles, loan words, function words and prepositional phrases. This inclusion of the last two categories as part of word meaning is dubious as these categories relate more to syntax and the internal structure of the sentence.

Zughoul (1991) analyses quantitatively and qualitatively the lexical choices made by a sample of Arabic speaking learners at Jordan's Yarmouk University. A total of 691 lexically deviant sentences are recorded and analysed, and categorised into 13 error types. The results show that the first language interference is a major variable in lexical choice. Interference takes the form of assumed synonymity, derivativeness, literal translation and idiomaticity. Under literal translation, Zughoul subsumes collocational errors where the learner assumes that the English word collocates in the same manner as its translation equivalent in Arabic.

Al-Makhzoumy and Al-Shorafat (1993) identify the most serious problems that secondary students in Jordan face and recommend procedures to improve students' writing ability in English. The problems are in the following areas and in their order of seriousness: 1- psychological problems 2- stylistic problems 3- content problems 4- language problems 5- evaluation problems 6- mechanics 7- time problems.
Psychological problems mean that writers have negative attitudes towards writing in English as they lack motivation and are afraid of making errors. The stylistic subareas include inability to write coherently and cohesively. Students do not write clearly as they have no audience awareness and this makes them weak in presenting argumentation, narration, description etc.

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Where content is concerned, students cannot organise or present ideas logically and are weak at expressing ideas that are relevant. In the language subarea, vocabulary presents a more serious problem than grammatical usage as students do not possess a repertoire of lexical items that enables adequate expression " To end, the researches recommend that for improvement to take place concentration should be on the content and discourse level rather than on grammar.

Lastly, a study by Fares (1994) investigates the semantic lexical difficulties in the written English of Egyptian EFL learners. A detailed analysis of 100 deviant errors chosen using a stratified random sampling technique shows that errors tend to concentrate in 3 main areas: phrase level expressions, synonyms and phrasal verb categories. Errors that tend to diminish at advanced academic level are derivatives, phrasal verbs, parts of speech and idioms. Fossilised errors at advanced level are synonyms, collocation and compound errors. Phrase level expressions and verbosity errors increase with higher level of English proficiency.

Lexical errors were also found in the sample of 30 compositions examined in our data. To begin our data analysis we shall give a brief illustrated categorisation of these errors followed by a brief discussion

ANALYSIS

ERRORS IN LEXICAL CHOICE

While investigating our data a considerable number of lexical errors was found. Categorising them according to Zughoul (1991) and /or Fares (1994) these errors fell neatly under all of their categories. Examples are first given and discussion follows.

1- Overuse of terms

These include the overuse of four particular lexical super ordinate terms good, bad, big, small, Nice is added by us to this list, e.g. We were allowed after dinner a small talk.

He treats his family in a good way

Ron Moss is a nice character.

2- <u>Verbosity</u> (use of big sounding words)

    e.g. Although both <u>prophets</u> Bacon and Descartes were different thinkers

    Happiness <u>pervaded</u> my heart.

3- <u>Confusion of Binary Terms</u> (confusion of relational opposites)

    · e.g. He is of average <u>length</u> and size.

    He had a <u>tall</u> rope.

4- <u>Influence of Arabic Style</u> (Using oppositive synonyms joined by <u>and</u>)

    e.g.   I want to speak and discuss with him

        He is brilliant and clever

        I was frightened and scared.

5- <u>Similar Forms</u> (choice of word similar graphetically or phonetically to what is intended).

    e.g.   Beside the sofa is <u>aside</u> table

        Because of their <u>self-conscience</u> ....

        On the <u>window seater</u> ....

6- <u>Analogy</u>   (Coining new parts of speech along the lines of existing paradigms)

    e.g.   She listens to awful noise similar to <u>mads.</u>

7- <u>Derivatives</u> (influence from Arabic derivativeness)

    e.g.   He acted as my old <u>cooker</u> when he stole the food. (cook)

8- <u>Literal Translation</u> (expression from Arabic on the literal level)

    e.g.   He wants to buy the whole world and put it <u>under my legs</u> (at my   feet).

9- <u>Collocation</u>

    e.g.   I had long heavy shiny and <u>sparkling</u> hair (thick and shiny)

        I told him I could <u>deliver</u> him home (take)

        Macbeth <u>committed the action.</u>

10- <u>Assumed synonymity</u>

    e.g.   The crushed plebs arose in rebellion (undertrodden)

        He saw him with a <u>handbag</u> (briefcase)

As for my spare time I used to pay it playing the piano (spend)

The stove gave warmth to the house (fireplace)

They lead a concrete life. (hard? down to earth? materialistic?)

11- Idiomaticity

    e.g.   He has a white face (fair complexion)

            She has soft long yellow hair (fair hair)

12- Verb + Preposition

    e.g.   He was concerned by all that happened (concerned about)

            All the experience he passed by affected him (passed through)

Two other areas in our data are found. One deals with informality and formality of style and the words attached to them: e.g.

The kid said to him ..... (the child)

My dad was a fearsome man (father more appropriate in the context)

The other deals with use of metaphor creatively but where the choice of collocational words is wrong; e.g. It clung its teeth into him. (Ambition dug its teeth into him).

Discussion

It is interesting to note that the errors that occurred in our data were mostly to do with assumed synonymity, collocations, idiomatically, fixed expressions and verbs preposition as well as in the areas of formality / informality. What interests us here is not how many times they occurred but where they occurred. They mostly occurred in the essays that were expressive, where the student was experimenting with non-core vocabulary rather than specific subject-core vocabulary, i.e. in contexts where he is learning to write. These errors are part of his interlanguage and he is till struggling and hypothesising as regards their current use. Our learners have not had the luxury of exposure to words over a long period of time in a rich variety of contexts.

The dissonances between a lexical item and its appropriate use can be stylistic, syntactic, collocational and semantic-- a heavy load indeed in terms of learning the use of a word. As writing teachers we must expect and understand the erroneous use of items in these areas.

We shall next consider how reiteration, repetition and collocation of certain vocabulary items used in the students' written texts tend to enhance or detract from the text's coherence. This is treated under lexical cohesion (or the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary.

