Composition Assessment

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Abstract

Evaluating composition is different from evaluating any other subject or any other activity not in the field of writing. Evaluating scientific subjects, for instance, is more objective than subjective; whereas evaluating composition is subjective. That is why two evaluators differ in the grade they give to one piece of writing. This is due to the difference in their moods, education, and the criteria they adopt in their evaluation. This has made composition teachers try to make the assessment of any text as objective as possible. They, therefore, tried, and still trying, to analyze what their students write into a number of components which they evaluate individually. Still, the process of evaluating any of these components is subjective and not objective. But the final result is less subjective than when the composition is evaluated as a whole.

The researcher tries in this study to review the attempts made by educators to analyze the writing material into its components and the systems used by them to grade the material. Also, the researcher makes some suggestions to improve students' level in writing English, what the department can offer, and what the students should do in this respect.

At the end of this study, the researcher presents a number of correction charts with symbols representing students' written language errors, and suggests an appropriate chart covering almost all the common writing pitfalls.

تقويم النص الانشائي

خلاصة البحث

ان تقويم النص الانشائي يختلف عن تقويم أية مـادة دراسية أخرى ، أو أي نشـاط في غير مجال الكتابة . إذ أن تقويم المواد العلمية وما شابهها يكـاد يكون موضوعيا ، بينما تقويم مادة الانشاء هو عمليـة ذاتية . وهذا مـا يسبب تفاوتـا ملحوظـا في التقويم بين مقوم وآخر بسبب الاختلا ف بينهمـا في المزاج والثقافة والمعايير التـي يعتمدها كل منهما . لذا حاول ويحاول المعنيون بشؤون تعليم مـادة الانشـاء ، كمـا يستعرضـه الباحث في هذه الدراسة ، أن يجعلوا تقويم ما يكتبه الطلبة أقرب الـى الموضـوعية منـه الى الذاتية . فقاموا بتحليل الكتابـة الـى عـدد من المكونـات ثم قاموا بتقويم كل مكون على انفراد . ومع ذلك فان تقويم أي مكون من هذه المكونات لا يخلو من تأثير الجانب الذاتي تمامـا . ولكن المحصلـة النهائيـة هي أقرب الـى الموضـوعية من تقويم النص الانشائي ككل .

يقدم الباحث في هذه الدراسة عدد من المقترحات التـي تتنـاول أسـاليب تحسين أداء الطلبة في قسم اللغة الانكليزية في كتابة الانشاء . ويتناول أيضـا مـا يجب على القسم تقديمه ، وما على الطلبة اتباعه من أجل تحسين أدائهم الكتابي .

في نهايـة الدراسـة يقترح الباحث جدولا بـالرموز التـي تمثل الاخطـاء اللغويـة الشائعة والتي يتم بموجبها تأشير هذه الاخطاء من قبل المدرس ، وكيفية استخدام هذه الرمـوز مـن قبـل الطلبـة فـي تحديـد ماهيـة هـذه الاخطـاء وأسبابها ومـن ثـم قيـامهم بتصحيحها بأنفسهم .

1- Introduction

The word 'assessment' used in this paper means 'evaluation' for which 'measurements' are the basis. Data are gathered in the form of measurements and utilized in the making of decisions. Evaluation consists of decision making based on information gathered. Giving a grade, for instance, is only one type of evaluation because it is a decision reached by a teacher based upon data: quizzes, tests, examinations, etc. (Jacobsen, et al. 248-50).[1]

The word 'composition' used throughout the paper means either any piece of writing given in one's own words in an answer to any question, or it may mean a piece of writing consisting of a number of unified and coherent paragraphs called a 'composition' (Davies 19). We also say a composition or an essay question if the answer to the question is to be in one's own words.

There has been an enormous increase in the complexity with which foreign language tests and examinations are constructed and used. Compared with what was introduced in the 1920s and 1930s, tests and examinations nowadays measure not only writing ability, but also competence and skill in spoken language at various levels of ability. Educators are continually exploring the usefulness of new kinds of test and examination formats (Chastain 516).

Teaching English as a foreign or second language developed greatly during the last sixty years. This development has made it necessary to use measures, that can cope with such development, to evaluate writing competence.

In spite of all the efforts made by language-teaching specialists to improve the reliability of composition assessment, the problem remains a challenge to them. Some of them tried to lessen the subjectivity of composition assessment in an attempt to increase its reliability by analyzing the piece of writing into its

components or elements.   Thus, instead of evaluating the composition as a whole, they evaluate each one of these components individually.

Therefore, instead of having one mark or grade for the whole composition, they have several marks or grades because each individual element is given a mark or grade. The total of the marks given to these elements gives the final assessment of the composition.

This paper tries to review the attempts made by examiners and test makers to make composition assessment more reliable than traditional procedures. Besides, the researcher, whose experience in teaching the English language as a foreign language is more than fifty

¹ **For documenting sources in this paper, whether In-text Citation or Bibliography at the end of the   paper, MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Update 2009 has been adopted.**

years, has included in this paper some recommendations and suggestions to both teachers and students on how students can improve their writing competence, and how teachers can improve the process of assessing their students' writing.   In addition, there is a section that deals with the difficulty the teachers face with large classes and the solution suggested to solve this problem.

The researcher hopes that this paper will help teachers improve their procedures for assessing their students' compositions, and help students improve their written language competence.

2- Subjectivity and Objectivity

The terms 'subjectivity' and 'objectivity' imply two different procedures. The first is the procedure in which the student answers in his own words and at appropriate length, which may range from a single sentence to a dozen, all or some of the relatively small number of questions. These answers are

commonly called 'composition answers' which are usually assessed subjectively. The question to which the answer is in the student's own words, and not provided for him by somebody else, is called a composition-type question (Davies19).

The second procedure is 'objectivity'. According to this procedure the student responds to each of a large number of questions by selecting one of several alternative answers provided with the questions by somebody else. We say that the assessment of the student's work is objective in the sense that evaluative judgment is not needed on the part of the teacher; a marking key, previously prepared, is all that is needed (21).

It follows that by 'subjective' we simply mean 'requiring judgment'; and by 'objective' we simply mean 'automatic'. Furthermore, in answering subjective questions, not only one answer is correct, whereas in the case of objective answer, there is only one correct answer.

