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RESEARCH

Analyzing the Use of Goutsos' Model in Expository Essays in English and Arabic

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Abstract:

This study tried to investigate the dominant elements of topic signals and topic strategies used in English and Arabic expository essays. The study adopted a descriptive methodology which combined both qualitative and quantitative analyses. One instrument was used for data collection which was writing samples for the students. The subjects were divided into two groups of students: Native Speakers of English (NSE) and Non-Native Speakers of English (NNSE). The two groups were in secondary schools. The NSE wrote expository compositions in English while the NNSE wrote expository compositions in Arabic and English. The results showed that the two groups employed the sequential strategies for continuity and discontinuity. They used them to signal the closing of a continuation span, starting a transition span and opening a new continuation span. However, there appear to be some differences in this application (quantity-wise and quality-wise). These differences may be caused by the influence of mother tongue, competence in the language (whether native or non-native), instruction on how to write, ignorance or negligence of the sequential techniques by the students, the teachers or the textbook designers. The study suggested that the importance of drawing the attention of the text book writers and teachers to the importance of training the students on how to effectively employ topic strategies and signals in order to write well composed essays in the expository writing.

Key words: Topic structure model, Topic organization, Sequential relations.

INTRODUCTION

A model of topic organization has been developed for the analysis of expository discourse by Goutsos (1997:35) who argued that 'it is possible to analyze discourse topic organization by focusing on sequential relations in discourse'. This argument was proved by his study on strategies of sequentiality in expository texts. Those strategies are called topic strategies and they are used to indicate continuity and discontinuity of a topic discussed in a text. Those topic strategies are subdivided into: topic continuation and topic shift strategies. Topic continuity is realized by the technique of topic continuation, whereas topic shift is realized by the techniques of topic framing, topic introduction, and topic closure.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many researchers agree that a certain amount of surface signals or cohesive markers in discourse are necessary for ease of processing and producing an organized and coherent text in sequential order (Enkvist: 1978). However, the current research highlights the important role of linguistic devices in the topic organization and as a means by which writers start, continue, and end an expository discourse as well as the organization of the expository text. Therefore, there is a need for a model to explain and describe the role of linguistic devices in the discourse topic organization and consequently as a source of coherence.

Goutsos' model is chosen by the researcher of this study because she is a teacher of English and she is concerned with the problems of students in the four skills of English especially

writing. Moreover, it contains a coherent view of topic facets unlike the existing approaches of the different facets of topic which did not address this issue.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research sheds light on the crucial role of linguistic devices in the management of topic. The results of this study can improve the awareness of English teachers and ESL students on the significant role of surface signals or cohesive markers in discourse as a source of coherence and therefore provide them with a pedagogical approach of text organization. Moreover, the results of this study indicate the significant role of evaluating the organization of students' compositions and consequently improve students' writing essays.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
This study has the following objectives:
1. Investigating the dominant elements of topic signals and topic strategies used in English and Arabic expository essays.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This study is going to answer the following questions:
1. To what extent do English and Arabic students follow Goutsos' model with regard to topic strategies and topic signals?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Goutsos' model
Sequential techniques are indicated by linguistic items in the text which are called topic signals. These linguistic items or devices used by writers and perceived by readers as signals of

discourse pattern of organization are categorized into:
orthographic markers, metadiscourse items, discourse markers,
sentence structure, time framing, cohesive devices and
prediction (Gumperz: 1982, Hoey: 1983 and Brown and Yule:
1983). Sequentiality in writing involves the basic tasks of
indicating continuity, discontinuity, as well as achieving a
regular succession of transition and continuation spans.
Continuation spans is one of the areas of local continuity or
stability, interrupted by areas of quick ruptures which
introduce instability into the text that are called transition
spans. The basic pattern of the sequential techniques
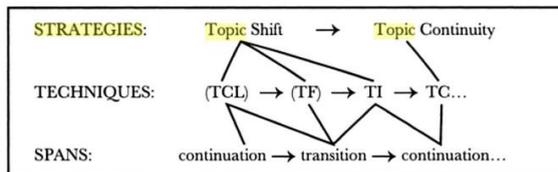succession is as follows:

FIGURE 3.1. **Topic structure model.**
where: TCL is topic closure, TF is topic framing, TI is topic introduction, TC is topic continuation, ( ) is optional,
and → is followed by.