LEXICAL COHESION

Reiteration means either restating an item in a later part of the text by repetition or by reasserting its meaning by using synonyms, antonyms hyponyms etc. Collocation is a relationship between words and other words that occur together. Writers make conscious choices as to repetition or reiteration by synonymy or by using a superordinate term. This gives the writer the chance to express attitude, use words that express modality, and experiment with discourse specific instantial relations. An examination of some lexical items in just one essay: shows that most of these relations are used together in one place. The text in appendix I is narrative-descriptive, written for an essay assignment in the writing class and is not subject specific. We have in the first line clear repetition of the same word in 'It is not nice' and 'I no longer know what the younger generation considers nice'. The villa is in the 'country' and she travels to the 'city', words that repeat and reassert location. Then we have' young girls' 'different and 'opposite' to those of her generation in manners, behaviour and appearance a case here of reiteration of synonyms. All this is found in the first paragraph. Manners, behaviour and appearance are superordinate general words the particularities of which come in the following paragraphs. Where appearance is concerned we get 'you can hardly distinguish between her and a boy' . We notice the word hardly which gives us important information about the stance and attitude of the writer towards the appearance of her grandaughter. Non-core words that carry modal meanings carry interpersonal rather than ideational meaning. Then we get sets of hyponyms which are related to appearance and this is where the writer employs antonymy an synonymy as well as repetition. The examples are, 'hair shortly cut' (cut short) as opposed to 'long hair', short unpainted nails' as opposed to 'polish nails' . Chances for using collocation and for making errors occur. Hair is 'long, heavy (thick) shiny and sparkling black'. This is a collocational mismatch as hair does not collocate with sparkling. These mismatches are very

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common in L2 texts as the learners do not encoun.. a word with sufficient frequency to demarcate its range or narrow the item down to its more fix.' partnerships.

The hobby of the grandchild is playing judo and when the grandchild is described as 'romantic' we see the irony. This romantic grandchild watches 'action movies of blood and battles' killing the remains of a romantic lady inside herself'. The girl is given the attributes and habits o a boy. and only one attribute of a girl —romantic-at the same time. We are asked to adjust our usual conceptualisations of how words are related to each other for the particular purposes of this text. The writer has disturbed our expectations as to how words are conventionally used. The girl is romantic and enjoys blood. Here the focus is on the difference in meaning potential. These relations between words are valid in the particular text only and are used to signal evaluation of a situation on the part of the writer. In other words these uses signal attitude, part of the register of the text.

Discourse specific lexical relations are called instantial relations, Typical vocabulary is readjusted in specific texts and its use is a sign of creative lexical usage, or as we have seen, as a device for evaluation or irony. The text gives examples of creative lexical usage as well. In the next paragraph we have.' I used to play the piano and let the sweet soft melodies hug and dance in the house to fill it with love and peace.' Apart from the fact that the vocabulary is non-core and the writer experiments with metaphor in a creative fashion, the words are in direct opposition to the 'awful noise' the grandchild listens to and 'claims' to be music. Claims is a 'modal, lexical item carrying information about tenor in discourse. Modality is not only fundamental in the creation of text and its meaning; it adds to coherence and understanding of the text. While we are considering creativity, let us not forget the collocational relation between the words kill and remains , words that belong to the set of death and murder and do not normally collocate but are used very effectively here. Again another instance of discourse specific instantial relation is seen when the 'polite grandchild' is 'arguing with her father, in a loud voice and using her hands.' Experimenting with vocabulary can teach students how to write effectively. We cannot ignore the use of 'the car got rid of the city' which shows the old lady's anxiety to get back to the countryside. Again 'the life they lead murdered their emotions' , continuation in the text of the killing

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1etaphor started earlier, and the effect created by exact repetition in 'they breath <u>polluted</u> air and re injected by <u>polluted</u> ideas'.

The stress in the above analysis has been on the use of vocabulary in discourse, on the ifferent roles it plays on giving coherence to a text especially through lexical cohesion, ollocation and use of metaphor. The idea is to bring out the positive qualities of a learner's essay nd not only concentrate on individual lexical errors. It was shown that a learner uses repetition, eiteration using synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms and collocation and metaphor. The use of nstantial relations and modal lexical items signalling evaluation and irony in discourse were also ontributions to coherence of the text. That however, does not mean the errors are not present . The text is full of different kinds. The most important relates to formality and informality, i.e. to iignaling vocabulary and its relation to discourse. An example is the learner's use of the very nformal 'dad's <u>home</u> and '<u>dad looking at me</u> ...' instead of the more appropriate '<u>my father's</u> 1ome' and '<u>my father looking at me..</u>' in that text. Other errors involve derivatives (cooker, :ook), assumed synonymity (stove, fireplace), coinage (mads), confusing of words (pay, spend) spelling (dinning room) etc. These errors are very irritating. However in the context of learning to write, especially using a process approach with drafting and redrafting, and in the context of using vocabulary as essential to teaching writing in context, we can capitalise on all the positive points first and then tackle the errors, whether grammatical or lexical, at the later stages of editing and proofreading. For ideas on editing and proofreading exercises to improve writing see Kroll (1991). Again in terms of writing to learn (see Raimes: 1987) this is a way of learning a language, its vocabulary and how it operates in real texts in order to get a message across to a reader.

It will be noticed here that the learner has used core and non-core vocabulary carrying attitudinal and emotioual connotations. Subject core vocabulary is by no means only confined to fields like biology or zoology. In another sense there is a vocabulary which is particular to a topic and its use in a text can help cohesion and text coherence. In the essays on Ramadan particularly, vocabulary that includes <u>fast, keep the fast, break the fast, Iftar, call to prayer, sunset to dawn, atayef, amar-el-dine, dried fruits, shelled nuts,</u> etc. contributed greatly to coherence. Other fortunate creative metaphors included' they all demolished the food on the table'; but the

unfortunate errors did occur. 'God's tables' (literal message translation of mawa'ed al-Rahman' and 'the kitchen is at its peak' are only a few.

INTRERPRETATION AND VOCABULARY IN TEXTS

Making sense of a text is an act of intrepretation that depends as much on what a reader brings to a text as what the writer puts into it. Interpretation is a set of procedures that involves mental activities that help a reader actively build the world of a text based on his or her knowledge of the world and how states and events are manifested in it. As the reader makes cognitive links in the text he goes further than just noting semantic links (e.g. cohesive links in the use of general words, hyponyms etc.) and recognizing textual patterns. He is creating coherence. The writer has to foresee difficulties readers experience in text processing and include in his text ways of making it easier for the reader to interpret the text. We are interested in how L2 writers do this in their written texts and what is the vocabulalry used to organise and signal the relationships that textual segments enter into with one another thus making the text easier for the reader to interpret their essays. The stress again is on the positive use of vocabaulary items and not only on the errors that L2 writers make in written expression.

