



# The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Writing Achievement among English as a Foreign Language Learners at the University of Jeddah

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## ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement among undergraduate EFL female learners studying a Technical Communication Writing Course in their first year in the Computer Science and Engineering Technology Department at The University of Jeddah. Forty-four learners participated in this study by completing a writing task and filling out an online survey. Learners' writings and responses to the questionnaire were then analyzed to determine the correlation between their self-efficacy level and their writing performance. Results indicate that the perceptions students have of their writing self-efficacy have a significant moderate positive correlation with their overall writing performance score ( $r=0.464$ ;  $p< 0.05$ ) and their grammar accuracy ( $r= 0.367$ ;  $p< 0.05$ ). However, no significant correlation was detected as far as the specific writing ability aspects under investigation are concerned.

**Keywords:** writing self-efficacy, writing performance, self-efficacy scale, Arabic EFL learners.



## Literature Review

One of the major factors that can influence learners' performance, according to the social cognitive theory, is self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; 1997). The importance of self-efficacy to students' academic achievement and language proficiency has always been a focus of interest for researchers in the field (Huang, Wang & Xie, 2015). According to the social cognitive theory, the beliefs one has, predict his/her behavior and affect the outcomes of that behavior (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy was first defined by Bandura as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance" (1986, p.391). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy beliefs are formulated from four sources resulting from (1) experiences (2) vicarious experiences (3) verbal messages and social persuasion, and (4) physiological states. Self-efficacy was found, according to a number of researchers, to positively influence students' academic outcomes in general (Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991) and their language competence in particular (Unrau et al., 2018).

In educational psychology, students' self-efficacy is argued to be a strong predictor of their academic performance and achievements. In other words, their performance is the result of what they believe they can accomplish. As stipulated by Bandura (1997), self-efficacy has a greater impact on performance than actual ability. This predictive role of self-efficacy has been supported by a rising amount of research from numerous domains. Researchers have argued that students' effort, perseverance, and resilience are all predicted to increase as their sense of efficacy increases; as a result, self-efficacy has a significant impact on how successful they are. However, self-efficacy is sometimes confused with other concepts in the field such as self-esteem (i.e., an appraisal of self-worth), or self-concept (i.e., the composite view of oneself). Self-esteem and self-concept are global constructs while self-efficacy is a domain-specific construct. It can only be studied in relation to one area, and it is mainly related to one's confidence in his ability (Eggleston, 2017).

As far as the writing skill is concerned, a number of existing research has supported the theoretical contentions about the role of self-efficacy, suggesting that writing self-efficacy contributes to predicting students' writing engagement and performance (Shell, Murphy, & Bruning, 1989; Shell, Colvin & Bruning, 1995; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997). Writing self-efficacy is defined by Pajares and Valiante (2001, p.369) as "students' judgments of the confidence that they possess the various composition, grammar, usage, and mechanical skills appropriate to their academic level". Writing self-efficacy encompasses students' confidence and beliefs in their ability to perform writing skills and complete writing tasks. Writing has always been considered a key indicator of learners' overall linguistic competence (Archibald, 2016). It is a dynamic and multidimensional process that reflects learners' linguistic proficiency (Anastasiou & Michail, 2013; Bruning et al., 2013). Moreover, it is a critical skill that plays a major role in learners'



academic success at all levels (Asmari, 2013). Furthermore, writing is a complex skill that requires metacognitive and motivational knowledge, cognitive knowledge including the social and physical environment, motivation, working memory, and long-term memory in addition to low-level skills such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (Hayes, 2000; Anastasiou & Michail, 2013; Wischgoll, 2016). Other high-level skills involved include self-regulation and self-efficacy (Bruning et al., 2013). Variations in learners' achievement in writing were found not only to be the result of their writing competence but also as an effect of the beliefs they have about their capabilities (Usher & Pajares, 2008; Zhang & Guo, 2012).

A large body of research was conducted on the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement for L1 writers (Pajares, Johnson & Usher 2007; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012; Sanders-Reio, Alexander, Reio & Newman, 2014; Wright, Hodges & McTigue, 2019). In addition, other research investigated the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement in L2 English writing (Woodrow, 2011; Zhang & Guo, 2012; Sun & Wang, 2020). Most findings showed a positive correlation. Self-efficacy was found to have a significant effect on language learners' performance in general (Huang et al., 2015) and on their writing achievement in particular (Bruning et al., 2013). Learners with a higher level of self-efficacy were found to perform better, have lower anxiety, and score higher grades (Pajares et al., 2000; Woodrow, 2011; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012; Zhang & Guo, 2012).

