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Post Graduate Studies

Department of English

**Assessing the Communicative Competence of Writing of  
Fourth Year Students at the Department of English at  
Benghazi University**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for a Degree of Master of Arts in English  
Language and Linguistics

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الدراسات العليا  
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# **DEDICATION**

To my tender **parents**

with my sincere love and regards

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is an attempt to assess the communicative competence of writing of fourth year students at the Department of English, Faculty of Arts at Benghazi University. The main purpose of this study is assessing the students' communicative competence of writing, that means assessing their ability to use the language (to write) in a way that reflects real language use in real life situations. And there is no doubt that there is a need to promote a communicative approach in language teaching and assessment of the students' language. And this study is supposed to respond to that need by providing a communicative approach in the written language. The data for this study included a pilot study, a task to assess the communicative competence of writing of fourth year students at the department of English and a questionnaire which the students responded to its items. Some books and the internet were essential sources to obtain information too. The results and recommendations of this study may offer the students some guidance which will help them improve their level of communicative performance in the writing skill. In addition, other recommendations are for teachers.

This study contains four chapters. The first chapter is introductory, the second chapter reflects the literature review of the study, the third chapter presents the methodology (data collection, analysis and interpretations) and finally the fourth chapter provides some conclusions and recommendations.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 Introduction

Language is a social skill, which exists in order to satisfy individual and group need. Some linguists view language as a social phenomenon. That is, language is a form of human social behavior, functioning within a context of situation. And according to Aitchison (1985):

*Language plays a central role on our lives .When we acquire language, we discover our identity as individuals and as social beings .It serves as a means of communication .It enables us to think of ourselves and cooperate with other people in our community .The use of language is an integral part of being human.*

(cited in Imssalem & Abunowara, 2001:14)

Language exists in two forms, the spoken and written. Two linguistic activities are associated with both speech and writing: an encoding and a decoding process. Speaking and writing themselves are the encoding processes whereby we communicate our ideas, thoughts, or feelings. And listening and reading are the decoding processes by which we understand a spoken or a written message .We may therefore say that language includes four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is perhaps in this order that we originally learned our native language, and it is in that order that foreign languages are now taught (Harris, 1969: 9).

All language users perform the acts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They of course rely on their underlying competence in order to accomplish these performances. When you propose to assess someone's ability in one or a combination of the four skills, you assess that person's competence, but you observe the person's performance (Brown, 2004: 117).

Not many centuries ago, writing was a skill that was the exclusive domain of scribes and scholars in educational or religious institutions. Almost every aspect of everyday life for common people was carried out orally. Today the ability to write has become a major skill in our global educated community. Writing skill is a necessary condition for achieving employment in many walks of life and is simply taken for granted in literate cultures. Weigle (2002: 1) states that:

*The ability to write effectively is becoming increasingly important in our global community, and instruction in writing is thus assuming an increasing role in both second-and foreign- language education.*

Wherever the acquisition of a specific skill is seen as important, it becomes equally important to assess that skill, and writing is no exception. Thus, as the role of writing in second-language education increases, there is a demand for valid and reliable ways to assess writing ability. A wide variety of writing tests is needed to test the many kinds of writing tasks that we engage in (Madsen, 1983: 101).

According to Harris (1969: 69), the writing process is a highly sophisticated skill combining a number of diverse elements, only some of which are strictly linguistic. Thus, the assessment of writing is a difficult task. As you consider assessing students' writing ability, you are required to be clear about your objective.

Researchers need to give additional attention to the development of a more communicative approach to language teaching/learning and to the evaluation of students' writing efforts. Teachers are argued to help students view and use language as a tool, which will enable them to accomplish a specific communicative purpose (function) in a particular setting (situation) about a particular subject (topic). The focus is on what the students can do with their language content and how well they can do it (proficiency).

This study will respond to the need for a communicative approach in language teaching and in assessing the students' writing competence. Instead of using writing ability as a tool for testing, as most foreign-language teachers do, our major concern is in assessing the communicative competence of writing.

Assessing the communicative competence of writing, refers to the assessment of the way students use their writing in real life situations (can they use it appropriately in a way that reflects real language use?).

This study is applied on fourth year students at the department of English at Benghazi University. Note Taking and Summarizing, which are instances of a growing number of approaches to interactive writing, are involved in this study to provide an evidence that students lack communicativeness during their daily use of their writing competence (during listening to lectures at the university).

## **1.1 A History of the Teaching of Writing in Foreign Languages**

Writing once held a prominent place in education. The Greeks considered its mastery a central concern of their curriculum. They made little distinction between learning to write in one's native language or in another. Both processes involved imitating the prose of masters until one's own sense of style was developed. After the middle Ages, writing in foreign languages was increasingly limited to translation, however it remained a major goal of foreign language instruction up until the audiolingual revolution of this century ( Dvorak, 1986).

Audiolingualism is associated with oral language practice, the demise of the grammar-translation method, and the repudiation of the favored status which written language skills had previously enjoyed. Most proponents of audiolingualism considered writing as essentially sound transferred to a different modality, talk on paper (Prochoroff, 1963: 63). Exposure to written language was to be delayed until students had developed a stronger oral base; once writing instruction had begun, students were to use only the vocabulary and patterns previously made familiar from oral drilling. Learning a second language meant overcoming a habit formed when acquiring the first language and replacing it, or at least overcoming its influence, when learning the second language. Learning was not viewed as a mental process but as a mechanical one. The set of habits that made up the first language was seen as interfering with the acquisition of the new set. The mechanism of acquiring a new set of habits was the habit formation paradigm of response, conditioned to a particular stimulus, and then generalized to other similar stimuli. Thus, by arguing students to "write only what you can say," teachers hoped to help them avoid the pitfalls interference from their native

language and the subsequent building of bad habits in the target language. The quality of language was determined by the relative presence or absence of error.

The audiolingual approach has gradually given way to a more communicative view of language and language learning, and to the notion that the system which the learner develops is neither entirely on his or her first language, nor on the target language. In communicative interchanges, teachers are to react to the content of the students' language instead of focusing on its accuracy. Thus, in teaching a modern language, the most general purpose is to enable students to communicate with native speakers of the language, and to understand the culture better. In the past few years, foreign language education has proposed many new theories which have called for significant changes in the way languages are taught (Rivers, 1981; Krashen, 1982; Omaggio, 1986). Today it is fashionable to use a communicative approach rather than a linguistic approach. Instead of teaching students vocabulary words or grammatical structures in isolation, teachers are argued to teach the language in a communicative context.

Today's foreign language teachers are bombarded with several new developments and ideas. Audiolingualism had been a reassuring and structured time for teachers; they had been told that they only needed to follow to the letter prescribed steps of teaching in order for students to be able to communicate with native speakers. Now, many new foreign language acquisition theories are emerging; audiolingualism is no longer the answer.

Teachers are left in the classroom with the uncomfortable knowledge that no one true solution to language acquisition exists, and that numerous variables (for example, characteristics of the social setting, personal characteristics of the learner

such as cognitive and learning style, etc.) account for some of the differences in the foreign language learning. In writing instruction alone, the key word of this decade is communicativeness. Teachers are argued to promote communication in the written language.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It has been assumed that there is a need for a more communicative approach to the assessment of students' writing competence and in second-language teaching. It has also been assumed that fourth year students at the department of English at Benghazi University lack communicativeness in their writing competence and they are considered to be communicatively incompetent. Thus, the problem to be discussed in this research deals with the lack of communicativeness in the students' writing competence (they do not use their writing knowledge appropriately in real life situations). To support the hypothesis of the study, a pilot study was conducted. The subjects were asked to listen to an authentic passage, which was about **The Daily Life of Astronauts in Space**. They were instructed to take notes of what they have heard, as if they were in a real lecture, then they were instructed to use their notes to come up with a coherent summary of the passage.