The approach to text interpretation that emphasises how larger patterns occur in text and how textual segments enter into relations with one another depends on logical sequencing, (as in cause-effect pattterns or problem-solution patterns) and matching relations (as in comparison/ contrast texts). The signals as to how to interpret the text occur in various ways; some are grammatical e.g. joining a subordinate clause to a main clause to show cause-effect relations, others are lexical i.e. using a lexical item to signal the same relation of cause and effect or even using repetition whether lexical or grammatical.

Larger patterns of text are found in texts used in a variety of subject areas and contexts. The patterns are culturally ingrained, thus perhaps employing different rhetorical patterns depending on the language used. Variety of contexts use different types of vocabulary to which we will turn first.

CORES VOCABULARY, PROCEDURAL (INDEXICAL) VOCABULARY & SCHEMATICALLY BOUND WORDS

When considering whether all words arE of equal status or whethEr some words arE more central to language use than others we are bound to discuss core, subject-core and non-core aspects of vocabulary. Core words tend to be the most frequently recurring in a wide variety of situations. Carter (1987: 53) offers examples saying that in a lexical set which contains the words fat, obese, overweight, plump and podgy, fat is the most frequently used word as it could be used to define all the other words in the set but the opposite is not the case. It forms an immediate antonym with thin while the antonym for podgy is less obvious. Overweight is more clinical and obese is clinical and carries negative evaluation. fat also collocates more widely than the others (e.g. a fat wallet) and is more readily used metaphorically (e.g. a fat chance). Fat is polysemous and can be used in different word-classes (eg. to fatten, fat for frying). It carries a heavy workload and is therefore the most core. It is expected that core words are easy to use and that they present no problem to the student. However, in the data the following was found: 'People believed that man's reason is the only avenue that leads to a good and active life'. Here, way is the more core word to use as avenue is more restricted in range as part of the set way, road, path, street, avenue etc. Path of course is also admissable but not street. Again 'debated in their country's problems' is used instead of 'discussed their country's problems', we also find ' I need to reform my character and my defects' where a more core word would be 'change my character'. The use of words that are more restricted in their range and less core is part of the expressivity of the writer but it does make the written style of an essay very awkward and stilted sometimes. It stands wrong in the special-subject genres more than in descriptive and narrative essays where expressivity is more tolerated.

Under procedural vocabulary we have words that are characteristically used to talk about other words, to paraphrase them, to define them and organise them in written communication. Robinson (1988: 232) says that they are the main element in our interpretation and categorisation of specific frames of reference. They are useful becuase they help us talk about specific words. They categorise and organise features of meaning relative to other known entities. If we look at our data and consider paraphrasing as well as the use of procedural vocabulary, we see two types.

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On type occurs in the description and narration papers and the other in the subject specific papers with a comparison/contrast format. The first type is mentioned by Zughoul (1991: 54) under 'errors in paraphrasing and circumlocution.' In our data we have 'My neighbour, the woman who lives in the flat beside me...' and 'I am happy that is I am satisfied..' Zughoul rightly considers this type of paraphrase erroneous as paraphrase of this type is not normally used in English. In the data this type seems to occur only in expressive writing where the student is less in control of his structure and lexis. There is room for experimentation here as one feels that topics have a role to-play. The more general a topic the more this kind of paraphrase tends to occur. Zughoul's topics were all of the general type given in composition classes. He states them as follows; TV programs, automobile accidents, a typical day, my house, tourism in Jordan etc. (ibid: 47). The errors in our data occur in genral descriptions and narration of experiences. In the essays on linguistics, Greek and Roman civilisation, and the Glorious and the French revolution, Macbeth etc. i.e. subject specific areas these errors did not occur. Rather paraphrases used procedural vocabulary to explain specific subject -core words: e.g. 'the polis or independent city-state', 'the commoners, adult male citizens...' 'the plebeians who were poor citizens who paid all the taxes' and 'the patricians who were the nobles and paid no taxes although they were rich.', 'the civilisation it inherited was Graeco-Roman which is a blend of the two civilisations of the old times', 'the Glorious revolution, a bloodless revolution.' Others include 'Macbeth's flaws or his natural weaknesses make him a tragic hero... and ' Linguistics is the scientific study of language. By scientific we mean a linguist studies language in a systematic unbiased way'. Here we see that key words in definitions are part of procedural vocabulary. This vocabulary provides the writer/learner with the capacity to identify lexicalised vocabulary of a specific subject area such as the word polis, and to talk about it in simple core vocabulary. This paraphrasing is not erroneous.

Widdowson (1983: 92) calls subject-core vocabulary words 'schematically bound words.' They narrow the frame of reference for the writer/learner and identify the field for him. Polis or Tragic hero will occur in a narrow range of texts identifiable within the specific fields of Greek classical heritage and literature respectively. Learners seem to have less problems with subject-core vocabulary than core or non-core vocabulary as is shown in our data. There was no incidence

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where a student made incorrect use of a subject specific word. However along the continuum between schematic and procedural words there are words like 'make' 'use' 'do' and 'have' in the use of which learners do make mistakes. We have in our data 'they made a revolution' instead of 'had a revolution' (idiom) and 'they have done a distinction between medecine and magic,' instead of 'made a distinction.' It is in these more core words that learners make mistakes of use. In fact the more technical the field the easier it is to use the subject-core vocabulary e.g. 'mineralcorticoids' belongs to the field of endocrinology in medecine and is generally monosemous not polysemous and cannot trap the learner into making mistakes. In the humanities and the social sciences however, some subject-core words are not extremely specialised e.g. ancient Greece, edicts and laws, jurists, awareness of the self, mandate of God are less specialised than Stoicism, polis, or grammar constraints and primary and modal auxiliaries, all of which are found in our data. Students of the humanities and social sciences may therefore be more prone to error of different kinds.

DISCOURSE ORGANISING VOCABULARY

We cannot mention procedural vocabulary without considering its role in the organisation of discourse. Traditionally words are divided into function words (closed systems) and lexical items (open sets). There are a number of words in the lexicon that seem to share the qualities of both the closed system and open set words. In discourse they do not identify the field of discourse but they sometimes can tell us about tenor. They can identify the structure of the text we are reading but tell us nothing of the subject matter e.g. This issue is going to be discussed and the outcome published. These words do a lot of lexical work but one has to seek elsewhere in the text to lexicalise them fully i.e. find out what the issue is and later on in the text what the outcome is. Winter (1977, 1978) calls these words' vocabulary 3 words', a subset of a more general set of discourse organising words. Francis (1986) focuses on what she calls 'anaphoric nouns', i.e. nouns that occur to refer back to chunks of text. It might be worthwhile to point out to students how these words operate predictively and retrospectively. This is important not only for reading skills that rely on prediction but also for organising writing more coherently. A learner who has a weak vocabulary of discourse orgnising words reflecting his intent as a writer

may present weaker essays than his colleague who has awareness of these words. Such . vocabulary is readily found in authentic non-narrative texts but in my opinion using the students' own essays is good material. In the data examined we found the following: 'Revolutions are something which people make when they become dissatisfied with their conditions. In this essay I will contrast between two revolutions as well as the conditions .... The conditions are political, social and economic .... The political .....' . We can see here how the word conditions predicts what is to come. In the next segment of text, the conditions are specified as political, social etc., and in the following segments of text each condition is discussed separately. Condition here is therefore an organising word that points to the text structure that is to follow . Awareness of this function of vocabulary in discourse structure could teach organisation of written material.