Figure 2. 1 : Topic structure model

Goutsos' model is the most appropriate and is better and more
relevant than the existing approaches on topic as a unit both at
the sentence level and the discourse level which is filled with
problems unlike Goutsos' model that adopts a *how* perspective
which focuses on the structuring rather than the individual
units of topic. Although a systematic treatment of topic in the
how perspective is not always clear in the study of conversation
and narrative, as this study gives an example of how this can be
achieved in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive and analytical in nature. It uses
samples of expository writing composition produced by
secondary school students as its primary data.

The writing samples will be subjected to in-depth qualitative analysis which will be supported by rigorous quantitative analysis. Both types of analyses will produce results that will be used to answer the research question.

Subjects

The subjects of this study consist of two groups of students in Khartoum State (the capital of Sudan). The first group of students consisted of Sudanese students who are non-native speakers of English and whose first language is Arabic. They study at Zat Alnatagian secondary school for girls. The second group consisted of students who are native speakers of English from England and USA. They study at British Education Schools in Khartoum. The Sudanese group consisted of 19 female students who were enrolled in the second year at the age of (14-15). The English group consisted of 19 male and female English students who were enrolled in the second year at an age ranging from 14 years to 15 years.

Data collection and procedure

The data were obtained from the writing samples of students who are native speakers of English (NSE) and students who are non-native speakers of English (NNSE). The NSE group wrote expository compositions (in English). The NNSE wrote two versions; one in English and the other in Arabic.

The students were asked to choose one topic from a list of four topics to write on. The compositions written by both groups were collected in the second term of the academic year 2006/2007 during second and fourth period of the particular day. The compositions in English were written in fixed time (60 minutes), but another one hour was given to the Sudanese to write the expository composition in Arabic, this was done after a break of half an hour following to their finishing of writing the English expository composition.

Study instrument

The compositions written by the two groups were analyzed to provide answers to the research questions.

The writing task consisted of four topics of composition that deal with different aspects of writing in order to give the students the chance to choose one topic to write on. These topics were chosen because they did not require expert knowledge from the students. The students could use their background knowledge of the topic in order to express themselves clearly. These topics were taken from Carrell (1992):

1. A problem in society that concerns you.
2. The easiest things for you to do in your home.
3. My life will be different from that of my parents.
4. The most important technological invention of the past twenty years.

The same topics were translated into Arabic and were given to the Sudanese students to choose one topic to write on. The topic in Arabic had to be the same topic that the student wrote in English. The main purpose of the writing samples was to find out the extent to whether the native and non-native speakers of English follow Goutsos' model with regard to topic strategies and topic signals in writing expository compositions.

Validity and reliability

The compositions which were written by the students were checked by two independent raters for the occurrence of topic strategies and topic signals. Moreover, the descriptive analyses of the students' essays were checked for inter-rater reliability.

Limits of interpreting the data

There were a number of limitations in data interpretation:

Firstly, the students did not receive any instruction regarding the appropriate limit of words number in writing the

expository composition. This might have affected the number of occurrence of topic signals and topic strategies in the compositions of English and Sudanese students.

Secondly, the sample size of the subjects is small. It therefore cannot be considered representative of all and the use of a bigger sample may result in different results. However, it is felt that the results from this study can assist teachers in understanding better the problems that students face in writing expository essays.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

This chapter presents the analyses of the texts written by the students.
  (1) The texts written by the Native Speakers of English (ESTs).
  (2) The texts written by the Sudanese students in (SATs).
  (3) The texts written by the Sudanese students in English (SETs)
Basically, the texts were as follows:
  (1) 19 texts written by native speakers of English (ESTs)
  (2) 19 texts written by Sudanese students in Arabic (SATs)
  (3) 19 texts written by Sudanese students in English (SETs)
However, not all of the texts have been subjected to analysis for a number of reasons:
  (1) The analysis continued until a point of data saturation has been reached (i.e. until new information stopped to be obtained).
  (2) Some of the texts were excluded because they did not exhibit the required competence of expository writing.
  (3) Some of the texts which were written by the Sudanese students in English had serve language problems *per se*. They were not suitable for analysis because the content was almost incomprehensible.