According to the students' samples of the piloting study, the subjects have used their writing competence inappropriately. The subjects' notes were incoherent, and so were their summaries(the utterances were not logically linked).

It is also obvious that the content of their notes and summaries was not in accordance with task requirements ( irrelevant).The subjects have also performed inaccurate structures and spelling.

### **1.3 Aims of the Study**

The main concern of this study is to assess the communicative competence of writing of fourth year students at the department of English at Benghazi University. This study actually managed to assess the students' writing competence in a way that reflects the way that knowledge is used in real communication.

Another concern of this study is that it aims at having the students develop their communicative competence and use their writing ability communicatively.

### **1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study is restricted to the assessment of the communicative competence of writing. It focuses on analyzing some samples of the subjects, in terms of the appropriateness of their language use in real life situations. The subjects of this study are fourth year students at the department of English at Benghazi University in Libya.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study will respond to the demand or the need for a more communicative approach that second-language teachers should adopt in their methodology of teaching and assessment of the students' language competence and performance.

If students are encouraged to study for more communicative tasks, this can only have a positive effect on their language learning and language use. This study will

help students to overcome their fear of the written form and increase their self-confidence and willingness to write.

## **1.6 Hypothesis and Research Questions**

### **1.6.1 Hypothesis**

It is anticipated that there is a demand to promote a communicative approach in written language. Thus, this study is supposed to respond to that need. It is hypothesized that fourth year students lack communicativeness in their writing competence (the way they use their knowledge does not reflect real language use in real life situations) and they are considered to be communicatively incompetent.

### **1.6.2 Research Questions**

This study will examine the hypothesis of it, by responding to the following questions:

**Research question one:** Do fourth year students lack communicativeness in their writing competence? Are they considered to be communicatively incompetent?

**Research question two:** Do fourth year students have a positive attitude toward communicative writing?

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

The following key terms are used frequently in this study and therefore need to be defined at the outset.

**Communicative Competence:** Parks (1985), defines communicative competence as "the degree to which individuals perceive they have satisfied their goals in a given social situation without jeopardizing their ability or opportunity to pursue their other subjectively more important goals" (p. 175).

Spitzberg (1988) simply defines communicative competence as "the ability to interact well with others" (p.68). He explains, "the term 'well' refers to accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness" (p. 68).

Cook (2003), defines **Communicative Competence** as: the knowledge which is necessary to use a language effectively, and the ability to put that knowledge into action.

**Competence:** is the internalization of rules by learners which are then organized into a system. This constitutes learners' "competence". The actual use of this system to comprehend and produce utterances is referred to as "performance". Researchers and linguists disagree about the exact nature of "competence". Some (e.g. Chomsky) view competence as entirely linguistic, while others (e.g. Hymes) view competence as communicative (i.e. "communicative competence" consists of both knowledge of linguistic rules and knowledge of how these rules are used to communicate meanings) (Ellis, 1986).

**Attitudes:** are sets of beliefs students have, in the case of classroom learning, about such factors as the target language culture, their own culture, their teacher's culture and the learning tasks they are given. These beliefs influence language learning in a number of ways (ibid).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Testing Communicative Competence**

Testing language has traditionally taken the form of testing knowledge about language, usually the testing of knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. However, there is much more to being able to use language than knowledge about it.

McNamara (2000) states that, from the early 1970s a new theory of language and language use began to exert a significant influence on language teaching and potentially on language testing. This was Hymes's theory of communicative competence, which greatly expanded the scope of what was covered by an understanding of language and the ability to use language in context, particularly in terms of the social demands of performance. Hymes saw that knowing a language was more than knowing its rules of grammar.

There were culturally specific rules of use which related the language used to features of the communicative context. For example, ways of speaking or writing appropriate communication to close friends may not be the same as those used in communicating with strangers, or in professional contexts.

Although the relevance of Hymes's theory to language testing was recognized more or less immediately on its appearance, it took a decade for its actual impact on practice to be felt, in the development of communicative language tests.

Communicative language tests ultimately came to have two features:

1. They were performance tests, requiring assessment to be carried out when the learner or candidate was engaged in an extended act of communication, either receptive or productive, or both.
2. They paid attention to the social roles candidates were likely to assume in real world settings, and offered a means of specifying the demands of such roles in details.

By the mid-1980s, the language testing field had begun to focus on designing communicative language-testing tasks. And a quest for authenticity was launched, as test designers centered on communicative performance. One interpretation of (communicative) was that tests should be authentic. Communicative competence is measured by determining if, and to what degree, the goals of interaction are achieved. In the field of communicative language testing, Weir (1990:11) states that:

*To measure language proficiency...account must now be taken of: where, when, how ,with whom, and why language is to be used, and on what topics, and with what effect.*

According to Kitao (1996), the basic idea of communicative competence remains the ability to use language appropriately, both receptively and productively, in real situations. Communicative language tests are intended to be a measure of how the students are able to use language in real life situations. Communicative language tests are those which make an effort to test language in a way that reflects the way that language is used in real communication.

In testing productive skills, emphasis is placed on appropriateness rather than on ability to form grammatically correct sentences. In testing receptive skills, emphasis is placed on understanding the communicative intent of the speaker or writer rather than on picking out specific details. And the two are often combined in communicative testing, so that students must both comprehend and respond in real time. In real life, the different skills are not often used in isolation. Students in a class may listen to a lecture, but they later need to use information from the lecture in a paper (written notes).

Canary and Cody (2000) provide six criteria for assessing competence which include, but are not limited to, perceived appropriateness and effectiveness. The criteria includes adaptability, conversational involvement, conversational management, empathy, effectiveness, and appropriateness. They are explained in more detail below:

### **Six Criteria for Assessing Communication Competence**

#### **1. Adaptability (flexibility)**

- a. The ability to change behaviours and goals to meet the needs of interaction
- b. Comprised of six factors
  1. Social experience - participation in various social interactions
  2. Social composure - refers to keeping calm through accurate perception
  3. Social confirmation - refers to acknowledgment of partner's goals
  4. Appropriate disclosure - being sensitive to amount and type of info
  5. Articulation - ability to express ideas through language
  6. Wit - ability to use humour in adapting to social situations; ease tensions

## **2. Conversational Involvement**

- a. Behavioural and cognitive activity
- b. Cognitive involvement demonstrated through interaction behaviours
- c. Assessed according to three factors
  - 1. Responsiveness - knowing what to say, know roles, interact
  - 2. Perceptiveness - be aware of how others perceive you
  - 3. Attentiveness - listen, do not be pre-occupied

## **3. Conversational Management**

- a. How communicators regulate their interactions
- b. Adaptation and control of social situations
- c. Who controls the interaction ebb and flow and how smoothly the interaction proceeds
- d. How topics proceed and change

## **4. Empathy**

- a. The ability to demonstrate understanding and share emotional reactions to the situation
- b. Need not lead to “helping” the other person
- c. Cognitive understanding
- d. Parallel emotions

## **5. Effectiveness**

- a. Achieving the objectives of the conversation
- b. Achieving personal goals
- c. A fundamental criteria for determining competence

## **6. Appropriateness**

- a. Upholding the expectations for a given situation
- b. A fundamental criteria for determining competence

## 2.2 Previous Studies of Communicative Competence

The term **communicative competence** was coined by Dell Hymes in 1966, reacting against the perceived inadequacy of Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between *competence* and *performance*. To address Chomsky's abstract notion of competence, Hymes undertook ethnographic exploration of communicative competence that included "communicative form and function in integral relation to each other" (Leung, 2005). The approach pioneered by Hymes is now known as the ethnography of communication.