With regards to specific discourse-genres, these words were found in comparison/ contrast essays more than in description. They even appeared in narration, which is least tightly organised. In one of the essays where a former ballet dancer is watching a ballet performance and imagines she is on stage we get: 'This illusion was no more. The lights had come on. The vicarious dance had ended: Here illusion refers back to the part of the text where the dance was described. In another essay we get ' In the kitchen the scene is different' . We are then shown what the scene is in the following segment of text. In one of the descriptions we have 'Assessment of appearances. is difficult'. We then have different parts of the text showing how assessment is made. The point is, students use these organising words in their essays. If we point them out in discussion of their work, we teach them in context, the relevant genre and within organisation of a written essay framework and they learn how words build up expectations concerning the shape of the discourse and help rhetorical organisation.

ORGANISING LARGER TEXT PATTERNS

So far we have been considering vocabulary in students' essays that points to segments of text. Some of the discourse organising words we have looked at give indications of larger text patterns and build up expectations about the organisation of the whole discourse. Where discourse genres are concerned these organising words may signal descriptive essays,

comparative essays, narratives expository informative types etc. In most texts there should be a readily identifiable overall organisational plan. In narratives for example we have a chronological order according to time. In comparison/contrast we are told that the order used is that of least important to more important. A balance must be kept and each detail should have a corresponding one compared or contrasted. We are even given types of internal organisation e.g.

Idea A   Detail 1 Detail 2 Detail 3
Idea B   Detail 1   Detail 2 Detail 3
and
Detail 1 Idea A   Idea B
Detail 2 Idea 1   Idea 2
Detail 3 Idea 1   Idea 2

Any single paragraph has one main idea with other ideas giving supporting detail. Ideas are organised in the order preferred by the genre. This is done by arranging supporting details logically in smaller and then larger textual patterns. A clear topic sentence and a suitable conclusion as well as transitional words to help connect details logically and key words of the topic (topic reminders) all enhance coherence. What detail and when to include it are also important for coherence and unity. Where organising vocabulary is concerned key words and transitional words are important for rhetorical organisation. Discourse organisers contribute to our awareness as to what pattern is being realised. In the data we have examples of these words. (See Appendix 2). ' In this essay I will contrast between the Glorious Revolution an the French Revolution. the two revolutions are different on the political, economic and social level'. While these organising words tell us that a comparison/contrast type organisation is going to be followed we also note that they occur in the opening parts of the discourse. In the main text transitions such as different from, in contrast, conversely show the details being contrasted. Contrast is also shown through key words and certain grammatical constructions: e.g. While the Glorious revolution was bloodless, the French Revolution was bloody. Then follow the specific characteristics of the two revolutions. The concluding section includes vocabulary such as 'Both revolutions expressed dissatisfaction with .... the Glorious revolution was better because ...... Here

we have an evaluation part which contains words like succeeded to , overcome ...... Certain vocabulary items cluster round certain parts of the larger patterns of text. Teaching vocabulary items that cluster around each segment of a large text pattern such as problem/solution or comparison/contrast will help students to recognise patterns and to organise their writing accordingly in the different genres.

The mater however is not as simple as it sounds. It is true that once conscious of a larger textual pattern the learner can be brought to an awareness of the rich vein of vocabulary that he can use to realise it. However, some rhetorical genres have no set patterns. Description is one of them. Hatch (1992: 175) says that description has no set template. Components could be described for certain types of description. In describing a room, we may focus on the furniture and objects in the room. On the other hand, we may focus not on space but on our feelings about rooms and about the people who live there. we might start at the door and work our way through a room. The important thing is not to give a list of the things in the room only. Description is not cataloguing. Because of this difficulty, the students' descriptions of place were mostly lists of badly presented items of furniture. They did not make the reader hear, smell or feel what they were describing. The vocabulary was not vivid and the details were not arranged in an easy to follow order. They did use connecting words in the main text section such as 'in the middle of the room, on the right behind the sofa etc.' but there was no variety in combining sentences with adjectives and prepositional phrases e.g. Leaving the room, you turn left towards the kitchen. Also, there were no words of conclusion. In fact in many place descriptions there was no conclusion at all (see appendix 4). This was not so in the description of persons. Words that organised introductions were present; e.g. 'Each person has his or her own characteristics.' Words that described the person were in the main text section; e.g. clever, respectable, happy-go-lucky, cheerful . good choice of clothes etc. Again concluding organisers were present; e.g. 'Such a character is practical, one who knows what to say, what to wear at the right time in the right place. The words here, used in the different parts of the text, reinforce the descriptive pattern of the longer text in which various characteristics are described. However the pattern is not as tightly knit as that of the comparison/contrast. Carrell (1984) mentions that of the five types of expository organisations she examined, description and collection represent the loosest

organisation. Collection is merely a grouping of concepts or ideas by association. Description is a specific kind of grouping by association in which one element of the association is subordinate to the topic. By presenting a particular attribute, setting, or specification, the description gives more information about the topic. comparison/contrast is organised on the basis of opposing viewpoints, either alternative views or opposing views. It is more highly organised.

In schema-theory, formal schema related to text organisation should act as a guide or an outline for the writer to follow when producing text in every discourse-genre. Carrell says the group of Arabic speakers that were part of her experiment were different to the Spanish and Oriental groups in that with the latter two, recall of information from highly organised texts was better than from the more loosely organised ones. With the Arabs, the less organised the text, the more information they recalled. She concludes this may be due to the preferred rhetorical pattern of coordinate parallelism typical of Arabic. This however requires further investigation. On the other hand the formal schema may not be present at all. Contrastive rhetorical studies may be of use in this area. What we can do is help the learner become aware of larger text organisation through the vocabulary in discourse that realises this larger organisation. In this context he will learn to write. It is worth pointing out here that the discourse-genres that are related to the sciences and to the social sciences have organisatipnal patterns that are more highly structured (problem/solution, cause-effect, comparison/contrast) than those for the humanities (description, narration). As can be seen from the appendices (appendix 1: description-narration, appendix 2: comparison/contrast, appendix 3: expository informative and appendix 4: description of place) our students could manage better the highly structured organised discourse-genres using organisational vocabulary.