Consequently, the number of texts which was analyzed was as follows:

(1) 5 ESTs.
(2) 5 SATs.
(3) 5 SETs

As for the texts written by the Sudanese students in Arabic, a faithful translation of the texts is provided in English to accompany the original Arabic text. The translation adopted was as literal as possible in order not to interfere with the content and structure of the original text. However, and because of some problems with paragraphing and punctuation, the segmentation of the texts into paragraphs and sentence was done according to the presentations of ideas. So, if a paragraph (or a long part of text) is linked with elements such as "**و**") -and), the decimal numbering is used where it is felt appropriate. In addition, the taxonomy of Goutsos's Model was kept as it is and the Arabic version was made to fit with it in terms of the syntactic terminology used. Explanations are made in instances which require some sort of 'contrastive analyses'. As for the English texts written by the Sudanese students, no editing of any errors (grammar, spelling, expressions, etc) has been done. The texts were analyzed in relation to organizational feature according to the Model of Goutsos.

The Goutsos's Model which is used for the analysis can be summarized as follows:

- ➢ **Topic Continuity**
  - o **Paragraph breaks**
  - o **Absence of signals**
  - o **Tense continuity**
  - o **Discourse markers**
  - o **Encapsulation nominals**
  - o **Local cohesive device of repetition**
- ➢ **Topic Shift**

- **Topic Framing**
  - **Paragraph break**
  - **Sentence-initial adjuncts**
  - **Enumeration**
  - **Question-answer pair**
  - **Discourse markers**
  - **Metadiscourse markers**
- **Topic Introduction**
  - **Initial dummy elements**
  - **Indefinite subject**
  - **Question-answer pair**
  - **Enumeration**
  - **Metadiscourse markers**
  - **Renominalization**
- **Topic Closure**
  - **Discourse markers**
  - **Metadiscourse markers**
  - **Encapsulation**
  - **Paragraph break**

The texts were analyzed qualitatively to show how the sequential strategies (Topic Continuation and Topic shift) were employed by the students and how they were indicated through topic signals. The texts were coded as follows:

(1) The texts which were written by the native speakers of English:
   (a) EST 1 (English speakers Text 1)
   (b) EST 2 (English speakers Text 2)
   (c) EST 3 (English speakers Text 3)
   (d) EST4 (English speakers Text 4)
   (e) EST 5 (English speakers Text 5)
(2) The texts which were written by the Sudanese in Arabic (SATs)
   (a) SAT 1 (Sudanese Arabic Text 1)

    (b) SAT 2 (Sudanese Arabic Text 2)

    (c) SAT 3 (Sudanese Arabic Text 3)

    (d) SAT 4 (Sudanese Arabic Text 4)

    (e) SAT 5 (Sudanese Arabic Text 5)

  (3) The texts which were written by the Sudanese students in English (SETs)

    (a) SET 1 (Sudanese English Text 1)

    (b) SET 2 (Sudanese English Text 2)

    (c) SET 3 (Sudanese English Text 3)

    (d) SET 4 (Sudanese English Text 4)

    (e) SET 5 (Sudanese English Text 5)

All of the texts were segmented using the decimal system to show paragraphs and sentences as follows:

1.1-------------- 1.2 ------------------------- 1.3 --------------------- 1.4-----------
2.2-------------2.3 ---------------- 2.4 ------------------ 2.5 -------------
3.1 -------------- 3.2 ----------------- 3.3------------------------ 3.4 -------------

Each paragraph is indicated by a new section (1.1, 2.1, 3.1, etc) Sentences within the paragraph are indicated by sub-sections (1.2, 2.4, 3.5, etc)

    Throughout the analysis, reference is made by this system of decimal numbering of paragraphs and sentences. Also, the point being referred to in the sentences is underlined and *italicized* or **bolded**. For ease of reference, the template of Goutsos's Model is repeated for every text.

    As for the quantitative analysis, frequency tables of the strategies and the topic signals are compiled and used for statistical analysis. The results are then compared to arrive at results which are used to answer the research questions and to verify the research hypotheses.

    (a) An example of a qualitative analysis will be mentioned for every type of three texts EST, SAT and SET.

Native English speakers' texts (ESTs)

EST1
  ➢ **Topic Continuity**

In EST1the sequential technique of continuity is indicated mainly by paragraph breaks. It is also signaled by the overall local cohesion in the text as well as the continuity of the tense.