The definition of "communicative competence" is what a speaker needs to know in order to communicate in a speech community (Hymes, 1972). According to Hymes (1972), competence should be viewed as "the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses" (p. 13).

Hymes (1972) proposed four sectors of communicative competence. First, "whether or not something is formally *possible*" refers to the notion of grammatical competence. It is concerned with whether an utterance is grammatically correct. Second, "whether something is *feasible*" deals with its acceptability, in addition to being grammatically possible. For example, some grammatical sentences cannot be part of competence because of the restricted ability of human information processing. Third, "whether something is *appropriate*" means that a sentence should be appropriate to the context in which it is used. Finally, "whether something is in fact *done*" implies that a sentence may be grammatically correct, feasible, and appropriate in context, but have no probability of actually occurring (Hymes, 1972: 14).

Coopers' (1968) view of communicative competence is very like Hymes' although he is concerned only with sociolinguistic and grammatical parameters. He reinforces Hymes' point that effective communication requires more than linguistic competence: "To communicate effectively, a speaker must know not only how to produce any and all grammatical utterances of a language, but also how to use them appropriately. The speaker must know what to say, with whom, and when, and where" (cited in Munby, 1978: 16-17).

Candlin (1986: 40) has described communicative competence as:

*The ability to create meanings by exploring the potential inherent in any language for continual modification in response to change, negotiating the value of convention rather than conforming to established principle. In sum, ... a coming together of organized knowledge structures with a set of procedures for adapting this knowledge to solve new problems of communication that do not have ready-made and tailored solutions.*

The model was originally suggested by Hymes (1972). He pointed out that there are rules of use as there are rules of grammar. *There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless* (cited in Imssalem, 2001: 78).

And then the model of communicative competence, was later developed by Roger Shuy and his colleagues at the Center for Applied Linguistics during extensive studies of children's functional language (Griffin & Shuy, 1978). This model assumed that competence involved knowing how to use language to get things done, to accomplish one's intentions and purposes.

Canale and Swain (1980) have their own contribution in this field. In the early 1980s, they have specified various aspects of knowledge or competence:

1. Grammatical competence, which covered the kind of knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology (words and rules).

2. Sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of rules of language use in terms of what is appropriate to different types of interlocutors, in different settings, and on different topics (appropriateness).

3. Strategic competence, or the ability to compensate in performance for incomplete or imperfect linguistic resources in a second language. In other words, it is the appropriate use of communication strategies.

4. Discourse competence, which was added by Canale, or the ability to deal with extended use of language in context (cohesion and coherence).

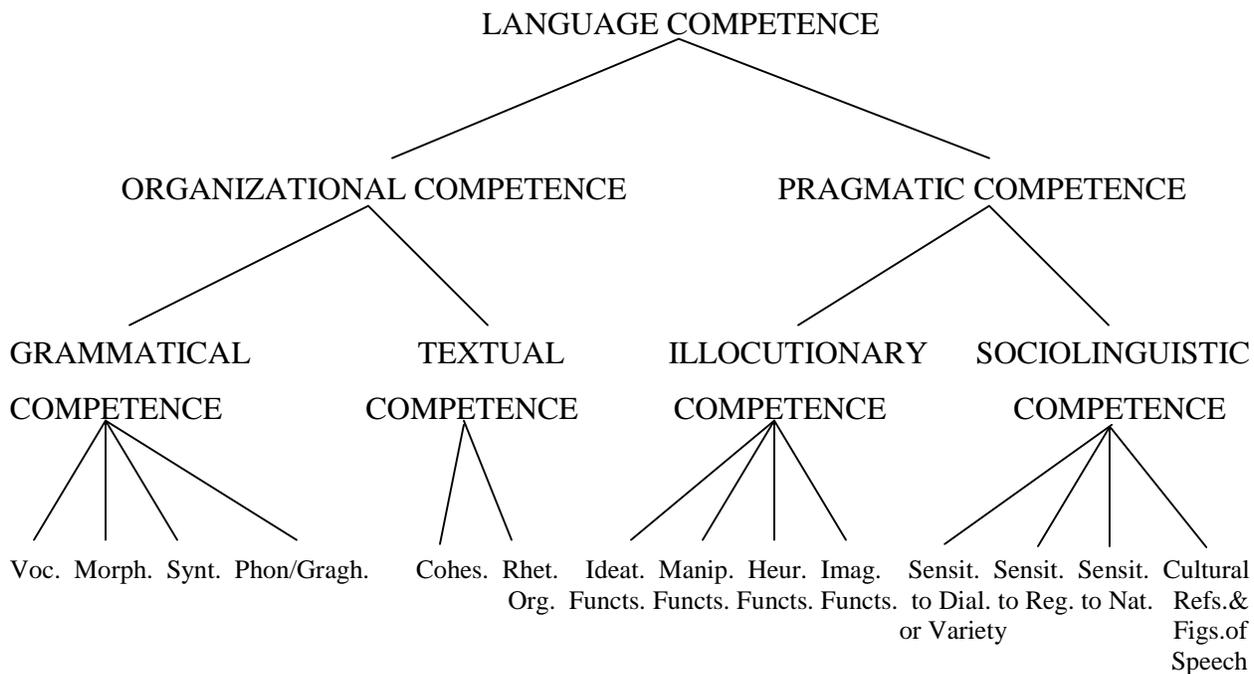
McCroskey (1982) attempts to clarify the importance of competence when he writes, “The domain of communicative competence includes learning what are the available means (available strategies), how they have been employed in various situations in the past, and being able to determine which ones have the highest probability of success in a given situation” (p.5).

Rubin (1985) explains that communication competence is “an impression formed about the appropriateness of another's communicative behaviour” and that “one goal of the communication scholar is to understand how impressions about

communication competence are formed, and to determine how knowledge, skill and motivation lead to perceptions of competence within various contexts” (p.173).

Following Canale and Swain’s (1980) model of communicative competence, Bachman (1990) proposed a model of language competence (Communicative Language Ability Concept) consisting of organizational and pragmatic competence, respectively subdivided into grammatical and textual components, and into illocutionary and sociolinguistic components. Bachman and Palmer (1996: 70) also emphasized the importance of **strategic competence** in the process of communication. Strategic Competence is associated with the interlocutors’ ability in using communication strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

**Figure 1: Bachman’s Components of Language Competence**



## **2.3 Studies of Students' Attitudes Toward Writing**

The first major studies on student attitude were pioneered by Eubert (1967). In his Wisconsin study he pointed out the importance of student attitude in ascertaining the degree of student success in the writing process (cited in Baudrand, 1992: 40).

Following Euberts' footsteps, Dally and Miller (1975) wrote extensively on the role that attitude plays in the writing performance of college students. All of their research has shown a high correlation between attitude toward symbols and performance in writing.

In recent years, Wolcott and Buhr (1987) explored students' attitude toward writing as a reflection of their writing performance. They found that the skills of students with positive attitudes toward writing improved significantly more than did those of students with neutral or negative attitudes.

Although all the previous studies show a high correlation between positive attitude and writing performance, Zamel (1987) is adamant in saying the type of instruction students receive in their writing classes is the determinant factor in fostering positive or negative attitudes.