THEME AND RHEME

Organising information is a conscious and systematic activity involving the writer in constantly making choices regarding what he makes his point of departure at particular sections and points in text. We have said above while looking at larger patterns that comparison/contrast essays were better organised by students than descriptive essays. One of the reasons for this was lack of variety of sentence combination using fronting devices of adjectives e.g. 'Hot and exhausted she...., adverbs, e.g. 'Carefully, he opened the door...., prepositional phrases, e.g. 'With

a guilty look she...., etc. The implications of these different structural options for the creation of text are important for the discourse analyst and the writing teacher. Apart from variation in the sense that we are given the chance to focus on certain elements as writers, they also give the writer the chance to decide how to present his information. If it is badly presented it can detract from coherence. This coherence is found in different theme-rheme relations in texts and in the vocabulary that is used in the theme of an utterance. Danes (1970) identifies the theme f an utterance by reference to 1- Identical wording. This involves in thematic position the occurrence of a lexical item, group or phrase from the preceding context in identical form. 2- Synonymous expression: this is the occurrence in thematic position of an element which communicates information which is similar in meaning to an expression in the preceding context. 3- Semantic Inference: this is the relation of information in previous utterances with those in thematic position by means of direct association or contrasts. 4- Paraphrase: this involves all or part of the information in the previous context as theme either by use of a single item or group of items. This last we have seen in operation when we examined discourse organising words in larger text patterns and text segments.

In our data we find that in terms of theme-rheme organisation, expository informative type texts have the following in the introductory section (Text In Appendices 3 & 4)

$$T1.......R1 \qquad \text{Expository Text. (Appendix 3)}$$
$$T2.......R2$$
$$T3.......R3$$

If we compare this to the opening paragraph of one of the descriptive essays we find the following:

$$T1........\ R1 = (Ri \qquad Rii) \qquad \text{Descriptive Text (Appendix 4)}$$
$$T2\text{----}R2 = (R2i = R2ii)$$
$$T3\text{----}R3 = (R2i = R3i)$$
$$T4\text{----}R4 = (R2i = R4i))$$
$$T5.\ \text{---}.R5 = (R2i = R5i)$$

The pattern shown for description is certainly not well structured. The notion of givenness or recoverability of information is not present except in R2i which is the item sofa around which the description is based. It is the focus in relation to which all other articles of furniture are located in space. In terms of vocabulary use we have in the expository text the word comprehension referred to as it in the following two sentences i.e. synonymous expression. We have comprehension referred to as understanding in rheme position and referred to again by the verb understand in rheme position. Vocabulary reinforces the theme whether in theme or rheme position. In the description text we have repetition of room and sofa in theme position and rheme position respectively. The vocabulary in the following sentences changes and is a list of other furniture items. In the expository text, the word comprehension is constantly repeated as a key word and the different phases of comprehension are presented. Key vocabulary is also found in reader, attitude of the reader, purpose of the reader etc. in thematic position. The wording is identical most of the time. In appendix 4 we feel that the description is flat because the student does not place adverbial in a different position by fronting them. He gives equal weight to all the elements of the message. They all start in the same way .e.g. a side table is located.. , a coffee table is found in front of A classical picture is hung. a tiny doll is found... The staging strategies used by the student are not successful. He has not considered audience orientation. The learner might be trapped in these unnatural patterns because of lack of grammatical resources or lack of confidence in the use L2. Advanced learners should be able to orient their audiences and create topic frameworks for their writing.

In topical structure analysis which is used to assess the overall coherence topic (main idea of the whole text) and relationship of topical subjects to one another are diagrammed to show the progression of topics. Research found that weaker writers use an excess of sequential progression with more subtopics to the number of sentences used. Texts of weaker writers had the topical subject only at the beginning of the sentence (Ferris, 1992). In looking at the diagram of the description text we see the number of subtopics arising from the rheme that are present but are not picked up and continued.

In choosing vocabulary in texts there are no guidelines as to why a writer should choose to repeat a word identically or choose a synonym for reiteration. Some researchers have suggested that

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there is a link between using reiteration using synonyms and the idea of re-entering topic words or key words into the discourse at a later stage, bringing the topic back into focus by foregrounding these words. In the text in appendix 3 the words process of comprehension are used in the first paragraph, the beginning of the third, the beginning of the fifth and the beginning of the eighth and concluding paragraph. This brings back the topic into focus; it also parallels grammatical topicalisation in theme-rheme. In terms of discourse segments, it is used at the beginning or introduction section, in the main section where discussion of its different phases are concerned and in the concluding segment. In appendix 4 (description) the key word for the topic is living room. This is mentioned in the first line and in the last line of the text. Another key word furniture is only mentioned once in the second line of the text. Awareness is lacking of lexical strategies of topicalisation and teachers should provide the lexical equipment to enable learners to create written texts.

Where rhetorical strategies are concerned there is also macro-level frontplacing. Topic sentences usually tell us what a paragraph is about. This may be an oversimplification. However, one can use the concept to teach macrolevel organisation of rhetorical genres, especially loosely structured ones like description which seem to give trouble even to advanced students.

FINDINGS

Following Ferris' recommendation (1994: 414) to adopt an approach to written discourse which considers writers' rhetorical and lexical choices, this study considered and analysed the lexical choices in students' compositions when using description, comparison/contrast and narration as discourse-genres. Following are the findings. It must be remembered that the study is not quantitative and that it remains for future quantitative research to substantiate the findings. It must be remembered that the study is not quantitative and that it remains for future quantitative research to substantiate these findings using collected data from a larger population from the various English departments across the country.

1- Core, non-core and subject-core vocabulary are all necessary for developing vocabulary for writing in the different genres.

2- Students need to learn how to write in the relevant genres of their academic disciplines and use subject-core vocabulary.

3- There is better use of writing in highly structured discourse-genres like comparison/ contrast helped by the use of subject-core vocabulary for specific fields.

4- The more technical the field the better the use of vocabulary in student written production using subject-core vocabulary.

5- Subject-core vocabulary is by no means confined to specific fields like chemistry or biology for instance. One can stretch the term to mean vocabulary particular to a certain topic even if the topic is not field, specific. Vocabulary particular to a topic helps contribute to text coherence.