To be objective, the assessor should see things as they are, rather than to be subjective, to see things as one wants them to be. In assessing the students' answers, the distinction exists between 'subjective' and 'objective'. If the assessor has to exercise judgment, if he has to decide whether the answer is adequate or inadequate, or if he has to choose between awarding the answer a high or low mark, then the assessment process is subjective. On the other hand, if the assessor is prevented from making judgments; if he is forced to accept decisions made previously by somebody else; if, in short, he is reduced, for the purpose of rating, to the status of a machine or in some cases can be replaced by a machine, then the assessing process is objective(23).

Although the two procedures, subjective and objective, are favoured by a number of educational-measurement specialists, there has been much criticism of both (Gamaroff). Those who favour the composition-type technique or the 'impression' method, as called by some others, in assessing a piece of writing

have generally included the following points in their defence (Harris 69).

1- In the composition technique of assessing any piece of writing, certain abilities, such as

ability to organize, to relate and weigh material, are assessed more effectively than does the objective technique. Besides, using the composition technique, provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to organize language material, using their own words and ideas, and to be able to communicate. In this way, students are provided with a degree of motivation and pleasure in what they answer; whereas the objective technique fails to provide this.

2- The composition technique motivates students to improve their writing; conversely, if

the technique does not require writing in the students' own words, students will neglect the development of this skill.

3- Composition tests on which assessment depends are much easier and quicker to

prepare than objective tests, an important advantage to the busy teacher.

The critics of the composition-testing technique also have their own views (Layman 137):

1- Composition tests are unreliable measures because assessment is highly subjective.

2- In writing composition answers, students can cover up weaknesses by avoiding certain

problems they find difficult, such as the use of certain grammatical patterns and lexicon. Such evasion is impossible with well-prepared objective questions.

3- Composition assessment requires much more rating time than objective rating.

Virtually, both objective and subjective techniques have their own special strength.

Thus, the ideal practice is to measure the writing ability by a combination of both types. Such a combination will probably produce more valid results than would either of the two types of measurement used by itself (Gamaroff).

3- Composition Evaluation

Foreign language testing goes back to the beginning of the last century (Carroll 518). At that time, objective testing methods had only recently been introduced in the foreign language field, and they were applied in a rather primitive fashion as judged by present-day standards. Up to the time of World War II, there was little experience with tests. It was not until World War II that test makers made serious efforts (mostly in military establishments) to develop comprehensive tests of foreign language. The fruit of their efforts did not have an influence in civilian centers until after the war.

The development of tests in English as a second or foreign language was the focus of the efforts of some prominent linguists as Charles C. Fries and David Harris in the early 1950s, but the formats and procedures of such tests were not perfected until the 1960s. Even now the so-called TOEFL is under continual scrutiny (519).

Sixty years ago, the conventional way of assessing what was written by students was by applying what we call composition-type technique, or what some researchers call 'impression method' (Harris 69). By this technique the composition was assessed as a whole and not by analyzing it into its components. By using this technique, assessment is not reliable. If two assessors, for instance. are asked to evaluate a piece of writing, we find that there is a wide different range of scores and judgments. Even if one assessor is asked to evaluate the same composition at two different times, the results will not be the same. Moreover, it is quite possible for a composition to appeal to a certain assessor but not to another. In this case, it is largely a

matter of luck whether or not a single assessor likes that particular piece of writing. This means that the assessor's mark is highly subjective and based on fallible judgment, affected by fatigue, carelessness, and prejudice. This, of course, affects the reliability of scores, and it shows at the same time the difficulty assessors face when assessing any piece of writing (Gamaroff).

   Due to the inherent unreliability in composition or impression method, testing specialists have done, and are still doing, their best to make the effect of subjectivity on their assessment as weak as possible. As a result, the analysis of composition has been their concern, and the analytical method of assessment has been the fruit of their efforts.

4- The Analytical Method

   The analytical method depends on a grading scheme according to which the elements of a composition are separated for scoring purposes. Several schemes or systems of analyzing composition to its elements or components have been suggested by some specialists. The following are some of these schemes in which the elements are listed and evaluated according to the evaluator's opinion without having a fixed scale for the marks or grades given to each elements; it is left to the evaluator to decide the marks given to each element (Heaton 148).

Components
1- (a) Grammar
    (b) Vocabulary
    (c) Mechanics
    (d) Fluency
    (e) Relevance
2- (a) Content
    (b) Organization
    (c) Vocabulary
    (d) Language use

(e) Mechanics

3- (a) Order of information   (Davies 81)

(b) The layout

(c) Spelling

(d) Punctuation

(e) Word order

(f) Choice of words and expressions

(g) Handwriting

(h) Grammar

4- (a) Content   (Harris 69)

(b) Form

(c) Grammar

(d) Style

(e) Mechanics (Writing Conventions)

5- (a) Language use

(b) Mechanical skills

(c) Treatment of content

(d) Stylistic skills

(e) Judgment skills

6- (a) Matter

(b) Expression and style

(c) Accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar

7- (a) Language   (Davies 96)

(b) Skill in logical organization

(c) Neatness

(d) Spelling

8- (a) Vocabulary   (Sako 497)

(b) Structure

(c) Accuracy

(d) Spelling

(e) Punctuation

(f) Content

(g) Organization of material

9- (a) Knowledge of topic   (Gamaroff)

(b) Clear expression

(c) Handling of material

(d) Argumentation

(e) Appropriate selection of meaningful sentences

(f) Cohesion

(g) Coherence

(h) Clarity

10-(a) Organization   (Nolasco 10)

(b) Register

(c) Style

(d) Tone

From a look at the composition analyses above, we notice that only some components are considered by most assessors, such as 'content', 'grammar', 'mechanics', 'form', and 'organization of content'. Only a few of them take into consideration components, such as 'handwriting' and 'layout'. On the other hand, different terms are used by some assessors for the same component, such as 'matter and content', 'judgment skills and style', 'fluency and stylistic skills', 'expression and style', 'mechanics' and 'spelling, punctuation, handwriting and layout', and 'language use and the choice of words or vocabulary'.