  ➢ **Topic Shift**
  • **Topic Framing**

In EST1, Topic Shift is indicated in a number of ways. The following extracts exemplify this.

  o **Paragraph break**

3.1 If these figures aren't sufficient to tear our hearts with sorrow, then they are certainly shredded by reading that many children under 12 years have abused other children.

In 3.1, the only topic signal is the paragraph break. The discussion moves swiftly to 3.1.

Other examples of paragraph break are in 4.1 and 5.1 of the same text.

  o **Sentence-initial adjuncts**

1.1 *Turning the newspaper pages every morning* my heart sinks as the stories of problems faced by children predominate.

4.1 *Faced with conflicting advice*, bombarded with a media

In this extract, topic framing is indicated by the underlined clause.

Other examples are

2.*1 In yesterday's world* it was the adults who committed murder, rape, abuse

Today it's the children

These clauses provide a new orientation to the discourse as they prepare for an upcoming topic introduction.

  o **Enumeration**

The following extract shows an example of enumeration. It is interesting to see that the successive topic introductions in 2.4

– 2.8 are not preceded by an explicit "enumeration pair". It seems that the writer preferred to keep that imbedded in the noun phrase 'the children' in 2.3.

2.3 _Today_ _it's_ the children. 2.4 _One in eight children has used an illicit drug. 2.5 One in four children is severely maltreated. 2.6 One in twenty children has faced sexual abuse, and over 90% of them were abused by someone they know. 2.7 One in seven children has been neglected. 2.8 One in five children has experienced domestic violence_

- **Topic Introduction**
  o **Initial dummy elements**

The two extracts below are examples of it-cleft element that indicates topic introduction through the theme-rheme construction.

5.1 It is no longer the mother and father who are raising their children exclusively

5.4 _It is no longer sufficient_ to apply

  o **Renominalization**

  1.2 _The children are forging_ battles against odds we never faced in our time. 5.3 And I am not sure as _adults we_ are supportive enough to help _them_ win this war. 5.4 It is no longer sufficient to apply the traditional receipts to raise our children. _5.5 They need us now more than any other era. 5.6 They are unable to maintain their unique identities because they are too busy trying to fit in or face the fears of what we ourselves fear in this so called modern world._

Here the repeated use of the pronouns (underlined) is used to signal topic introduction. They allow for the transition of continuation spans.

- **Topic Closure**

Throughout this text, topic closure is signaled by paragraph breaks.

Texts written by Sudanese students in Arabic (SATs)
SAT 1

➢ Topic Continuity

In SAT1, the sequential strategy of Topic Continuity is employed through the following signals:

o Paragraph break

All through the text, paragraph breaks show that the writer indicated continuity by segmentations of the text into 5 paragraphs each of which opens a new continuation span.

o Absence of signals

Since continuity is the default case, it is indicated by absence of signals.

o Tense continuity

The text uses the continuous tense all through. There is no other tense used here. Examples of this are

بجعله أفضل الأعمال التي تفعلها لإن أيمانك به   1.1 إنِ الإيمان بامر ما و بأهميته كفيل سيعطيك طاقة تساعدك على أدئه و اقتناعك به سيدفعك دفعا للبحث و التنقيب عن كل خباياه ليخرج كأفضل ما يكون.

Believing in a matter and its importance is sure to make it the best of acts **to do** because your belief in it <u>will give</u> you energy **to help** you to do it and your conviction <u>will</u> surely <u>push</u> you to try to find and dig for all of its potentialities so that it <u>comes out</u> in the best possible way.

In the extract above, the underlined words in the Arabic text 1.1 corresponds to the underlined words in the English translation.

Syntactic markers for the continuous and future tense in Arabic are   ت as in تفعلها and تساعدك. The future in Arabic is expressed by the contiguous form of the verb and is sometimes indicated by the morpheme س as in سيعطيك and سيدفعك . The translation from Arabic into English may sometimes make it imperative to use the *infinitive with to* for the present continuous such as the bolded word English version: **to do** and **to help** the equivalents of تفعلها and تساعدك respectively.

o   **Discourse markers**

Topic Continuation is also indicated by discourse markers. An instance of this is evident in the extract below:

3.2   **فكما عرف دائما أن الممنوع مرغوب3.3 و لنفس أساس هذه النظرية ما تفعله بنفسك ليس كما يطلب منك أو تؤمر بفعله.**

as it is normally known that what is prohibited is wanted **and** because of the same basis of this principle what you do by yourself is not the same as what you are asked to do or ordered to do.