6- The more general the topic and the less tightly organised the discourse-genre the more 'erroneous' paraphrasis that does not add to information is found. This point needs further proof through quantitative experiment. In the data these errors were not found in the subject-specific contexts in more controlled discourse-genres.

7- In the more loosely structured narrative and descriptive genres there is more expressivity and more experimentation with core and non-core vocabulary but there is also more error. Creative lexical, usage not only teaches students to write effectively but also adds to text coherence. It also encourages taking risks while writing, a requirement for development of writing skills.

8- There is a need to develop awareness of the discourse potential of lexical patterning above sentence level in order to improve both writing and vocabulary use.

9- Awareness is lacking of lexical strategies of topicalisation in the less highly structured discourse-genres like description.

10- In students' descriptions, where rhetorical skills are concerned there was a strange absence of conclusive paragraphs in spatial descriptions.

11- Students need to appropriate themselves to audience needs. The above findings tie in with recent research and collaboration between rhetoricians and linguists in that they show the need for a linguistic/rhetorical system to help students improve their awareness of the role of vocabulary, syntax and audience in making their written texts more coherent. If audience awareness is an important factor in writing and learning for example, we have to teach our students that writers need to be sensitive to the different expectations of the reader. In English,

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readers expect essays to be organised deductively from general to particular (Hinds, 1990: 98). The inference-based rhetorical form preferred in English places the burden chiefly on the writer to achieve coherence in a text and to make transitional statements. If the students are trained to do that, as well as to use vocabulary to organise discourse, their subject specific as well as general essays would be much more coherent than they appear at present. Research findings are important as they point to the lacks in writing programmes and the needs of students . It is also worthwhile to look at what students themselves think they need in a writing course.

In informal talks, and in response to open ended questions our department students, in the four years, during the academic year 1993/1994,... expressed a wish for training particularly focused on vocabulary and grammar. As well, they felt that they needed to know how to organise content (which they all claimed they knew well) and express it clearly in writing so that the lecturer may understand what they have written . This they saw as a need particularly where their special sub-disciplines were concerned though many also wanted rhetorical skill training for their expressive essays. Organisation, transitions, coherence, introductions and conclusions, therefore, all seemed important to them, although they could not put this very clearly in those same words. Our students thought that the writing skills or the actual task management skills they got in their Writing classes were most helpful in their content course writing tasks, but they thought that they did not get enough training in managing text (planning, outlining, drafting, revising, and proof reading) in the short two-hour course per week in Writing. They wanted at least a four hour course, as well as meetings outside class with young demonstrators who are about to specialise in writing (and therefore know a great deal about it) twice a week, to discuss issues in the areas of rhetorical skill, language proficiency and task management strategies, especially those dealing with what they had done wrong in their written papers, whether these are special subject papers or general essays . In fact, our students are calling for feedback of the right kind so that they can get help during the writing process and before they are evaluated on the different courses of their disciplines and sub-disciplines.

Two more important points are worthy of notice:

1- our students do not know what is involved in the writing process and what skills are required of them in a writing class;

2- subject teachers and writing teachers live in separate worlds teaching the same sets of students but each concerned only with what he teaches and not realising the need for cooperation between them in the benefit of their own and their students' interests. It must be stressed that both subject and writing teachers should realise that writing courses exist in order to teach and improve student writing for the purpose of not only learning how to write but also how to use writing effectively in other courses of their sub-disciplines which require explanation, discussion and evaluation of material through writing. If this is made clear to students as an important goal of the writing course then they will learn to use writing as a tool for learning their discipline material. I am also tempted to say that this should be made crystal clear to writing and all special subject teachers.

Our students' preoccupation with the individual preferences of teachers where assignments are concerned bring us to other task management strategies where writing is involved. These are strategies of reading, summarising, note-taking, using quotes and synthesising for the purpose of writing course assignments, and also library skills and research skills. Those skills are never taught in the writing or essay classes. It is true that reading is generally followed by some summarising and note-taking exercises but actual serious note-taking and summarising skills are left to the discretion of the reading teacher. Under the new regulations which became effective in the academic year 1992/1993, their are language courses entitled Writing (second term), Language: reference skills (first term) Reading: varieties of text, (first term) in the third and fourth years in the Language and Translation Section. In the Literature Section in the third and fourth years the language component is made up of an ESSAY component (writing) and a READING component. Great use could be made of these courses in both sections to improve students' management of source and research skills as well as reading and writing but only if the teachers of these courses and the subject specialists work in complete harmony and cooperation. In the reference skills course, in addition to skills of referring to specialised dictionaries for different purposes of translation and language, library and research skills, as well as how to use quotes, how to summarise information in readings, how to synthesise collected material and relate it to a given topic and how to take notes from readings could be taught. The reading material used could be one of the varieties of texts used in the reading course which relates to

their specialisation. The writing teacher could use the topic related to the reading material in his/her writing class in a variety of different ways. Where the specialist teacher will ask for an assignment, say, on 'The Grammar of Words', the reading teacher may assign a reading text regarding the constraints on the combinability of words involving syntactic and collocational constraints. He/she will read the text with students and, as well as exercises involving reading strategies he/she will also do others on note-taking and/or summarising relevant information. The skills teacher may practice how to gather material appropriate for the topic, and reference it. The writing teacher will concentrate on different types of writing. One will involve the special discourse-genre involved in presenting such a topic (a report or a recount) and the structure and subject-core vocabulary in such a genre; the other will involve an informal explanation and exemplification of how some words in the language operate and how they combine and what are the possible combinations and examples of impossible and probable combinations in English and Arabic. The third type may be a narrative type essay with an element of comparison/contrast involved which gives the expressivity of students a chance to show itself and the chance for them to use non-core as opposed to core and subject-core vocabulary. The essay may be imaginary concerning words personified as people some of whom meet and become deeply attached to each other and marry and stick together for life (fixed expressions). Others, as in common human situations met, are very close to each other, but are forced to be with other words as well (the more core a word the more it will contract partnerships with other words). Others are very restricted in their relationships and do not mix well at all except with few words. Of course there are reasons for the 'characteristics' of these 'wordpeople' that make them act and react in such ways just as in human situations. This cross generic writing helps students learn how to write a report for a particular audience in the actual context of the discipline of linguistics as well as develops lexis of the three types: core, subject-core and non-core. It encourages writing in a discourse-genre specific to a subject as well as expressive free writing. It maintains a balance between writing to learn and learning to write. Students learn about their particular subject as well as how to read, summarise and choose information relevant to their topic. They learn about the different rhetorical genres and when and for what each is used and consequently, the different type of vocabulary (simple informal as opposed to formal specialised sophisticated vocabulary) to

use with each discourse-genre. The narrative essay will encourage students to take the risk and experiment with idioms and metaphor i.e. the use of instantial relations of lexical items in a specific text, which in turn encourages the use and understanding and development of non-core vocabulary—certainly a requirement in an English Department. There is no doubt that this will lead to language proficiency in general.