A third method of assessing composition is called the 'Mechanical Accuracy' or 'Error Count'. This method may be added to the two methods mentioned before. The procedure of this method consists of counting the errors made by the student and then deducting the number from a given total. For example, a student may lose up to 10 marks for grammatical errors, 5 marks for misuse of words, 5 marks for misspelling, etc. Since no decision can be reached about the relative importance of most errors, the whole scheme is actually highly subjective: should errors of tense be regarded more important than certain misspelling or misuse of words? Furthermore, it is fairly common for an evaluator to feel that a composition is worth

several marks more or less than the score he has awarded and so alters the grade accordingly. Above all, this method ignores the real purpose of composition writing and concentrates on the negative aspects of the writing task (Heaton 148-49). Therefore, it is not recommended.

5- Description of Composition Components

Examination specialists have described most of the composition components listed in the analytical schemes above as follows:

a. **Content:** the substance of writing; the ideas expressed; the particular subject to be written on (Brumfit 15; Heaton 148).

b. **Mechanics:** the use of the graphic conventions of the language: punctuation, spelling, handwriting, and layout.

c. **Fluency:** style and ease of communication.

d. **Relevance:** the content in relation to the task demanded of the students.

e. **Language use:** the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences.

d. **Treatment of content:** the ability to think creatively and develop thought, excluding all irrelevant information.

e. **Stylistic skills:** the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs, and use language effectively; in other words, writing style includes writing patterns, sentence structure, and paragraphing (Heaton 135).

f. **Judgment skills:** the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information (Writing Seminar Paper6).

g. **Matter:** logical presentation and paragraphing.

h. **Expression and style:** sentence structure, vocabulary, colorful phrasing, and clarity (Leech1).

i. **Layout:** general appearance of what the student has written, including handwriting (Nolasco 6).

j. **Language:** sentence structure, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and richness of vocabulary (Davies 28).

6- Systems of Grading Composition

After composition has been analysed into its components, examiners put a scale for grading the components at different levels. They have also given a description of performance for each grade. Some examiners have expressed their grades in letters and some others in figures, with the level these letters and figures represent (Sako 498).

Level	Description
1	Elementary proficiency. Student can write simple statements and questions using a very limited vocabulary. Errors in spelling and structure frequently obscure meaning.
2	Limited working proficiency. Student can write sentences on familiar topics using non-technical vocabulary and basic structural patterns. Errors in spelling and structure occasionally obscure meaning.
3	Minimal professional proficiency. Student can write paragraphs on familiar topics using basic structural patterns. Errors seldom obscure meaning.
4	Full professional proficiency. Student can write prose with sufficient structural accuracy

and   sufficient   vocabulary   to   satisfy
professional requirements.

5   Native or bilingual proficiency. Student can
write with proficiency equivalent to that of an
educated native speaker.

Below is another example of a grading system devised by
some examiners (Chastain 518).

5   This is the highest level in writing that can be
expected. A '5' indicates

the ability to communicate with relative ease
what student is trying to

express within the limits of his/her learned
structure and vocabulary with   a minimum
number of errors.

 3   This figure represents a good performance.
'Good' means that the student

 is able to express himself/herself. His/her
grade is not higher due to the   difficulty in
communication and increased serious errors. Also, his/her
sentences are short and less complex, and the
command of vocabulary is   noticeably less
than that of high quality performance.

 1   This grade tells the student that he/she needs
to improve his/her writing. What he/she is
trying to say is barely comprehensible, and
he/she   has   great   difficulty   expressing
himself/herself. His/her knowledge of voca-
bulary is minimal and he/she has only
minimal control of the grammar.

0   The student fails to communicate.

If the teacher wants to include additional gradations, he
might add 'pluses' or 'minuses' to the scale without
complicating his task of marking.

From the above-mentioned description of writing performance, it is clear that the quality of written work consists of a number of factors which cannot be quantified for the purpose of measurement. Thus, composition assessors have no alternative other than to assign a grade to student performance based on the subjective evaluation of either the entire work or the individual components.

The teacher can introduce the analytic procedure by listing the components of the composition: content, organization, etc., on the blackboard. These components can be discussed with the students and examples are given. After the students have the opportunity to understand what each component means, the teacher can introduce the grades that may be given to each component, and tell his students the quality of work each grade represents. The highest level, of course, would be the native proficiency; but since obtaining that degree of proficiency is unlikely, that level can be eliminated (515).

Some well-known language-teaching specialists in the United Kingdom thought of compiling a banding system with a brief description of the various grades of achievement expected to be attained by learners. In addition to the description of what each grade represents, they allotted minimum and maximum marks out of 20 to each grade in assessing the entire composition (Heaton 145).

Marks	Grade	Description
18-20	Excellent	Natural English, minimum errors, complete realization of the task set.
16-17	Very good	Good vocabulary and structure, above the sentence level, errors non-basic.

12-15	Good	Simple but accurate realization of task, naturalness, not many errors.
8-11	Pass	Reasonably correct with some serious errors.
5-7	Weak	Vocabulary and grammar inadequate for the . task set.
0-4	Very poor	Incoherent, errors showing lack of basic knowledge of English.

Also, in the United States, considerable and careful research has been conducted in the rating of composition. The result was that composition was analyzed into five components, and minimum and maximum marks were allotted to each component. The total marks obtained for all components gives the final result.

The following is the American researchers' rating scale(146).

Compone	**Mark out of 100**	**Description**
(a) Content 30%	30-27	Excellent toVery Good, knowledgeable, substantive.
	26-22	Good to Average: some knowledge of the subject, adequate range
	21-17	Fair to Poor: limited knowledge of

		subject, little substance.
	16-13	Very Poor, does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive.
(b) Organization 20%	20-18	Excellent to Very Good: fluent expression, ideas clearly stated.
	17-14	Good to Average: somewhat inconstant, loosely- organized but main ideas stand out.
	13-10	Fair to Poor: non-fluent, ideas confused and disconnected.
	9-7	Very Poor: does not communicate, not enough to evaluate
(c) Vocabulary 20%	20-18	Excellent to Very Good: sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice, usage, etc
	17-14	Good to Average: adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom,

	13-10	form,choice, usage but meaning not obscured.
	13-10	Fair to Poor: limited range, frequent Errors of word/idiom, form, choice, usage.
	9-7	Very Poor: essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabu-lary,not enough to evaluate.
(d) Language use 25%	25-22	Excellent to Very Good: effective complex construction.
	21-18	Good to Average: effective but simple construction.
	17-11	Fair to Poor: major problems in simple/complex construction Very Poor: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules.
(e) Mechanics 5%	5	Excellent to Very Good: demons-trates mastery of conventions.
	4	Good to Average:occasionalerrors of spelling and punctuation.