The following studies examine the effects of type of instruction and methodologies on student attitude and their performance:

Kantor (1984) investigated teacher-student interaction in a composition classroom, and the manner in which the teacher responded to the students' intuition about writing.

Similarly, Dunn, Florio-Ruand, and Clark (1985) studied the effect of the teacher motivating, encouraging and coaching in an effort to open interaction among the classroom participants on the writing and the writing attitudes of high school students.

In another ethnographic study, Hildenbrand (1985) explored in depth an ESL community college students' attitude, perceptions and assumptions about writing.

In a recent study, Zamel (1990) examined the experiences of three ESL student writers in two different classrooms over two semesters. She studied the relationship between writing development, attitude and writing instruction.

From the previous studies it can be concluded, that there is a strong relationship between type of instruction, attitude and writing development.

## **2.4 The Influence of Communicative Competence**

Through the influence of communicative language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the goal of language education, central to good classroom practice (Savignon, 1997). This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority. The understanding of communicative competence has been influenced by

the field of pragmatics and the philosophy of language concerning speech acts.

Cook (2003), in his description of the influence of communicative competence, illustrates the following:

-Directly or indirectly, the notion of communicative competence has been very widely drawn upon in all areas of applied linguistics. In first-language education, the area which Hymes was addressing, it was invoked to justify a shift away from developing only mechanical language skills towards a more rounded capacity to communicate, a trend which has now been reversed. In information design, for example, the drafting of official documents and forms, it supported the view that stating facts is not enough, they also need to be easily accessible. In speech therapy it justified an increased emphasis on social knowledge and skills in addition to deficiencies in grammar and pronunciation. In translation it strengthened the case for seeking an equivalent effect rather than only formal and literal equivalence.

-The biggest single influence however, as is so often the case of applied linguistics, has been upon the teaching of English as a foreign language. Inspired by Hymes, the **communicative approach**, aimed to develop learners' capacity to use the language effectively. Given the narrowness of the methods which preceded it, with their excessive emphasis upon grammatical accuracy, this approach should have been beneficial, allowing teachers and learners to achieve a more balanced view of what successful communication involves.

-One of the strengths of the concept of communicative competence is that it does not assume that knowledge necessarily leads to conformity. Knowing what is appropriate to a particular situation, relationship, genre, or culture, does not mean

you necessarily do it. There are many instances where people depart from the norm.

-The fate of the concept of communicative competence is an object lesson for applied linguistics. It shows how, when transferred to a practical domain, theories and descriptions of language use, however powerful, quickly become simplified and fall victim to vested interests. Ideas which are to survive this fate need to take account of language as a lived experience rather than only as an object of academic study.

-Communicative competence remains, however, an extremely powerful model for applied linguistics, not only in language teaching but in every area of enquiry. It moves beyond the rarefied atmospheres of theoretical linguistics and traditional language teaching.

-It has also contributed to a growing interest in the analysis of language use, not only as a source of examples illustrating an underlying system but also as social action with important effects both at the micro level of personal experience and at the macro level of social change.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 Data Collection and Analysis**

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the methodology involved the following:

#### **3.1 Participants**

The subjects participating in this study included fourth year students (Translation\English Section) at the department of English at Benghazi University. Fifty students were selected randomly by the researcher, during the academic year 2009/2010.

#### **3.2 Instruments**

The data used in this study was gathered from different sources: a note taking/summarizing task and an attitude/information questionnaire. There is also the sources obtained from the library and the internet.

The first source of data was the note taking and summarizing task. It was a communicative task based on authenticity. The researcher managed to create an authentic or a real atmosphere for the subjects of the study and provided a communicative task which is supposed to reflect their real language use in real life situations.

The aim of the communicative task was to assess the subjects' communicative competence of writing, so the subjects were asked to listen to an authentic passage, which was about **The Daily Life of Astronauts in Space**. They were instructed to take notes of what they have heard, as if they were in a real lecture, then they were instructed to use their written notes to come up with a coherent summary of the passage. For instance; when students listen to their teacher during a lecture, they should use their writing ability in that real life situation and take notes then attempt to come up with a summary of the lecture to help them study so easily. (The passage is included in Appendix A, the note taking/summarizing task is included in Appendix B, and the students' performance on the task is included in Appendix D).

The second source of data was a questionnaire of the students' attitude/information about communicative writing. The subjects were asked to respond to this instrument and to comment on its items.

The questionnaire developed by the researcher was based on different questions which might reflect the subjects' experience with communicative writing. ( see Appendix C for a copy of the questionnaire ). On May, 2010 the researcher administered the questionnaires to the students. A Lickert scale of 12 questions was used to determine attitudes. After each question, space was provided for written comments.

Both of the communicative task and the questionnaire were provided to the subjects at the end of their academic year on the same day. First they were asked to accomplish the task and then to respond to the questionnaire.

### **3.3 Procedures**

In this part of study the data analysis involved several procedures to provide an evidence of the research hypothesis, as well as, answering the research questions.

This part of study is divided into two sections: the analysis and interpretations of the subject's performance on the communicative task and the analysis of the attitude/information questionnaire.

Whenever applicable, the data analysis procedures used in these two sections are structured around the two research questions proposed in chapter 1.

#### **3.3.1 Analysis and Interpretations of the Subjects' Performance on the Communicative Task**

**Research question one:** Do fourth year students lack communicativeness in their writing competence? Are they considered to be communicatively incompetent?

In order to assess the communicative competence of writing of the fourth year students, the researcher provided in this section an analysis of the subjects' performance on the communicative task.

In this section the researcher developed a scale which addresses five aspects of writing to assess the communicative competence of the subjects' writing skill. The five aspects of writing are: relevance and appropriateness, organization and

cohesion, vocabulary, grammar and spelling.

The first aspect reflects pragmatic competence, that is , functional and sociolinguistic competence, while the other aspects refer to organizational competence, i.e. to two of its components, grammatical and textual competence. (see Bachman's concept of communicative language ability in chapter 2).

### **3.3.1.1 Relevance and Appropriateness**

Relevance and appropriateness is a complex criterion which refers to the extent to which form and content of a produced text are in accordance with task requirements as well as to the extent to which content and form of a text and language expression are socially appropriate and natural/authentic with respect to the situational and contextual variables such as: theme, social roles of communication partners, purpose and place of communication etc.

The following are some samples of the subjects' performance on the task:

#### **Note taking:**

- 1. Sleeping is very diffrens in way  
wiching is difficult, exersis is very important for legs.*
- 2. Living different in the space.*
- 3. Sleeping its very difficult in space as bring it in wall to don't go away.*

**4.** *Living space the austernotes they eat, sleep wash and play, we do they like this but they different.*

**5.** *Living in space  
they broch with wet sponds  
take to thire frind  
taking about sleeping*

**6.** *More kind of spease  
The spease are  
The dreaming sleaping in The spease*

**7.** *I like watch Tv . in the evining only Becaes I free evry night  
I don't like to play Football specially in he Libya.*

**8.** *They don't wash, they only by wait sponch.*

**9.** *Living in space  
on earch we put Food in Glass.*

**10.** *Sleep, put food on earth, Keep water in the glass, you should be carefully.*

**Summarizing:**

**1.** *Eating and sleeping are very difficult excersice is very important For health and help you to became activity.*

**2.** *Living in the space very different every thing different the food and sleeping and also washing is very difficult.*

**3.** *Because the air they are floating.*

**4.** *Living in the space: they eat, sleep, wash enjoy and play we do the same thing but in the space it is very different.*

**5.** *Living in space. Take about living in the earth and how to eat wash and drink carfully, sleeping.*

**6.** *Talk of about leaving in spease, and exceplen more kind The speace, anather Thing can you dreaming in The sleaping leaving in The speace.*

**7.** *I want talk about myself I like to do everything such as watched T.v and play games in the computer. That's it.*

**8.** *Asteront They don't wash, only by a wit sponch that the water don't goes out.*

**9.** *Another important thingto keep in touch with friend by Email.*

**10.** *There are a lot of things of living in space are*

*Put the food on earth*

*Keep water in the glass*

*Exercies is important and doing exercise in 4 minutes.*

According to the previous samples, it is obvious that the subjects' performance on the task was irrelevant ( was not in accordance with task requirements). Moreover; the content and form of their performance was inappropriate, and their usage of language expressions was socially inappropriate too.