The students' desire for more stress on language skills in the writing class is very understandable considering the fact that in a specialist English department fluency and accuracy in the foreign language is as important as the content of the specialist subjects. Yet there seems to be another reason for their insistence on grammar and vocabulary training especially their insistence on correct word choice. Silva (1993: 662) tells us that research findings show that second language writers spend a great deal of time consulting a dictionary and exhibit more concern and difficulty with vocabulary. Advanced students are slowed down by the search for the correct grammatical rule or the explicit word necessary for expressing what they are thinking and usually have to use a substitute word which does not exactly fit their thoughts or what they want to convey while they are writing. In certain disciplines finding the exact word and using it may be crucial. Leki & Carson (1994: 92) interpret this interest in language skills as in interest in acquiring efficiency as well as reducing their workload and work time, which is very reasonable. The stress in this paper on using vocabulary as an organising principle in discourse an important factor in the coherence of a text is thus justified.

Al-Makhzoumy and Al-Shorafat (1993) found that the most serious problem facing Arab students where written work is concerned was psychological concerned with lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes and other negative attitudes causing inability to write clearly and coherently in different discourse-genres and for a specific discourse community. Perhaps writing on subjects related to their disciplines and courses, or to material that they will use, will be of more benefit as they provide more intellectually stimulating and demanding subject matter and more sophisticate vocabulary at university level. Again there nonacademic writing should focus on topics other than the traditional 'Education in your Country' or 'Your favourite Book'. Challenging topics and students' success in handling them will build real confidence in writing. Non-challenging topics do not require knowledge transformation and do not help students participate in university

academic culture. Our students were very interested and pleased to write on subjects connected with their Shakespeare and Graeco-Roman civilisation syllabuses, and more students handed in written work than with other topics.

The persistent call for more vocabulary teaching in language and writing classes and the insistence on the correct word choice may have reasons other than language proficiency. Students' main concern is usually to do well in exams. As we have mentioned before they are evaluated through their written work. Yet most if not all subject teachers do not see their students' written work except in an exam answer. Students themselves believe that they need more reading than writing skills as they use writing only 10% of all their time spent in academic tasks (Leki & Carson: 1994: 82). In exams speed in writing and finding the correct word and/or morphosyntactic rule is vital for students. In multiple choice type questions a subtle difference between two words may be the difference between a wrong or correct answer. In short answers and short essay type questions, finding the specific word that conveys a concept or meaning is important in terms of correctness and time. Paraphrases and circumlocutions are not only less accurate but are time consuming. As a result, students always lose a great deal of marks on summary and note-taking type questions than perhaps on long essay type questions where students have more time and control over the language they use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1- It is recommended that the writing course should be four instead of two hours a week. Two of these should be used for writing in a specific subject with all that it involves, i.e. it should be reading-based writing which teaches how to summarise etc. and to use the particular rhetorical skills and task management skills. The other two should be used for a general writing course in which students learn how to write.

2- There should be a large vocabulary component which is context-based in the writing course.

3- Students should be exposed to a great deal of authentic reading texts and listening texts in order for them to get acquainted with natural spoken informal discourse and written discourse.

4- More challenging as well as more serious topics should be included in the writing classes as well as topics related to students 'disciplines.

5- There should be less reliance on the dictionary with more exposure to vocabulary in the four skills,

6- A process approach to writing is recommended for both writing expressively and writing academic subject specific essays.

This approach pays attention to the development of any type of writing expressive or academic (see Raimes 1987) and Kroll (1991)

7- Cross generic writing is recommended for writing to learn and learning to write as shown above.

8- In an EFL situation where writing is concerned contrastive rhetorical studies may help where conventions of organisation and cohesive structure of text patterns differ from one language to another.

[illegible]

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Narration / Description

I am an old lady, quite old lady... Do not ask about my age as it is not nice or else, I no longer know what that young generation considers nice. I live alone at my villa in the country. For so many years I have not been in the city, until I have visited my only daughter and grandchild. I am really shocked. How have girls turned out to be the extreme opposite to what they used to be in the past? to my generation for example My grandchild is quite different whether in manners, behaviours , and even appearance.

In the morning I have had my first look at my dear grandchild. From top to toe you can hardly distinguish between her and a boy. She has her hair shortly cut. She is always in a tight blue jeans and a loose cotton T. shirt even her socks are manlike ones and she always wears a Coochi shoe. Her hands with such a huge painted watch and short unpainted nails are similar to a man's hands. I could not believe my eyes when I saw her.

Then I remembered myself. I used to be dressed up even at home. I had a long heavy shiny and sparkling hair when I was in her age. I used to pay full attention to every single part of mine and care about its beauty. I almost had nothing to do but that, to polish my nails and paint them or to comb my long hair. Every thing had had its time. It was a life of humans not machines.

At noon my grandchild is at home to have a quick bath before going to the club. She prefers practising her hobby in that time. Then, as quick and as rush as the storm she gets her lunch. She eats usually a strange mixture of so many things called pizza. Even the taste of food is lost nowadays. She eats standing and going around the room as my old cooker when he stole the food trying not to show as. When I asked innocently about that hobby they said, 'Judo'. Do you believe !! A young lady in a training suit hurrying for judo exercises. God!! Furthermore, my romantic.

Grandchild spends her spare time watching action movies... movies of blood and battle. Perhaps she means to kill the remains of a romantic lady inside herself. She listens to awful noise similar to mads and claims it to be music ... Jazz music ... Then the posters of the famous beaters or players of that noise are hung on the walls of her match-box room where she spends almost all her time.

I used to practise my hobby at noon as well. I used to play piano and let the soft sweet melodies hug and dance in the house to fill it with love and peace. As for my spare time, I used to generously pay it reading sentimental novels. TV sets had no existance at that time, So I had the joy of imagination. I think my spirit was fed with beauty. The was reflected in my room. My room was beautifully furnitured, filled with landscape pictures drawn by my hands. The harmony of its colours could make any commer feel comfort and familiarity.