3   Fair to Poor: frequent errors of
spelling , punctuation, and capitali-
zation.

2   Very Poor: no mastery of conven-
tions, dominated by errors of
spelling,punctuation,capitalization,
paragraphing,
not enough to evaluate (147).

Comparing the two procedures of assessing composition, i.e. the British and the American, we can see that the British system takes the composition as a whole. The grade given covers the entire composition. It is therefore highly subjective.   On the other hand, the American procedure analyzes the composition into five components. Each component is given four grading levels: Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair to Poor, and Very Poor. Although this system is less subjective than the British system which evaluates the composition as a whole, it is still subjective in evaluating each component separately. Due to the subjectivity of evaluating the components individually, the total scores given by two raters applying the American system may be inconsistent. For one rater may ignore a specific component because he thinks that the ignored component is of little importance or overlapping. Moreover, similar total scores given by two raters do not necessarily mean similar judgments. They may differ in grading a particular component: one may give, for instance, a high mark for "organization", and the other gives a low mark. This situation may be reversed with another component; but, on the whole, the two total marks may be the same (Gamaroff).

It follows that if similar scores between two raters do not mean similar judgments on individual components, it is also

true that different scores between raters do not necessarily mean different judgments on all components. There may be similar judgment on certain components and, at the same time, different judgments on the others, but the total mark is the same (Gamaroff).

This wide range of scores and judgments, and the different weight raters may give to each component, show the difficulties raters face when assessing compositions.

In spite of the different analytic schemes used by composition markers, there has been almost a general agreement among most of them to use the following two banded schemes with mark allocation out of 100 for each component (White ix; Davies 96).

	Component	**Mark**
A-	(1) Content	13-30
	(2) Organization	7-20
	(3) Vocabulary	7-20
	(4) Language Use	5-25
	(5) Mechanics	2-5
B-	(1) Language	out of 50
	(2) Skill in logical composition	out of 25
	(3) Spelling	out of 10
	(4) Neatness	out of 5
	(5) Punctuation and layout	out of 10

Each component, as shown above, receives a proportion of marks out of a total of 100. Thus, by adding the marks given to all components, we obtain the final mark for the composition out of 100.

Such banded schemes are more helpful to both teacher and student than a single mark or grade given to the composition as a whole. The mark given to each component tells the teacher in which aspect or area a student is weak, and, at the same time, how work is improving during the term. The students should be

informed about the adopted scheme so that they know the criteria being used for assessing their work.

The weak side of these two schemes is that some examiners may give more or less weight to some components. This usually depends on the examiner's opinion of the importance of each component to the writing skill (Davies 96). Two assessors may differ in respect of marks, strictness, and order of importance. For instance, assessor A may give a wider range of marks (i.e. ranging from a low mark to a high mark); assessor B may have much higher expectation than assessor A, and thus he marks much more strictly awarding lower marks to all the compositions (Heaton 144).

There are other grading systems applied by some teachers. One of these systems may go like the following where letters with what they mean are used instead of figures for the evaluation of the composition as a whole; or for evaluating each component individually.

A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Average
D	Just Adequate
E	Fail

If the teacher wants to include additional grading, he might add 'pluses' or minuses' to the scale above. This system may be used to grade the composition as a whole where each letter represents the composition final grade, or the system may be used to grade the individual components separately if the analytic method is applied. (Wallace 175).

Whatever system of evaluation is used, the assessor should decide in advance on the precise basis for scoring. Thus, the starting point is to decide the procedure to be applied: analytic or overall judgment. If the choice is the first, the assessor should decide the weight that will be given to each of the various components. This requires that the assessor has to specify the

mark given to each component, and the total of these marks will constitute the final result (Harris 78).

If the assessor uses the overall judgment of the composition, and gives it one of these grades: Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good or Excellent, he will face the problem that his overall judgment is not based on any notion of an absolute standard, except in terms of the performance of the group as a whole. This requires that he should scan a sample of papers to decide upon standards and use the sample papers as models. He has, then, to refer occasionally to these models to ensure that standards are not shifting (79).

The advantage of the first system of marking, i.e. the analytic evaluation, over the second, i.e. the overall or impression evaluation, is that it helps the teacher to maintain a consistent scoring procedure, enables the students to know in advance what the bases of scoring will be, and on the teaching side, directs students' attention to the specific areas of their weaknesses (80).

The element of subjectivity cannot be avoided in both evaluation systems above. Therefore, it is preferable to evaluate the papers anonymously. In small classes anonymous evaluation is difficult, if not impossible, because the teacher will recognize his students' papers by their handwriting and style. This leads unconsciously to the teacher's bias (78-79).

7- Suggested Composition Examination Paper

As both subjective and objective techniques in assessing writing material have their own special merits, the ideal practice to assess composition is by using a combination of the two types. Such a combination will probably produce more valid results than would either of the two types of measurement used produce by itself.

Therefore, in preparing a composition examination paper, the two types, i.e. subjective and objective, should be included. For instance, one of the questions can be writing a composition of

200 to 300 words. This composition may be evaluated either by the analytic method or by the impression method.   To this question, a few objective questions on grammar, vocabulary, sentence completion, sentence combination, sentence reordering, and error correction may be added as far as the time of the examination allows.

8- Our Department[1] and the Teaching of Composition

Our students start their studies in our department after they have spent eight years learning the English language in primary, intermediate, and secondary schools. It is true that they come from secondary schools with basic knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but they are unable to make use of this knowledge in writing an acceptable piece of writing. Moreover, most of them do not find it easy to write even one single correct sentence. This makes them feel uneasy when they are asked to write a composition, an experience to which they have not

been exposed before. They feel that writing a composition is beyond their power, and will   continue to be so unless they are given careful guidance.   .

Our task, as teachers, is to change these notions by showing them that writing is a form of communication in which one meaningfully expresses ideas, hopes, opinions, and findings to other people. They must be made feel that being able to write good English will increase their chances to better life after their graduation. To get a job in foreign organizations or to apply for admission to foreign universities, they need to write applications in English; and even after getting a job, they may be required to write in English reports, documents of events, proceedings, business and personal letters, diaries, journals, etc.