So the lack of relevance and appropriateness of the subjects' performance on the communicative task, reflects the lack of communicativeness in their writing ability.

### **3.3.1.2 Organization and Cohesion**

Organization and cohesion stands for the extent to which the utterances are logically linked to form a coherent text as well as for the use of cohesive devices. A communicatively competent student should use the writing ability in a coherent and reasoned way. The subjects' performance should reflect not only grammatical accuracy, but perhaps even more importantly, should include clear semantic and syntactic relationships between sentences. Their written samples should have meaning and make sense.

Students should also avoid performing ambiguous utterances. Clarity of expressions entails using intelligible, unambiguous language that the interlocutor will understand.

In Grice's terms, coherence falls in the category of manner. A coherent, understandable speaker will a) avoid obscurity of expression and will also b) avoid ambiguity ( Grice, 1975: 46).

The following are some samples of the subjects' notes and summaries:

**Note taking:**

**1.** *eat, sleep, wiches, water gravity*

*sleeping is very diffrent in way.*

**2.** *Sleep, put food on earth, keep water in the glass, you should be carefully. washing is diffecult. Exerices is important, 4 minutes for the excrices, listening music is also important.*

**3.** *in space are different in earth by food  
in earth the food put in disese and the water in glass.*

**4.** *walking on a space  
Feeling in space station when you waching the earth.*

**5.** *using legs  
floating in the air  
creavity holds food down  
washing is difficult.*

**6.** *relax: music, sports  
The legs in the earth and space.*

**7.** *on erthe put food in the frieze  
Sleeping is very diffrend*

*Waching is difficult.*

**8.** *Exercise is important to astronauts*

*They eat, drink the same as humans*

*Becareful due to gravity on space.*

**9.** *Living different in the speace*

*Food*

*Sleeping very different in speace.*

**10.** *living in space*

*They broch with wet spords*

*take to thire frind*

**Summaries:**

**1.** *Eating and sleeping are very difficult*

*excercise is very important for health*

*and help you to become activity.*

**2.** *put food on earth*

*Keep water in the glass*

*Washing is difficult*

*Exercies is important and doing exercies in 4 minutes.*

**3.** *Different in the food*

*Different in the way of sleeping*

*Different in doing exerceing.*

**4.** *life in space is deficult, because you find some when you eat and drink. You keep the food and water in different cans.*

**5.** *Life in space is unusual. it has a special aspects for example the astrounts cann't wel and they cann't wash their teeth.*

**6.** *living in space can do excercise relaxing, Graphty whereas Sleeping and places of the legs.*

**7.** *on the erthe put food in a Frieze The sleeping is very differend Waching is difficult because there is no shower.*

**8.** *Astronauts are very similar as humans on earth, but need to be more cautious, due to gravity.*

**9.** *Living in the speace very different every thing different the food and the sleeping and also washing is very difficult in the speace excrise very important.*

**10.** *Living in space. Take about living in the earth and how to eat wach and drink carfully, sleeping.*

The previous samples demonstrate that the organization of the subjects' written notes and summaries was unclear and inappropriate to the task. The subjects' written notes and summaries were also incoherent (the utterances were not logically linked). Their written samples do not make sense and they have produced ambiguous language. In conclusion, it can be said that the subjects' samples reflect little awareness of appropriate and meaningful text organization, as well as very limited use of cohesive devices.

### **3.3.1.3 Vocabulary**

This criterion is used to assess the range of words and expressions a student knows and uses. More precisely, this criterion assesses the lexical variation (to what extent a student uses different words) and the lexical sophistication (to what extent a student uses words that do not appear in vocabulary of other students, i.e. words that are characteristic for advanced levels). This criterion also assesses the degree of appropriateness of vocabulary use in a particular context. Choosing the correct word to use in the correct context is an important part of knowing how to use the language.

The following are some samples of the subjects' performance on the task and the italicized vocabularies reflect the wrong choice:

### **Note taking:**

1. Living in space, sleep, walk and play *opposite*. (differently)
2. sleep float on air or *bag* tie on the wall. (sleeping bag)
3. They like to *fly*. They sleep in the sleeping bag *hang it* to the wall to not *fly*.  
(float, tie it, float)
4. on each we put food *in glass*. (on a plate)
5. they *wash* their teeth carefully. (brush)
6. In the night they can *floating*. (float away)
7. *Defaclity* to wash your body. (It is difficult)
8. In space you enjoy in *flying*. (floating)
9. *Keeps the water in glass*. (Gravity keeps the water in the glass)
10. On space washing and showers so *hard*. (difficult)

### **Summarizing:**

1. Sleeping very difficult they *put* there *beds* in the wall. (tie, sleeping bags)

2. they *clean* their teeth *in a very carefull*. (brush, carefully)
3. They like to *fly* on ear. (float)
4. There is no *water*. (shower)
5. *they are not alwod to make a shower or bath*. (there is no shower or bath)
6. *You can take a rest after the day*. (After a day's work, astronauts relax)
7. when you sleep may you find yourself *flying*. (floating)
8. In space every thing is different *where as* sleeping, washing and walking. (such as)
9. *Keeps the water in glass*. (Gravity keeps the water in the glass)
10. It's amazing to live in space but, it's *hardly* to live in. (difficult)

In the previous samples, the subjects' choice of vocabulary was inadequate and inappropriate to the task. Some of the subjects' written notes and summaries illustrate limited choice of vocabulary. In addition, some of them have written extensive notes and summaries to the extent that their summaries were much longer than the passage itself.

### 3.3.1.4 Grammar

Grammar refers to the degree of accuracy of morpho-syntactic structures and the degree of their complexity. In fact, students who are communicatively competent should not generate grammatical errors, because they use their writing ability in real life situations. In addition, fourth year students are supposed to be familiar with the writing skill and its aspects. One of the aspects of writing is grammar.

This study agrees with Canale and Swain (1980) who argue for the role of grammar in their communicative competence model. They explain that although “focus on grammatical competence in the classroom is not a sufficient condition for the development of communicative competence, it would be inappropriate...to conclude...that the development of grammatical competence is irrelevant to or unnecessary for the development of communicative competence” (p.12). Thus, there should be emphasis on both grammatical accuracy and meaningful communication from the onset of foreign language study. Early meaningful verbal communication may not be possible without some grammatical knowledge. If the goal of language learning is communicative competence, then the language-teaching syllabus must integrate aspects of grammar.

The following samples indicate the subjects' grammatical errors:

#### **Note taking:**

1. *Showering is most difficult.* (the omission of the definite article **the**)

- Showering is the most difficult.

**2.** *water in glass.* (the omission of the indefinite article **a**)

- water in a glass.

**3.** Gravity *in* earth. (the misuse of a preposition)

- Gravity on Earth.