In the Arabic version in 3.2 above, the morphemes **ف**, **و** and **أو**are discourse markers of continuation . They do the function of coordination which their English equivalents (**as**, **and**, **or**) perform. As such they are indicators of continuation.

o   **Encapsulation nominals**

4.1 **و حتى يسهل الإنسان على نفسه ما يفعله عليه أن يحاول جاهدا الاستماع و الإحساس بالمسؤولية تجاهه كأنك و دون سواك من طلب منك أداء هذا العمل**

as if you are and not any person other than you who has been asked to do **this piece of work**

In the extract 4.1 above, the Arabic demonstrative article **هذا** with the noun **العمل** is used to encapsulate the proposition o.,loijhgf78po kjnerh67gtf ,u"efrgtn   the sentences in 3.1, 3.2 and 4.1 before it. In the English version this is expressed by the word "**this**" in the phrase "**this piece of work**"

o   **Local cohesive device of repetition**

This is indicated by using the different forms of verb **فعل** from beginning to end in the text (1.1 **تفعلها 3.1   تفعلها 3.2 فعله 2.1 تفعل** **6.2 تفعل 6.1 أفعله 4.1 يفعله**)

➢ **Topic Shift**

The three sub-strategies of the sequential strategy of Topic Shift are indicated by the following signals.

- **Topic Framing**
  o   **Paragraph breaks**

All paragraph breaks indicate the closing a current continuation span and the opining of a new span. This is a signal of Topic Framing.

- o **Sentence-initial adjuncts**

This signal is employed to indicate Topic framing. For example:

4.1 و حتى يسهل الإنسان على نفسه ما يفعله عليه أن يحاول جاهدا الاستماع و الإحساس بالمسؤولية تجاهه كأنك و دون سواك من طلب منك أداء هذا العمل 4.2 فافخر بنفسك حتى تصير أهلا للإعتماد عليك.

In order for a person to make what he does easy for himself,.........

The initial sentence adjunct in 4.1 above (translated in the English version below it) sets the scene for the upcoming text. As such, it serves the purpose of Topic Framing.

- o **Enumeration**

3.1 لهذا السبب و غيره تكون الأعمال التي تفعلها بمليء إرادتك أنجح دائما مما يفرض عليك بسبب الإقتناع أولا و بسبب الرغبة في أدائه ثانيا.

For this reason and other reasons the things which you do out of your own will is usually more successful than the ones which are imposed on you because of conviction **firstly** and because of the desire to do it **secondly.**

This example shows how the writer used enumeration by using **أولا** and **ثانيا**; the equivalents of **firstly** and **secondly** in the translation.

- o **Discourse markers**

The extract below (2.1) gives an example of how the writer used discourse markers in order to signal Topic Framing. The discourse marker in Arabic "**أما**"(= **However** in English) sets the scene for the following text – closing a previous continuation span and opening a transition span. Also, "**و من ثم**" (= **hence**) paves the way for the phrase "**أدئه**" (=its performance.)

2.1 أما عدم الإقتناع به فسيجعل أدائك سيئا لإنك تفعل ما تخالف به ذاتك و معتقداتك مما سيؤثر على طريقة نظرك له و من ثم أدئه.

However, not being convinced of it will make your
performance bad because you will be doing something that
contradict yourself and your beliefs which will affect the way
you see it and **hence** its performance.

    o **Metadiscourse markers**

Two examples of metadiscourse markers in this text are in 3.2
and 5.1 below:

The Arabic expressions "**فكما عرف دائما**" and "**شخصيا**" (equivalents to
"**as it is normally known**" and "Personally speaking" in the
English translation) show how the writer was able to employ
metadiscourse markers in order to signal Topic Framing where
a continuation span was closed and a transition span opened.