The problem we face as teachers is crowded classes of about forty students each. In this case it is very difficult to give frequent writing assignments and have time to evaluate such a number of papers. This situation makes it difficult, if not

impossible, to give a composition assignment every week or even every month. You can imagine the enormous effort the teacher has to make to read, evaluate, and make the necessary corrections of this number of students' papers.

With the present situation, the time allotted to teaching composition is mostly spent in teaching grammar and vocabulary in the form of drills at the individual sentence level. No composition assignments, not even a single one, are given during the term or even during the year. Although the final exam paper contains a question about writing a composition, students have not had any composition-writing experience during the year.

To face the problem above, I recommend that the three composition hours a week in the first-year syllabus are to be divided into one lecture and two tutorials of which the number of students should be between 10 and 15.

One of the two tutorials is to be devoted to discussing reading assignments. It has been

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[1] The department meant here is the Department of English, College of Arts, University of Basrah.

proved by experiment that we learn writing by reading rather than by writing. Each student is asked to read a simplified novel every two weeks and then to give a brief account of the novel to his group during the tutorial hour. Students should be told that this reading is for pleasure and interest and for testing. They are to be advised that when reading a novel or any piece of printed material, they should pay close attention to the way the text is structured and written. At the same time, it is advisable that the student may write down all the words and expressions he/she believes they can be of some use in his future writing. Furthermore, the teacher can ask each student during the tutorial hour what useful words and expressions he was able to find in his reading material. These words and expressions are to be written down in a note-book kept for this purpose. The student

is advised to read these words and expressions from time to time, and to try to learn them by heart. It is certain that students will be able to write better compositions if they build up a collection of suitable words and expressions, some of which can be used in more than one situation.

The other tutorial hour is to be given to composition writing. The topic of the composition is to be suggested by the students themselves. The topic chosen should be related to their life and experience. This will make them greatly interested in writing and discussing the subject of the composition and encourage them to participate in all relevant class activities.

Once a topic has been suggested and accepted by the group, the teacher can ask his students to give any points related to the topic of the composition. These points may be put on the blackboard as suggested by the students, and then can be arranged in the form of an outline after disregarding irrelevant points. Teacher's guidance is given when discussing the outline items. This oral discussion is highly desirable before students begin their writing. This oral discussion helps them overcome the problems of vocabulary and sentence structure. They can write their notes as the discussion proceeds. The teacher may put on the blackboard the important vocabulary and grammatical structures needed for writing the composition discussed. The composition is to be written at home and handed to the teacher during the tutorial the week after.

As for marking the compositions, there are several techniques. However, the technique that is mostly preferable is that the teacher marks all the papers himself by using correction symbols for which a chart is to be given and explained to the students. This technique is more effective than any other procedures because the student corrects his own mistakes by referring to the correction chart which informs him of the kind of

errors he has made [see Appendix 1(Frank 137); Appendix 2 (Azar 340-41); Appendix 3 (Sharon 5)].

The tutorial hours suggested above and the technique for marking compositions are of great importance for improving students' writing ability. This technique has proved to be more fruitful than any other techniques, such as exchanging composition papers among students, or having the teacher himself put the required corrections of his students' errors. Also, this technique gives the students practice in finding out their errors by themselves, attempting at the same time to correct these errors after they know their causes.

What is suggested above cannot be achieved with large classes. Therefore, if we want to succeed in improving our students' writing ability, we must have small groups to teach. And this, the researcher believes, is quite possible with the present number of the teaching staff in the department. Thus, giving frequent composition assignments, combined with continuous reading of simplified books on the students' part, will certainly be effective and have fruitful results.

The third hour of the three hours allotted to composition a week, is to be a lecture which may be given to a larger group of students. In this lecture, the teacher deals with the students' common errors made in their compositions. He may give them drills in the grammatical elements related to these errors with the necessary explanation during the tutorial hour.

Experience has shown that students cannot write whole compositions if they are unable to write acceptable paragraphs. Again, this cannot be achieved either, if they are unable to write correct and connected sentences. Moreover, a set of well-written sentences will not necessarily form a well-written paragraph. The skill of weaving sentences together into a unified whole requires training and practice in the use of linking devices. Sentence combining instruction involves teaching students ways

to embed one sentence or idea into another to create sentences which are more varied and interesting, and gives them an opportunity to learn a variety of syntactic patterns. Through a series of guided exercises, students are shown how several short sentences can be combined into longer ones. It has been found that sentence combining is superior to traditional grammar instruction. Students of lower-ability usually benefit more than other students do from sentence-combining exercises. Sentence combining is a good example of teaching the principles of grammar in a meaningful way, using students' own writing as the material with which to practise developing writing skill (Cotton 6) Therefore, before students are taught to write individual paragraphs or whole compositions, they should have enough practice in constructing well-connected sentences. Once they are able to do so, they are ready to go a step further and start writing individual paragraphs.

Furthermore, the researcher suggests that the first year in the department is to be spent on training our students in writing individual paragraphs. At the same time, this should be accompanied with all the grammatical items at the sentence level: sentence structure and sentence combination. In this connection, it is preferable that the first six weeks of the first term is to be spent in teaching sentence patterns and sentence combination with relevant exercises that enhance the information given. The remaining time of the year is to be devoted to paragraph writing. Writing a whole composition is to be left until the second year, whereas essay writing is to be practised in the third and fourth years. It is no use, as experience has shown, giving many hours to theoretical subjects in linguistics and literature at the time most of our students are unable to express themselves freely and correctly.

Accordingly, the researcher suggests that the hours given to traditional grammar in the syllabus are to be added to the composition hours. Teaching traditional grammar does not

contribute to the improvement of students' writing ability. On the contrary, overteaching of grammar may impair the writing process. As grammar is to be situational, communicative and functional, it should be taught in relation to the actual errors made by students. Therefore, grammar is to be part of the language course and not as a subject taught by itself.

In order to produce graduates competent to use the English language effectively and efficiently, teaching composition should continue for the four years students spend in the department: paragraph writing in the first year, composition writing in the second, essay writing in the third, and language or language skills, or whatever the course is called, in the fourth. The researcher also suggests that one of the tutorial hours during the last month of the fourth year can be devoted to students' presentation of their research papers. The tutorial procedure should continue for the four years. Otherwise, our efforts will be in vain and our graduates will be disappointing because of their failure in using the English language in their future career.