About 9 o'clock I went to the dinning room expecting all the family to be there but I found no one. I was told the father gets his dinner at work as he he usually gets home very late. The girl was still out. Up till now ? I aaked. The answer was another shot of surprise. They were informed on the phone that she was going to dine with her fiancée. I went to bed. Late at night I was awoke by loud voices. I went to the reception from weher the storm of quarreling came. My polite grandchild was arguing with her father using her hands in a rude way. She was like a soldier in a battle.

I went to bed again intending that night to be the last one.

I remembered dinner at dad's home which had its special ritual.

All the family had to be dressed up and gathered at 9 pm. After dad finished we were allowed to have a small talk together, during which I used to play the piano, while the stove giving warmth to the home. I had never dared asking even to call my fiancée and I used to shrank when dad looking in my face with unhappy eyes. It was not just a matter of fear of his punishment but he was too great and respectable in our eyes to be disobeyed.

*   In the very early morning, I was dressed ready for getting home. I cannot bear such a dry fragmentary life any longer.   I tried to politely advise my grandchild but as I expected she turned a deaf ear to me.   So I got into the car to get home. The moment the car gets rid of the city I was relieved and I thought .... perhaps my poor grandchild and her generation cannot totally be accused.   Nobody is bad by nature.   The concrete life they lead murdered their emotions.   They are not as lucky as we were. They breathe polluted air. They are injected by polluted ideas.   Their quick life symbolised in their pizza and hamburger and even their music prevents them having a sense of beauty or feeling the grandeur of the past. They say that she learns sciences called physics and chemistry.   I missed such an experience. They say these sciences make the brain really active and brilliant. But still she misses being taught the most vital thing of all .... to be a girl to have a feminine identity ... to be herself.

Comparison/Contrast

A Contrast between the French Revolution and the Glorious

Revolution

Revolutions are movements that people make when they become dissatisfied with their conditions, in order to express their will to change them. Revelations reflect the conditions of the people who make them, because they are the outcome of the conditions. In this essay I am going to contrast between the French Revolution and the Glorious Revolution, as well as the conditions which led to their occurrences.

The Glorious revolution in England was a bloodless revolution, in which no radical killings occurred. Consequently, the society remained rather stable and anarchy did not spread. On the contrary the French Revolution was a bloody revolution, in which radical killings occurred all over France. Consequently anarchy spread through out France. These two revolutions are very different, because the political, economic and social backgrounds of each one of them are different.

On the social level the English society was very special, because of the Reformation of the English church which deprived the clergy from both power and wealth. The English middle class merchants enjoyed wealth and had political representation in the parliament. By contrast, there was no reformation in France, so the clergy maintained both power and wealth. The French middle class people had money, but they were deprived of any political representation.

On the economic level, the English monarchy supported trade and industry. The middle class merchants gained much wealth and the economic state of England flourished. On the contrary, the French monarchy did not encourage neither trade nor industry. The nobility contempted the middle class merchants and the economy of France declined, people suffered the lack of food and the large taxes collected by the king.

On the political level, the English monarchy was <u>constitutional</u> that is the parliament had great influence on the political life. The English parliament was composed of the nobility and the middle class merchants who contributed to the political life of England. <u>By contrast</u> the French monarchy was <u>absolute</u>, that is the parliament did not have any influence on the political life. Moreover the parliament was composed only of the clergy and the nobility. The middle class did not have any political representation and they did not have any influence on the political life.

Although all the previous conditions affected the two revolutions, the direct causes for them were different. While in England the direct cause of the revolution was political, in France the direct cause was both social and economic. In England the king wanted to have an absolute power, so the parliament organised <u>an ordered movement</u> to overthrow him and maintain the constitutional monarchy. Yet in France people starved as there was not enough food because of the bad harvest, and in the same time, the king tried to collect more taxes out of them. When they could not pay they revolted <u>in an disordered way</u>.

Both of the revolutions expressed the peoples dissatisfaction. But of course the English revolution <u>was better</u> because it was organised and <u>not many people were killed</u> while the French revolution <u>was not organised</u> and <u>thousands of people were killed.</u>

APPENDIX 3

<u>Expository/Informative</u>

<u>A Theory in Comprehension of a Written Passage</u>

<u>Comprehension</u> is a very complex process. <u>It</u> involves receiving, <u>understanding</u> and using the information presented in the written passage. <u>It</u> requires certain background knowledge and certain attitudes of the reader in order to <u>understand</u> a written passage.

Before reading, <u>the reader</u> must identify the <u>purpose of reading</u>. This will help the reader to behave in the right way towards the passage that he reads. This will make the <u>process of comprehension</u> easier.

The <u>process of comprehension</u> has three phases. The first phase is receiving the information presented in the written passage. It involves the use of the eye to transfer the written symbols, the pictures and the diagrams to the brain of the reader. Knowing the written symbols make it easier for the eye to transfer them to the brain.

the second phase is understanding. It involves the use of the background knowledge of the language to transfer the written symbols into intelligible information. It also involves making sense of what is read by putting the information in order, identifying the relevant information that is needed and understanding the implications of the written passage. It also involves connecting the written information to the pictures or diagrams presented with them.

The third phase of the process of comprehension is using the information that is gained through reading. In this phase we connect the information gained to the purpose. We use this information in many ways, for example, we use them to form a background knowledge of a certain subject. Using information is very important, because if the information is not used it becomes of no value.

The reader must have certain background knowledge of the language that he reads about. The reader must know the written symbols of the language, how they are used to form words, what are the meaning of the words, how the words are used to form sentences, what type of sentences is used, how they are combined to form a passage and how the passage is orgnaised.

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The   attitude of the reader is very important. He must be interested in the subject that he reads about, that is he must have a   purpose for reading. The purpose determines the way of reading, for   example, skimming, scanning, intensive or extensive reading. Using the right way of reading is very important because it makes the process of comprehension easier.

The process of comprehension is very important in our lives. It helps us to learn and to gain experience of life. It also helps us to communicate more easily with the others. It's one of the most common processes that we   apply in every day's life because it helps us to receive and comprehend the messages of others.

Description of Place

       We are looking at a living room with a very simple furniture. In the middle of the room there are a small sofa and a comfortable armchair next to it. A coffee table is found opposite to the sofa with a beautiful antique vase on it. A side table is located beside the sofa to put the lamp on. The bright colours of the cushions that are lying on the sofa are chosen with care. A classical picture is hung on the wall behind the armchair near the window. A tiny doll is found on the window-seat which looks like one of the queen's guards. We can also see a book case under the stairs with a few ornaments above it. Another larger book case is found infront of the stairs. There are two pictures (prints) against the wall which are very similar to each other, and making a nice contrast in the living room.