3.2 فكما عرف دائما أن الممنوع مرغوب

as it is normally known that what is prohibited is wanted

5.1 شخصيا لا صعوبة معينة في أداء عمل معين

Personally speaking, there is no specific difficulty in doing
any piece of work

    • **Topic Introduction**

The sub-strategy of Topic Introduction is signaled in this text
by the following devices:

    o **Indefinite subject**

The example below shows the employment of an indefinite
subject as a signal for Topic Introduction (opening of a new
continuation span). In 4.1 the Arabic noun "**الإنسان**" (which is the
subject of the sentence) is used here as generic term that does
not refer to a specific man or woman. The equivalent in the
English translation is "**person"**

4.1 و حتى يسهل **الإنسان** على نفسه ما يفعله

In order for a **person** to make what he does easy for himself

- o **Renominalizaion**

The device of renominaliztion is abundantly used through this text. In Arabic, the use of explicit and implicit pronouns that refer to people and objects is a common way of renominalization. The following extract shows this:

2.1 أما عدم الإقتناع بِه فَسيجعل أدائكِ سيئا لإنكِ تفعل ما تخالف بِه ذاتكِ و معتقداتكِ مما سيؤثر على طريقة نظركِ له و من ثِم أدئه.

However, not being convinced of **it** will make **your** performance bad because **you** will be doing something that contradict **yourself** and **your** beliefs which will affect the way **you** see it and hence its performance.

The underlined pronouns in the Arabic text (2.1) correspond to the bolded pronouns in the English translation. They all refer to the entity which is being addressed by the universal pronoun "you" throughout the whole of this text and the concept of "piece of work" which is the essence of the topic. In addition, the Arabic implicit pronouns (such as the ones that can be inserted after **فَسيجعل** and سيؤثر as (هو or it) renominalize the same.

- • **Topic Closure**

Topic Closure is indicated the following topic signals

- o **Discourse markers**

4.2 فَافخر بنفسك حتى تصير أهلا للإعتماد عليك.

so feel pride in yourself **so that** you are worthy of being depended on.

The morpheme "**فَ**" (= **so)** brings the discourse to stop as it signals that the writer has finished discussing the point and is closing the continuation span. This is further coupled by "**حتى**" (= **so that)** which finalizes the discussion.

- o **Metadiscourse markers**

6.1 خَتاما أحب ما أفعله و أفعله بإخلاص و حسن نية

In conclusion, love what you do and   do it with devotion and in good will.

In 6.1 above, the metadiscourse device "**ختاما**" (= **In conclusion**) is a signal that the writer is closing down the discussion.

    o **Paragraph break**

All of the paragraph breaks indicate the finality of the thread being presented in the specific paragraph and as such signal Topic Closure.

Texts written by Sudanese students in English (SETs)
SET 1

    ➢ **Topic Continuity**

In this text, the sequential strategy of Topic Continuity is indicated by the following signals/

    • **Paragraph break**

In 2,1 below, topic continuation is signaled by paragraphs break which indicates the opening of a new continuation span.

    1.1 *It is very important in our life because it makes the world as a small village.*

    o **Discourse markers**

In 3.1, the discourse marker "*and*" signals continuity of the topic.

3.1 You can get everything which you want from Internet in whatever time you wish *and* it make ever thing ease.

Also, in 4.1 "*But*" as a discourse marker signals the opening of a new continuation sapan and thus it indicates continuity.

4.1 *But internet has a lot of demerits for weak-self people like wasting time on facebook and Twitter*

    ➢ **Topic Shift**

The sequential strategy of **Topic Framing** is indicated by the topic signal of **Paragraph break** in 1.1 below.

1.1 Internet is the World Wide Web (www) which belong to certain company like Google and Yahoo.

It is also indicated by **Sentence-initial adjuncts** as in 3.2 (the underlined if-clause).

> *1.1* *If you have research and information* you can get them from internet and if you want to store them you can download them in internet.

- **Topic Introduction**

The Topic Stringy of Topic Introduction is indicated by the topics "**Initial dummy elements**" "*some people*"

> 4.2 and *some people* enter to sites which are forbidden by Islam.

➢ **Topic Closure**

Topic Closure is indicated by the topic signal of **Metadiscourse markers** as is shown by "*Any Way*" in 5.1 below.

5.1 *Any way* internet is to be part of our life which we can't give up from it.