9- Conclusions

The important aim of teaching composition in the first-university year is to make students at the end of the year able to express themselves clearly, directly and concisely in English. This requires that students should be given every opportunity to develop their writing skills during the year.

The problem of composition assessment is how to be as fair as possible in the allocation of marks and judgments. The problem of scorer's reliability in assessment seems to take precedence over all other issues of examination. Even when the analytical method is used in evaluating composition, the problem of unreliability still exists because of the large differences in the relative weight assessors attach to the different components: content, organization, etc.

The task of evaluating communicative writing competence is one at which every teacher must work. Devising a system for evaluating student communicative skills is necessary, but devising a system that will be suitable to all teachers in all situations is not likely, nor necessary (Chastain 515).

One of the major findings is that lack of proficiency in English as a medium of instruction is the main cause of poor achievement in most subjects among first-year students in our department. Thus, the problem is often rooted in language incompetence and not with subject incompetence.

Whatever attempts have been made to make evaluating language use as objective as possible by analyzing the piece of writing into several components, evaluating each component remains subjective in itself. However, assessing a piece of writing analyzed into its components is somewhat more reliable than assessing it as a whole.

The aim of making the effect of subjectivity on assessing composition as little as possible should be the concern of teachers and test makers in their future researches. Therefore, reliability in composition assessment is a more fruitful field of study than grading grammatical items.

 In spite of all what has been said about unreliability, composition or impression technique is still widely used as a means of measuring the writing skill. It is not easy to obtain any high degree of reliability by dispensing with the subjective element. However, composition assessment can be improved considerably once the subjective element is taken into account, and once methods of reducing the unreliability inherent in the traditional methods of assessment are applied.

10- Recommendations

1- We learn writing by reading which has a stronger influence on improving writing ability than the effect of writing frequency. A variety of studies indicate that voluntary pleasure

reading, paying attention to the way the text is structured and written, contribute to the development of writing ability (Krashen 4-5; Nolasco 5; Boutin et al. iv).

Increasing reading has generally been found to be more effective in producing gains in writing than increasing writing frequency. Besides, researches strongly suggest that grammar instruction is not effective in helping students to write efficiently. Thus, increasing reading at the expense of grammar instruction has been found to result in more improvement in writing. Writing competence is acquired subconsciously. Readers are unaware that they are acquiring writing competence while they are reading (Krashen 20). At the same time, students should be encouraged to write as much as they can about, for instance, daily events, new ideas, experience, insights, or about anything that may interest them. It is advisable that they are asked from time to time to read what they have written in their journals or diaries (Smalley 3). This will certainly give the students an opportunity to practise writing and use a wide range of vocabulary of different registers and styles. As a result they build up a collection of suitable expressions which can be used in more than one situation (Nolasco 39).

2- Knowing the meaning of words is necessary; but it is only one part of the vocabulary-improvement process. It is very important that students are able to use these words in contexts and situations.   Therefore, students should learn the new vocabulary, not as individual items, but as it is used in clear and meaningful sentences. Students should learn that clarity is the main aim of writing style, and that the main principle of clarity is to keep most sentences short. For meaning to be clear, the reader must be able to grasp at once the relationships among the words in a sentence.   Long sentences tend to obscure those relationships. Of course, not every sentence is to be short. It is quite possible for long sentences to be clear if they are properly constructed. An occasional long sentence is no problem, but a

never ending series of long sentences leaves the reader confused. At the same time, short sentences won't make reading easy if the words within those sentences don't make sense. Long words, even if they have well-known meaning, or words ending in – *ization, -any, -ment, -ial,* and –*ability* should be avoided as far as possible. These words are usually long and abstract; and therefore, make reading difficult and diminish the forcefulness of the statement. Readers comprehend more quickly if the words are short and concrete because such words evoke visual images and avoid ambiguity. Short words, therefore, and short sentences are the prime ingredients of clear writing (Newsom 95-98).

   3- Emphasis must be placed on meaningful and communicative drills. Creating situations which are related to students' lives and interests is very important to motivate them to write. Unreal examples or topics should be avoided. Sometimes, lack of motivation or lack of knowledge of the topic itself, rather than an inferior ability to use English, results in bad grades. The teacher should take this into his consideration when preparing an examination paper. Meaningful and real-life topics should be given for composition questions. Topics, for instance, requiring students to act the part of another person are to be avoided because students feel that such tasks are unrealistic and uncommunicative (Heaton 20).

   4- Experience has shown that some students require more practice than others in order to be able to achieve an accurate and acceptable level of writing. In fact, most of our first-year students are of this group. They have some knowledge of basic structures and vocabulary, but their control of these areas is weak. This requires that we have to focus our efforts on such students and make them write as often as the teacher's time allows for the evaluation of their writing. Furthermore, they should be asked to read as much as they can, paying attention to sentence structures and how these sentences are connected to

each other. What these students need is written mastery of key structures, increasing their vocabulary, and developing their ability to write about a wide range of topics.

5- Questions on grammar or vocabulary should be written in paragraph forms and not in isolated sentences (Taylor 370).

6- Assessment of written work is useful primarily as a means of improving learning. Both teachers and students must have access to the results in order that teachers may be able to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and to revise the method being used if necessary; and, at the same time, students will be informed of the areas which need more of their effort.

7- In marking students' errors, it is preferable that the teacher does not mark every error. He should focus on those errors which cause difficulty to the reader. That is, attention should be given to errors which interfere with communication and comprehensibility. The errors that should receive teacher's attention are poor sentence construction, paragraph organization, omitting necessary information, misuse of sentence linkers and logical connectors, ambiguity of article and pronoun reference, subject-verb agreement, comparison of adjectives, formation of adverbs and formation of irregular verbs (Harris 72). Misspelling is not penalized unless a word is so badly spelt that it cannot be accepted. Grammatical errors should be only penalized in those tests which are designed to measure familiarity with the grammar of the language. The traditional emphasis on grammar actually slows down students' development as writers. On the other hand, if grammar instruction is related directly to students' writing errors, it can enhance writing achievement (Heaton 17). This means that grammar instruction in response to students' needs is effective in improving writing ability.

8- If it happens that a student gets a low grade, he should be told not to go protesting to his tutor that his grade should be higher. The student is to know that the tutor is the expert who

decides the level of his work. The student can, of course, go to his tutor to ask his advice on how he can improve his writing and avoid making errors, provided that he has read the tutor's comments on his work because the tutor may have already answered his queries.