**4.** *On* space almost no gravity. (the misuse of a preposition and the omission of verb to be)

- In space there is almost no gravity.

**5.** they brush *your* teeth. (the wrong choice of a pronoun)

- they brush their teeth.

**6.** they *slept* in a sleeping bag. (wrong verb form)

- they sleep in a sleeping bag.

**7.** In the night they *can floating*. (wrong verb form)

- In the night they float away.

**8.** they often excriece pyclicle *talks* to friend. (subject-verb agreement)

- they often exercise by bicycle and talk to friends.

**9.** The spease *are*. (the misuse of the verb to be **are**)

- The space is.

**10.** *exercise very important.* (the omission of the verb to be **is**)

- exercise is very important.

### **Summarizing:**

**1.** *flying instead of walking most of time.* (the omission of the definite article **the**)

- floating instead of walking most of the time.

**2.** *They do normal thing but in different way.* (the omission of the indefinite article **a**)

- They do normal things but in a different way.

**3.** *life in earth.* (the misuse of a preposition)

- life on Earth.

**4.** *it's similar, but with different ways.* (the misuse of a preposition)

- it's similar, but in different ways.

**5.** *we do the same thing but in the space it is very different.* (the wrong choice of a pronoun)

- they do the same thing as us but in the space it is very different.

**6.** *they can listening to music.* (wrong verb form)

- they can listen to music.

**7.** *Exercies is important and doing exercies in 4 minutes.* (wrong verb form)

- Exercise is important, they do them in 4 minutes.

8. The topic *talk* about living in space. (subject-verb agreement)

- The topic talks about living in space.

9. They *exircases* evry day. (subject-verb agreement)

- They exercise every day.

10. *Living in the space very different.* (the omission of the verb to be **is**)

- Living in the space is very different.

In the previous samples the subjects generated different grammatical errors: 1) The subjects omitted the indefinite articles **a** or **an** which are necessary before a singular countable noun; they have also omitted the definite article **the**. 2) The misuse or omission of a preposition in a sentence. 3) The wrong choice of a pronoun. 4) Verb form: the subjects used the wrong verb form. 5) Subject-verb agreement: this rule was not applied by a considerable number of the students. 6) The omission or the misuse of verb-to-be especially **is** and **are**.

### 3.3.1.5 Spelling

Spelling refers to the degree of accuracy in applying spelling and punctuation conventions. Using spelling and punctuation correctly are important skills. Many people judge the quality of what is written not just on the content, the language, and the writers' handwriting but also on their use of accurate spelling and punctuation. If capital letters, commas, full stops, sentence and paragraph boundaries, etc. are not used correctly, this can not only make a negative impression but can, of course, also make a text difficult to understand.

The following are some samples which indicate the subjects' inaccurate spelling and punctuation:

**Note taking:**

1. *wiching* is difficult, *excersis* is very important for legs

- Washing is difficult and exercise is very important for legs.

2. They *broch* with wet *sponds*.

- They wash with a wet sponge.

3. *they* like *flawting* in the *ear*

- They like floating in the air.

4. *creavity* holds food down

- Gravity holds food down.

5. *relax*: music, *Sports*.

- Relax: music and sports.

6. *Drink carfully*, *Sleeping*, *Exersise* is very important in *spaese*.

- Drinking carefully, sleeping and exercising are very important in space.

7. *Astroners* eat, sleep, wash, and play, but differently.

- Astronauts eat, sleep, wash and play, but differently.

8. *in* the space, eat, *watch*, play, drink carefully.

- In the space they eat, wash, play and drink carefully.

9. *They Exercise* is very important in space, because they *don't* walk *in space*.

- The exercise is very important in space, because they don't walk.

10. *exercise* is important, they float and don't use their legs

- Exercise is important, because they float and they don't use their legs.

### **Summarizing:**

1. *exercise* is very important *For* health and *help* you to *become* activity

- Exercise is very important for health and helps you become active.

2. *Take* about living *in* the earth and how to eat *wash* and drink *carefully*, *sleeping*.

- Talks about living on the Earth; how to eat, wash, drink carefully and sleep in the space.

3. *Astronaut* *They* don't wash, only by a *wet sponch* that the water *don't* goes out.

- Astronauts don't wash. They only use a wet sponge, so the water doesn't go out.

4. Life in space is unusual. *it* has *a* special aspects for example the *astronauts*...

- Life in space is unusual. It has special aspects. For example, the astronauts...

5. *living in Space Can do Exercise*.

- In space you can do exercise.

6. *in addition Exercises i* very important ...

- In addition, exercise is very important...

7. *in space. Astroners* eat, sleep, and play...

- In space, astronauts eat, sleep and play...

8. The life in the space is very *diffrent* from the life *in* the earth.

- The life in the space is very different from the life on the Earth.

9. *Astronaunts* living in *Space* have to cope with a different life style.

- Astronauts, who live in space, have to cope with a different life style.

10. *they excersize* 30 minutes a day...

- They exercise for 30 minutes a day...

The previous samples indicate that the subjects did not apply accurate spelling. In addition, the subjects omitted some punctuation symbols and misused them, such as 1) capital letters: which are used at the beginning of sentences 2) full stops: used at the end of sentences 'period' 3) comma: separates clauses and marks a 'breathing space' between ideas 4) apostrophe: signals a contracted form of a verb or indicates a possession 5) semi-colon: indicates that the main thrust of a sentence continues, but is temporarily halted.

In short, according to the subjects' samples, it is obvious that they have performed irrelevant utterances to the task requirements and inappropriate content. In addition, the organization of their performance was unclear and their utterances were not logically linked (incoherent). Moreover, the wrong choice of vocabulary,

the inaccurate grammatical sentences and the inaccurate spelling were evident in all of the samples. So the samples lack the five aspects of writing.

In conclusion, it can be said that the lack of the five aspects of writing of the subjects' performance entails the lack of communicativeness in their writing ability and they are considered to be communicatively incompetent.

### **3.3.2 Analysis and Interpretations of the Questionnaire and the Results**

**Research question two:** Do fourth year students have a positive attitude toward communicative writing?

This section interprets the results of the Lickert Scale questionnaire which assesses the students' attitude toward communicative writing and which reveals information about the activity itself.

The attitude/information Lickert scale questionnaire is comprised of two parts. The first part, questions one to six, students' attitudes, and the second part, questions seven to twelve, is informative.

#### **Questions one to six:**

In answering questions one to six, students were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements using a 1 to 5 scale with the following values: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree. For each question the students' comments are included in Appendix E. These insightful opinions demonstrate that the students are able to reflect on their own learning experiences. Table 1 presents the results of the Lickert scale for questions one to six.

**Table1: The Percentage of Responses to Items 1- 6 on Lickert Scale Questionnaire**

Item	The Percentage of the Students' Responses				
	St-agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	St- disagree 1
1. English writing is interesting.	34%	48%	8%	4%	6%
2. Whenever I listen to a lecture, I should take notes.	42%	42%	12%	4%	0%
3. Note taking, during my academic year, helped me understand my lectures better.	44%	42%	0%	10%	4%
4. I like to summarize the lectures, so it will be easy to study and memorize the main points.	40%	38%	12%	8%	2%
5. Note taking and summarizing, during the past academic years, have improved my writing skill.	26%	30%	28%	12%	4%
6. I should use my English writing ability in real life situations.	26%	44%	18%	12%	0%

From the results of the above six questions and the students' comments (Appendix E), it can safely be concluded that students showed a positive attitude toward communicative writing for several reasons:

1. It is obvious that 48% of the students were interested in the process of English writing.
2. 42% of the students felt that it is important to take notes of the lectures.
3. 44% of the students expressed that taking notes is helpful and it has a strong benefit to the extent that they have understood their lectures much better.
4. 40% of the students liked to summarize the lectures, because the summaries include the main points of the lectures. Thus, the study process would be much easier.
5. 30% of the students felt that note taking and summarizing helped them improve their knowledge of the writing skill.
6. 44% of the students also expressed that they need to use their writing ability in their real life situations.