This section presents the quantitative analysis of the data. Firstly, the three types of texts (ESTs, SATs and SETs) will be presented separately. Then the analysis will compare the results as follows:

(1) ESTs v SATs

Here the comparison will show the similarity and difference in the usage of sequential strategies between English students and Sudanese students in their respective native languages.

(2) SATs v SETs

Here the comparison will be made to show the similarity and difference in the usage of sequential strategies between the texts produced by the Sudanese students in their first language and in the second language.

(3) ESTs v SETs.

Here the comparison will be made to show the similarity and difference in the usage of sequential strategies in expository writing of English students and in that of Sudanese students.

However, not all of the topic signals will appear in this analysis. Some of the topic signals do not lend themselves naturally to quantitative analysis. These are paragraph breaks, absence of topic signals and tense continuity. Such signals cannot be counted and consequently they cannot be accommodated in a frequency table.

ESTs

Table 5. 1: Topic signals employed to indicate Topic Continuity in ESTs

Topic Continuity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse Markers	3	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Encapsulation Nominals	2	33.3	33.3	83.3
	Local Cohesive Device of Repetition	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.1) and the histogram (5.1) above show that the topic signals which are used mostly by native speakers of English for Topic Continuation are discourse markers. They amount to 50% in the ESTs.

Table5. 2: Topic signals employed for Topic Framing in ESTs

Topic Framing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sentence-initial adjuncts	4	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Enumeration	3	25.0	25.0	58.3
	Question-answer pair	1	8.3	8.3	66.7
	Discourse markers	1	8.3	8.3	75.0
	Metadiscourse markers	3	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.2) and the histogram in (5.2) show the topic signals
which are employed by the native speakers of English for Topic
Framing. They reveal that the most used topic signal is
"sentence-initial adjunct" (33. %) followed by "enumeration" and
"Metadiscourse markers" (25% for each). The least used are
"Question-answer pair" and "Discourse markers" (8.3% for
each).

Table 5.3: Topic signals employed for Topic Introduction in ESTs
Topic Introduction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Initial dummy elements	2	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Indefinite subject	4	44.4	44.4	66.7
	Question-answer pair	1	11.1	11.1	77.8
	Enumeration	1	11.1	11.1	88.9
	Renominalization	1	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	9	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.3) and the histogram in Figure (5.3) indicate the that
the topic signal used most by native speakers of English for
Topic Introduction is the "Indefinite subject" (44.4%) followed
by "Initial dummy elements" (22.2%) . The three topic signals of
"Question-answer pair", "Enumeration" and "Renominalization"
are equal (11.1% for each). The one which was not used at was
"Metadiscourse markers".

Table 5. 4: Topic signals employed for Topic Closure in ESTs
Topic Closure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse markers	2	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Metadiscourse markers	1	25.0	25.0	75.0
	Encapsulation	1	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.4) and histogram (5.4) show that "Discourse markers" are the most used topic signals for Topic closure by native speakers of English. The two other ones "Metadiscourse markers" and "Encapsulation" are used equally (25% for each one).

SATs

Table5. 5: Topic signals employed for Topic Continuity in SATs
Topic Continuity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse markers	5	62.5	62.5	62.5
	Encapsulation nominals	2	25.0	25.0	87.5
	Local cohesive device of repetition	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.5) and histogram (5.5) show that the topic signal of "Discourse markers" is the one which is mostly used by Sudanese students when they write expository texts in Arabic. It amounts to 62/5%. The topic signal of "Encapsulation nominals" comes next with a percentage of 25%. The least used is "Local cohesive device of repetition" (12.5%).

Table 5. 6: Topic signals employed for Topic Framing in SATs
Topic Framing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sentence-initial adjuncts	5	35.7	35.7	35.7
	Enumeration	3	21.4	21.4	57.1
	Discourse markers	3	21.4	21.4	78.6
	Metadiscourse markers	3	21.4	21.4	100.0
	Total	14	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.6) and histogram (5.6) show that "sentence-initial adjuncts" are the most used of the topic signals by Sudanese students in their expository writing in Arabic for Topic Framing

(35.7%). The topic signals of "Enumeration", "Discourse markers" and "Metadiscourse markers" are used equally (21.4% for each). The topic strategy of "Question-answer pair" is not used at all in the texts analyzed.