9- Our attitude to a piece of written communication can be seriously affected by the writer's handwriting. Most of our students need instructions on how to make their writing easy to read, neat, and attractive. Clarity of handwriting is important because unclear handwriting may make it difficult to decide, when marking a piece of writing, whether some words are wrongly or correctly spelt due to their illegibility. The teacher can give his students the following simple rules of handwriting:

(a) Writing should be on the line.

(b) The letters, except for the capitals, are to be of the same size. The capital letters should also match each other and be twice the height of the circle-based letters.

(c) Letters are to slant slightly forward, i.e. to the right, and should be consistent. A completely vertical handwriting is probably the most legible.

(d) The space between words should be even. This includes not only regular spacing between words, it also concerns spacing of letters within the word. The spacing between words can be wider or narrower, of course within limits, provided it is regular. A good rule is that the space between words should not be less than the width of one 'round' letter and not greater than two.

(e) Movement of the pen when writing should be in the right direction, especially when writing certain letters, such as 'o', 'b', 'p', 'v', 'x', and 'z'.

(f) All capital letters are upper-case letters; and small

letters are either lower case, such as 'g', 'p', 'q', and 'y';
or upper case (all the remaining letters except 'z' and
'f' in cursive handwriting).

A pertinent question to handwriting arises about whether the letters within each word should be joined to each other or not. In fact, no one has yet devised a form of the alphabet that is completely cursive. A good general rule might be that where it is natural to join, then join; but where joining holds you up, leave it out (Mosback 60-62).

10- The teacher should provide materials and procedures that enable his students to make their own corrections. For this purpose, students should be provided with a system, usually a correction chart, which enables them to find out their mistakes and write the corrections as directed by the symbols shown on the chart. The correction chart does not include the symbols used for the faults that really need to be corrected by the teacher, such as awkward or unidiomatic usage, as well as those faults that are concerned with finer points of style, reasoning, and diction. If the teacher feels that his students are not yet ready to handle the correction symbols on the correction chart, it would be advisable to begin with elementary type of errors, then gradually introduce the other symbols. To encourage students benefit from the correction of their errors, the teacher may suggest that they keep a list of these corrections with the surrounding context and to review this list from time to time (Frank vi ff).

In order to enable the students find out their own mistakes indicated by the symbols of the correction chart and be able to correct them, they should be given adequate information about grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Grammar should not be overtaught. Overteaching of grammar can seriously impair the composing process (Krashen 34).   Materials concerning grammar are to be dealt with in the context of communicative

treatment of writing skills. Any form of grammar taught should be related to uses where it is communicatively appropriate and functionally motivated (Richards ix-x).   In addition to the grammatical forms and items of this kind, the teacher should point out the morphemes that change the grammatical status of the word to which these morphemes are affixed; for instance, from verb to adjective, e.g. run   running (water); noun to verb, e.g. circle   encircle; or at the end to change adjective to verb, e.g. weak   weaken, and the like (Newby 27).

   Acquiring the unconscious control of a set of grammatical rules is merely a function of the frequency and reinforcement associated with sentences illustrating the rules. Language, in fact, is a rule-governed behaviour, and learning involves internalizing the rules (Byrne 51-53).

   11- One of the most difficult things in learning English is making the transition from the classroom to the 'real' world. In the classroom, everyone knows that the speaker is a student and mistakes are allowed. Speaking English outside the classroom is completely different and often students feel lost as soon as they step outside the door. Lists of memorized vocabulary are suddenly useless when, for example, ordering food in a restaurant.

   From the researcher's long experience in teaching English as a second language, and as a student of English in the middle of the last century, he has found that role playing is one of the ways ESL/EFL instructor can ease students' transition into using English in real world situations. Role playing is where students take on different personalities. The initial situation develops from the students interacting with each other and can literally go in any direction.   This gives students the motivation and involvement where they have to think in English.

   Role playing is interesting, memorable and engaging, and students retain the material they have learned. In their assumed

role, students drop their shyness and other personality, making it one of the best tools available for teaching a second language.

The value of role playing comes from students immersing themselves in the material. The teacher as a facilitator of the role playing must support students in their roles. The teacher should not do anything to interrupt the conversation. Grammar correction should be left to the end. Correcting students in the middle of their conversation interrupts the progress of the role playing. It is recommended that the teacher makes notes and the correction is done after.

Role playing is great fun. Experience has shown that students love it. They retain what they learn, and often leave the lecture room laughing and still arguing.

One hour a week, out of the six hours given to composition and grammar courses, can be devoted to this activity which is worth trying.

<u>APPENDIX 1</u>
<u>Symbol Chart for Correction of Compositions</u>

agree   *agreement.*   Make the verb singular or plural
          according to the main word in the subject.

              The owner of these buildings *is* **a very rich man.**
            If 'each' or 'every' is part of the subject, the verb
            must be singular.
          ***Everybody is coming* to the party.**

ap   **apostrophe.**   An apostrophe has been incorrectly
          added or omitted. Apostrphes are used for
          constructions with auxiliaries (*who's = who is*) or
          for possessives of nouns (*the girl's hat)* but
           not for the possessive of pronouns (*its function,*
           whose book).

art   **article.**   An article (*a, an, the)* is incorrect if
          omitted. Use an article with a singular coun-

	table noun. Do not use an article with a noncountable noun that stands alone (*I am studying history).* Use *the* if the noncountable noun is followed by a modifier (*the* history *of the United States).*
C	**capital letter.** Correct for capitalization. Use an initial capital letter for a word referring to nationality or religion (*an Italian custom; the Catholic religion),* a day of the week, a month, a holiday, a geographic name.
	close up. Join together as one word (*them selves*).
comp	**comparison.** Use the correct word-form, preposition, pronoun or auxiliary required in a comparison.
concl	**conlusion.** Add a conclusion.
con	**connection .** Use an appropriate connection within a paragraph.
coor	**coordination.** Too many short sentences have been written separately or joined by *and.* Sub-ordinate some of the sentences.
dangl	**dangling.** Correct the *–ing* or *–ed* phrase that has no subject to be attached to.
	DANGLING: While *watching* TV,*her dinner* was burning on the stove.
	CORRECTION: While watching TV, she did not notice that her dinner was burning on the stove.
	Or: While she was watching TV, her dinner was burning on the stove.
frag	**fragment.** Do not cut off a part of a sentence from the rest.
	FRAGMENT:She has many hobbies. *For example, tennis and cooking..*
	CORRECTION: She has many hobbies,

for example, tennis and cooking

OR:She has many hobbies.