In conclusion, the majority of the students' positive responses entails their positive attitude toward communicative writing.

## **Questions seven to twelve:**

Questions seven to twelve were not attitudinal in nature. Rather, they were separate and often unrelated questions about the students' experience of communicative writing in their life and throughout their academic years. Because each question is informational, individual items are discussed separately and include insights of the students' comments. In answering questions seven to twelve, students were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements using a 1 to 5 scale with the following values: 5 = never, 4 = occasionally, 3 = sometimes, 2 = often/usually, 1 = always. The students' comments are included in Appendix E. Table 2 presents the results of the Lickert scale for questions seven to twelve.

**Table 2: The Percentage of Responses to Items 7-12 on Information Segment of Lickert Scale Questionnaire**

Item	The Percentage of the Students' Responses				
	Never 5	Occasionally 4	Sometimes 3	Often/Usually 2	Always 1
7. Do you use your English writing ability in real life situations?	16%	2%	32%	8%	42%
8. Did you take notes of the main points of your lectures during your last academic years?	8%	12%	44%	20%	16%
9. Did you summarize your lectures?	14%	6%	38%	22%	20%
10. Do you find using English writing, in your real life situations, difficult?	36%	18%	28%	18%	0%
11. Do you think that teachers should focus on correcting the grammar of your writing and emphasize on not performing any grammatical mistakes or errors?	12%	6%	32%	14%	36%
12. Do communicative writing tasks have a positive effect on your language learning?	14%	12%	22%	18%	34%

7. Obviously, most of the students always use their English writing ability in real life situations, due to 42% of the students indicated that. From their comments, it is evident that they felt that they need to use their writing competence communicatively.

8. Generally, the students did not always take notes of the lectures, but 44% of the students indicated that they sometimes did.

9. The majority of the students indicated that they sometimes summarize their lectures, since 38% of the students clarified that.

10. Some of the students ( occasionally, sometimes and often ) encounter some difficulty in using their English writing competence communicatively. Nevertheless, 36% of them never find using it difficult.

11. Generally, the students wanted their grammatical mistakes to be corrected by teachers, due to the percentage 36% reflects a wide range of opinion among the students. Upon reading the comments, it is clear that the students expressed that teachers should attend to correct their grammatical errors.

12. 34% of the students responded that communicative writing tasks have a positive impact on their language learning. Thus, this is an evidence that they need communicativeness in their language learning.

### **3.4 Discussion**

The results of this study can best be understood by looking again at the two questions posed. Both of the research questions will be discussed in the order in which they were presented in the Introduction.

**Research question one:** Do fourth year students lack communicativeness in their writing competence? Are they considered to be communicatively incompetent?

In response to the first question, the results of the students' performance on the communicative task provide evidence that the students lack communicativeness in their writing competence and they actually need communicativeness in their language learning.

In addition, upon the students' responses to the questionnaire and upon their insightful comments, it is evident that there is a demand to promote communicativeness in the process of teaching/learning the writing skill.

From the results of the students' performance on the task, it is also obvious that the students are considered to be communicatively incompetent.

**Research question two:** Do fourth year students have a positive attitude toward communicative writing?

The attitude/information questionnaire demonstrates that students have a positive attitude toward communicative writing. The students' positive responses to the questionnaire reflect their positive attitude toward communicative writing.

In addition, the students' comments indicated that they need communicativeness in their writing ability. Communicative writing tasks lead students to increased confidence and a positive attitude in their ability to write in the foreign language. This makes them more likely to take risks and make commitments to writing, which in turn facilitates the development of their writing abilities. As Zamel (1987, 1990) has repeatedly explained, the type of instruction students receive in their writing classes is the determining factor in fostering positive or negative attitudes.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4.0 Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusion

Several concluding remarks can be drawn from the results of this research:

- Writing became a natural means of communication because it is originated in real lives, communicative contexts. Thus, the communicative competence of writing can only be observed and assessed over a variety of situations in which various performances are appropriate.

- Writing, like all other aspects of language, is communicative. Think about what we write in real life. We write e-mails, notes, summaries, letters, assignments, essays etc. All of these writing tasks have a communicative purpose and a target audience. In English language classrooms, however, writing often lacks this. Why? There are lots of reasons, as there are lots of ways to make the writing teachers do with learners more communicative. (One of the reasons is the lack of communicativeness in language teaching\learning).

- The kinds of tasks teachers set learners may not be motivating, relevant or indeed very communicative. The students need materials that provide relevant, real and communicative practice. It is also worth remembering that the way a lesson or a lecture actually unfolds will always be influenced by the students themselves. It pays to be alert and active.

- From the students' performance on the communicative task and their responses to the questionnaire, it is evident that there is a need for a more communicative approach in the process of teaching/learning the writing skill.
- Moreover, it is obvious that fourth year students lack communicativeness in their writing ability and they are considered to be communicatively incompetent, since their performance on the task reflects that fact.
- Finally, from the findings of the students responses to the questionnaire, it can be concluded that fourth year students have a positive attitude toward communicative writing tasks and they need to use their writing ability in real life situations.

## **4.2 Implications**

In order to promote a more communicative approach to the process of teaching/learning the writing skill and to motivate students to use their writing competence appropriately in real life situations, in communicative contexts, it is necessary to propose recommendations that teachers and students should adopt.

## **4.3 Recommendations**

### **4.3.1 Recommendations for Teachers**

- Teachers need to make a distinction between writing to learn (other things, like structures, spelling and vocabulary) and learning to write. If teachers understand this distinction and make sure their learners do too then the communicative

purpose of writing will be clearer.

- Teachers need to work hard on developing ways of responding to the content of what learners write, the message, and not just the level of language. If they can do this effectively, then their students will make more effort to communicate when they write to them. It is imperative to assert that today teachers should not worry about the success of their students in exams.

- Teachers should talk about writing with their students (how we write well, why we write and for who, and what makes it difficult). Learners training like this can provide valuable support and motivation.

- It is really important for teachers to make use of communicative writing tasks in their classes if they really want to promote their students' communicative capacities. They must not lose sight of the fact when using communicative tasks in their classes, they give students sense of self confidence and it is only by being self-confident can students express themselves freely and without constraints.

- Teachers need to use meaningful, realistic and relevant writing tasks based on the learners needs and interests. In fact, there are lots of ways to make the writing which you do with your students more communicative:

1. Find ways to publish learners' writing. They can publish in newspapers. Get them to create individuals and group profiles on social utility such as face book. Publish a class magazine of previous writing works.

2. Encourage learners to write with a clear purpose and for a clear audience for example: letters for newspapers, pen friend, to teachers and other students. So identify a clear objective or purpose.

3. Find challenging and rewarding tasks which can support a variety of learning aims and integrate other skills and language systems, such as summarizing, project work, translation, writing up notes from interviews and preparing a briefing or a talk.

4. Use relevant and realistic tasks in the classroom such as writing notes, recipes, e-mails, filling in forms, preparing signs for the class and getting students to write greeting cards for birthdays for one another.

5. Respond to the content of work that your learners give you as well as correcting the errors they make, by adding your own comments to their homework or establishing a dialogue through e-mail and learners diaries. You can also involve the students in the self-correction of errors.