Table 5. 7: Topic signals employed for Topic Introduction in SATs
Topic Introduction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Initial dummy elements	2	18.2	20.0	20.0
	Indefinite subject	4	36.4	40.0	60.0
	Renominalization	4	36.4	40.0	100.0
	Total	10	90.9	100.0	
Missing	System	1	9.1		
Total		11	100.0		

Table (5.7) and histogram (5.7) show that the two topic signals of "Indefinite subject" and "Renominalization" is equally used by the Sudanese students with a high percentage of 36.4%. The topic signal of "Initial dummy element" is used by the Sudanese students with a percentage of 18.2%. There are two topic signals which were not used in the texts at all. These are "Question-answer pair" and "Metadiscourse markers".

Table 5. 8: Topic signals employed for Topic Closure in SATs
Topic Closure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse markers	2	28.6	33.3	33.3
	Metadiscourse markers	3	42.9	50.0	83.3
	Encapsulation	1	14.3	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	85.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	14.3		
Total		7	100.0		

Table (5.8) and histogram (5.8) show that the Sudanese students use "Metadiscourse markers" more than any other

topic signal (42.9%). This is followed by "Discourse markers" (28.6%). The least used topic signal is "Encapsulation" (14.3%).

Table 5. 9: Topic signals employed for Topic Continuity in SETs
Topic Continuity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse markers	3	42.9	75.0	75.0
	Local cohesive device of repetition	1	14.3	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	57.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	42.9		
Total		7	100.0		

Table (5.9) and histogram (5.9) show that for Topic Continuity 75% (valid percent) of the topic signals used by the Sudanese students in their expository writing in English are "Discourse markers". The valid percent of "Local cohesive device of repetition" is 25%. No other topic signals were employed for this sequential technique (Topic Continuity). However, as is mentioned above, the other topic signals (paragraph break, absence of signals, tense continuity) are taken for granted.

Table 5. 10: Topic signals employed for Topic Farming in SETs
Topic Framing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sentence-initial adjuncts	4	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Enumeration	2	25.0	25.0	75.0
	Metadiscourse markers	2	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table (5.10) and histogram (5.10) show that 50% 0f the topic signals used by Sudanese students in expository writing for Topic Framing are "sentence-initial adjuncts". The remaining is divided equally between "Enumeration" and "Metadiscourse markers" (25% for each). The topic signals of "Question-answer pair" and "Discourse markers" are not used at all here.

Table 5. 11: Topic signals employed for Topic Introduction in SETs
Topic Introduction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Initial dummy elements	1	12.5	16.7	16.7
	Indefinite subject	2	25.0	33.3	50.0
	Metadiscourse markers	1	12.5	16.7	66.7
	Renominalization	2	25.0	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	75.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	25.0		
Total		8	100.0		

Table (5.11) and histogram (5.11) show that the most used topic signals employed by Sudanese students in expository writing are "Indefinite subjects" and "Renominalization" (33.3% for each). The remainder is also equally divided between "Initial dummy subjects" and "Metadiscourse markers" (16.7% for each).

Table 5. 12: Topic signals employed for Topic Closure in SETs
Topic Closure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Discourse markers	3	37.5	50.0	50.0
	Metadiscourse markers	3	37.5	50.0	100.0
	Total	6	75.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	25.0		
Total		8	100.0		

CONCLUSION

Summary of the findings of the study

Both the qualitative and the quantitative analyses show that the two groups employed the sequential strategies for continuity and discontinuity. They use them to signal the closing of a continuation span, starting a transition span and opening a new continuation span. However, there appear to be

some differences in this application (quantity-wise and quality-wise) These differences may be caused by the influence of mother tongue, competence in the language (whether native or foreign), instruction on how to write, ignorance or negligence of the sequential techniques by the students, the teachers or the textbook designers.

Implications

The following implications could be stated:

1. English teachers should integrate the teaching of reading and writing because students would know and learn the characteristic features of good English writing (Mulyani: 2012).
2. To improve the ability of the Sudanese learners of English to write well organized expository topic.
3. To draw the attention of the text book writers and teachers to the importance of training the students on how to effectively employ topic strategies and signals in order to write well composed essays in the expository writing.

Recommendations for further research

The researcher suggests that further research can be carried out using Goutsos' model as well as other models of writing on the writings of students from different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

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