Among them are tennis and cooking.

H   **hyphen.**   Correct or add a hyphen within a
word or at the end of a line. Do not
use a hyphen
at the beginning of a line.

inform   **informal.** Change the informal expression to
one that is more appropriate for
formal English.

intro   **introduction.**   Add an introduction

neg   **negative.**   Avoid the use of a double
negative
DOUBLE NEGATIVE**;**   There isn't
nobody here.
CORRECTION**;**   There isn't
anybody here.   OR: There is
nobody here.

N   **number (of nouns and adjectives):** Use the
correct singular or plural for a noun.
Adjectives do not have any plural form
except for *this* (plural *these*),
that   (plural *those*), *much* (plural
many),
little (plural *few*).

par   **paragraph development.**   The paragraph
does not develop one main point, or it
includes   more than one point, or its
main point is not sufficiently
developed.

//   **parallelism.**   Use the same grammatical
form for word groups connected by words
like *and, o*r*, than.*
FAULT IN PARALLELISM**:** The girl promised to

stay home that week and
that she would study for her tests.
CORRECTION; The girl promised to
stay home that week and to study for
her tests.

prep	.	**preposition.** Correct the preposition fault.
pro		**pronoun.** Correct the pronoun fault. The fault may be**:**

    1- an incorrect form of the pronoun

    2- a confusion between *it* and *there*

    3- a vague or unclear reference of a pronoun

    4- a change in the pronoun number (singular or plural)

    5- a shift in person (*we, you, one)*

    6- an unncessary pronoun

P   **punctuation.** Correct the punctuation. Watch carefully for a comma or a semicolon that has been added or omitted. Correct a run-on sentence (two sentences incorrectly joined into one by a comma or no punctuation) by using a period or a semicolon.

RUN-ON; I will have to read more in college, consequently I will improve my reading skill.

CORRECTION: I will have to read more in college; consequently I will improve my reading skill

repet   **repetitious.** Cut out the unnecessary expressions or ideas that repeat what has already been said.

SS	**sentence structure.** Supply the missing subject, verb, or object. Or correct the form of phrase used as a subject or an object.
sp	**spelling.** Use the correct spelling. Observe the rules of doubling final consonants, keeping or dropping final *e*, changing *y* to *i*, combining the letters *i* and *e.*
trans	**transition.** Add a connection, i.e. a joining word or words.
vague	**vague.** Make the expression or the statement more specific in relation to the point being made.
V	**verb.** Use the correct verb tense**,** verb form, or auxiliary**.** FORM**; be + *-ing* (progressive)** **be + *-ed* (passive)** **have + *-ed* (perfect** **tense)** Use the *–ing* form of a verb after a preposition.
WF	**word form.** Use the correct ending for the word (determined by the word's part-of-speech function in the sentence).
WO	**word order.** Use the correct word order for: questions and indirect questions; adverbials, adjectives. Do not separate a verb and its object.
~	**Reverse the word order.**
wordy	**wordy.** Remove the excessive wording that has been used for ideas being expressed.

APPENDIX 2

Guide for Correcting Writing Errors

Each number represents an area of usage. The teacher uses these numbers when marking his students' writing to indicate that the student has made an error. The student should refer to this list to find out what kind of error he has made and then to make the necessary correction.

1	SINGULAR-PLURAL	He have been here for six month. ①① *He has been here for six months.*
2	WORD FORM	I saw a beauty picture. ② *I saw a beautiful picture.*
3	WORD CHOICE	She got on the taxi. ③ *She got into the taxi.*
4	VERB TENSE	He is here since June. ④ *He has been here since June.*
5+	ADD A WORD	I want ∧ go to the zoo. ⑤+ *I want to go to the zoo.*
5−	OMIT A WORD	She entered to the university. ⑤− *She entered the university.*
6	WORD ORDER	I saw five times that movie. ⑥ *I saw that movie five times.*
7	INCOMPLETE SENTENCE	I went to bed. Because I was tired. ⑦ *I went to bed because I was tired.*
8	SPELLING	An accident occured. ⑧ *An accident occurred.*
9	PUNCTUATION	What did he say. ⑨ *What did he say?*
10	CAPITALIZATION	I am studying english. ⑩ *I am studying English.*
11	ARTICLE	I had a accident. ⑪ *I had an accident.*
12?	MEANING NOT CLEAR	He borrowed some smoke. ⑫? *(? ? ?)*
13	RUN-ON SENTENCE*	My roommate was sleeping, we didn't want to wake her up. ⑬ *My roommate was sleeping. We didn't want to wake her up.*

*A run-on sentence occurs when two sentences are incorrectly connected: the end of one sentence and the beginning of the next sentence are not properly marked by a period and a capital letter or by a semicolon.

APPENDIX 3

Symbols used for Correcting Composition Writing

means "add" (add a word or words)

(   )   means "omit" (take out)

>   means "indent" (go in 5 spaces to the right)

?   means "mystery" (I can't interpret this. Rewrite or leave out)

/   means "separate" (leave a space between these two items)

Gr   a grammatical mistake

T   a mistake in the use of tenses

F   wrong form of the word

The Researcher's Suggested Chart

Going through the three symbol charts, we find that the last one is concerned mainly with the mechanics of writing except the symbol **Gr** which covers a wide area of writing errors, but without any details. The symbol chart in Appendix 1 contains some symbols for errors that the student cannot correct without the teacher's help. The symbol chart in Appendix 2 is easy to apply and saves time on the teacher's part because all that he does is to write a number over the error. But this chart is not comprehensive for it does not cover all the writing errors. To make this chart include a wide range of symbols for correcting errors, we may add to it some symbols from the other two charts in Appendices 1 and 3.

From the chart in Appendix 1 we may add these symbols:

agree,   **, dang, H, neg, N, //, prep, pro, SS,** and **~**   . From the chart in Appendix 3, we may add these two symbols: < and / **.** Numbering these additions starts from number 14 upwards because the chart in Appendix 2 ends in number 13.

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