6. Make writing easier and more fun by doing group writing activities, group correction and editing of work. Teachers should also remember to monitor their students. Process writing includes elements of this.

7. Support writing with reading. This not only helps learners develop the sub-skills they need but also helps them understand that good writing is a powerful and an important communicative tool.

### 4.3.2 Recommendations for students

It is a necessity for students to understand that they should make an effort in order to develop their writing ability and make it more communicative. It is now up to the students to avail themselves to profit by this opportunity to develop their capacities by achieving the following points:

- **Prepare:** When students prepare their lessons, they perform better in their class. This is pretty logical when you think about it. Without preparation, the students are required to do two things at once: use their English language resources effectively and be creative. Preparation can often take care of some of the pressure that comes with having to be creative while using the language spontaneously.

- **Participate:** Students should participate in the class activities that teachers monitor them to. When students really want to improve their English abilities, they will try their best to understand their classmates and make themselves understood, and thereby participate enthusiastically. If students really want to learn, they should try to speak English instead of Arabic and participate in group discussions. On the other hand, when the students do not want to be involved in group work, communicative language teaching (CLT) cannot be implemented.

- **Use writing for communication:** When students use their writing competence, this will only encourage the teachers' attempts to apply communicative language teaching (CLT). The students' usage of writing in real life situations is important, because these situations increase their motivation in developing communication competence in English writing. The following are some communicative writing tasks that the students can use in real life:

1. Join chat groups on yahoo or hotmail messengers. You can also chat with online friends from all over the world in English.
2. Get a pen friend whom you could write letters to and receive from . It is better if your pen friend was a native speaker.
3. Have a phone conversation and write down the message in English.
4. Write a report for a news broadcast and then role play as a journalist.
5. Listen to a friend's story and try to write a summary of it. And you can also summarize lectures.
6. Write up notes from lectures or interviews.
7. Create a survey, ask the questions and then write down the answers.

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# **Appendices**

## **Appendix (A): The Listening Passage Provided**

When astronauts are in space, they eat, sleep, wash, work and play. They do the same things as us, but they do them differently. On Earth, we put food on a plate and water in a glass. Gravity holds the food down and keeps the water in the glass. But in space, there is almost no gravity. So food can float away, and astronauts must eat and drink carefully.

Sleeping is very different in space. Some astronauts like to float in the air, but most astronauts like to be in a sleeping bag. They tie the bag to a wall so they can't float away in the night.

Washing is difficult. There is no shower or bath, so astronauts must use a wet sponge. They brush their teeth normally, but very carefully: they don't want wet toothpaste to float around the spacecraft!

Exercise is very important in space. On Earth, your legs carry your body, but in space, astronauts float, so they do not use their legs. This is very bad for their legs, so they must exercise for thirty minutes every day. They often use an exercise bicycle for this.

After a day's work, astronauts relax. They listen to music, read, watch films, play games, write e-mails or talk to their friends and families by radio. Sometimes they just enjoy floating in the air. On the International Space Station, astronauts sometimes race from one end of the station to the other. The most popular pastime is looking out of the window, looking at space and watching the Earth.

# **Appendix (B): The Communicative Writing Task Provided**

University of Benghazi Faculty of Arts Department of English

May, 2010

Q. Listen to the following and take notes. After note taking, write a summary.

Notes:

Summary:

# Appendix (C): An Attitude/Information Questionnaire

University of Benghazi

A Questionnaire to Assess the fourth year students' attitude toward communicative writing and to assess their Communicative

Competence of writing  
at the English Department

May, 2010

Read the questions and put an X by one of the choices below each question. If you would like to comment on that question, please write on the lines provided.

1. English writing is interesting.

( ) strongly agree ( ) agree ( ) undecided ( ) disagree ( ) strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

2. Whenever I listen to a lecture, I should take notes.

( ) strongly agree ( ) agree ( ) undecided ( ) disagree ( ) strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

3. Note taking, during my academic years, helped me understand my lectures better.

strongly agree  agree  undecided  disagree  strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

4. I like to summarize the lectures, so it will be easy to study and memorize the main points.

strongly agree  agree  undecided  disagree  strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

5. Note Taking and Summarizing , during the past academic years, have improved my writing skills.

strongly agree  agree  undecided  disagree  strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

6. I should use writing in real life situations. I should use it during lectures, I should write letters in English .....etc.

strongly agree  agree  undecided  disagree  strongly disagree

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

Read these questions and put an X by one of the choices below each question. If you would like to comment on that question, please write on the lines provided.

7. Do you use writing in real life situations?

never  occasionally  sometimes  often/usually  always

Comment:-----  
-----  
-----

8. Did you take notes of the main points of your lectures the last academic years?

never  occasionally  sometimes  often/usually  always

Comments:-----  
-----

9. Did you summarize your lectures?

never  occasionally  sometimes  often/usually  always

Comment:-----  
-----

10. Do you find using English writing, in your real life situations, difficult?

never  occasionally  sometimes  often/usually  always

Comment:-----  
-----

11. Do You think the teacher should focus on correcting the grammar in your writings and emphasizes on not performing any grammatical mistakes or errors?

never  occasionally  sometimes  often/usually  always

Comment:-----  
-----

12. Do communicative writing tasks, tasks which reflects real language use (writing letters, note taking, summarizing.....etc),have a positive effect on your language learning?

( ) never ( ) occasionally ( ) sometimes ( ) often/usually ( ) always

Comment:-----  
-----

## **Appendix (D):**

### **Some Samples of the Fourth Year Students' Performance on the Communicative Task at the Department of English at Benghazi University**

## **Appendix (E):**

### **Some Samples of the Fourth Year students' Comments at the Department of English at Benghazi University**

## المخلص

### تقييم كفاءة التواصل لمهارة الكتابة لطلبة السنة الرابعة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بنغازي

إن هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لتقييم كفاءة التواصل في مهارة الكتابة لطلبة السنة الرابعة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية ، كلية الآداب بجامعة بنغازي.

الهدف الأساسي لهذه الدراسة هو تقييم القدرة اللغوية لمهارة الكتابة للطلبة ، و ذلك يعني تقييم مقدرة الطلبة على استخدام اللغة (على الكتابة) بطريقة تعكس الاستخدام الواقعي لهذه اللغة في حياتهم اليومية وفي مواقف الحياة الحقيقية.

وما من شك أن هناك حاجة لتفعيل المنهج التواصلي في طريقة التعليم والتقييم للغة الطلبة ، ومن المفترض أن هذه الدراسة ستلبي تلك الحاجة وذلك باستخدام وتعزيز المنهج التواصلي في اللغة المكتوبة.

تتضمن المعلومات المعروضة في هذه الدراسة اختبار لتقييم كفاءة التواصل لمهارة الكتابة لطلبة السنة الرابعة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية مع وضع استبيان قام الطلبة بالإجابة على الأسئلة التي يطرحها ، علاوة عن المعلومات المستسقة من بعض الكتب والانترنت كمصادر أساسية للبحث.

وستزود نتائج وتوصيات هذه الدراسة الطلبة ببعض الخطوات التي ستساهم في تحسين مستوى أدائهم التواصلي لمهارة الكتابة ، بالإضافة إلى بعض التوصيات للمعلمين.

وتشمل هذه الدراسة على أربعة فصول ، وتشمل هذه الفصول على الفصل التمهيدي والدراسات السابقة والمنهجية المتبعة بالبحث والتحليل وكذلك النتائج (الاستنتاجات) والتوصيات.