Chea (2012) conducted a study at an institute of foreign languages to investigate the relationship between writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and learning strategies. Data was collected using a questionnaire that contained Likert-type measures, which probed into learners' writing beliefs, writing goal orientation, and learning strategies. The statistical analyses showed a positive correlation between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement ( $r(242) = .15, p < .05$ ). However, according to Chea (2012), writing scores were collected from different lecturers where students wrote about different topics. A more standardized score to ensure enhanced reliability of the scores to reflect students' writing achievement is highly recommended by the researcher.

Sun, Wang, Lambert & Liu (2021) investigated the effect size of the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement for first-language and second-language writers in English based on a meta-analysis of 76 published journal articles and dissertations. Results showed a medium effect size ( $r = .29$ ) with both L1 and L2 writers. Moreover, writing English as an L1/L2 was found to moderate the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement. The effect size estimated with L2 learners was ( $r = .44$ ) compared to L1 learners ( $r = .23$ ), which is highly significant. The researchers suggested some pedagogical implications for L2 instructors including providing more writing practice, focusing on peer work,



modeling, providing immediate and constructive feedback, and paying special attention to the physiological effect on learners.

Although the previously mentioned research findings suggested that students' writing self-efficacy has a statistically significant effect on writing performance, other research findings have revealed conflicting evidence (e.g. Al-Mekhlafi, 2011; Hashemnejad, Zoghi & Amini, 2014; Khojasteh et al., 2016). Al-Mekhlafi (2011) examined the writing self-efficacy of forty-four Omani female EFL teacher-trainees in relation to their writing performance. Results revealed no relationship between the two variables. Hashemnehad, Zoghi, and Amini (2014) investigated self-efficacy of 120 Iranian EFL students majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in relation to their writing performance, taking into account gender differences. Findings revealed no significant relationship between male and female students' self-efficacy and writing performance. Furthermore, Khojasteh et al. (2016) examined 59 Iranian mixed-gender medical university students' self-efficacy in relation to their writing performance. Findings also revealed no significant relationship between male and female participants' writing performance and their self-efficacy beliefs.

According to Sun et al. (2021), most of the research conducted on self-efficacy is related to English as a first language (e.g., Pajares et al., 2007; Jones, 2008; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012; Bruning et al., 2013; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Graham et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2019). However, as far as the EFL context is considered, research is limited and has provided conflicting results. Moreover, the directionality and magnitude of the relationships vary greatly (Sun et al., 2021).

These limitations and conflicting results of previous research in EFL contexts indicate a need for further empirical research that could ascertain the importance of self-efficacy in L2 writing. That said, the present study aimed at investigating the relationship between self-efficacy and writing achievement at the university level in an EFL context. The research questions addressed by the current investigation were as follow:

RQ1: Is there a correlation between writing self-efficacy and writing proficiency in EFL female learners' performance at UJ?

RQ2: What is the magnitude of the relationship, if any, between writing self-efficacy and writing proficiency in EFL female learners' performance at UJ?



## Methodology

### Design of the study

A descriptive-correlational research design was used to answer the research questions. It involves measuring two variables, namely writing self-efficacy and writing performance, and assessing the relationship between them, with no manipulation of an independent variable.

### Participants and instructional context

Forty-four undergraduate Arabic EFL female learners enrolled in the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering Technology at the University of Jeddah participated in this study. Participants had studied EFL for six years in school and had intensive general English courses during the one-year Preparatory Program at the University.

### Materials

The materials consisted of the writing self-efficacy scale, a writing test, and an analytic scoring rubric.

**Writing Self-Efficacy Survey:** Learners' beliefs about their writing self-efficacy were measured using self-report survey items adapted from Woody, Zeleny, Souza, Harder, Reiser and Szto (2014). The original measure consisted of eleven items (see Appendix A), which were slightly modified and used. An extra item was further added at the end of the survey to check learners' general satisfaction with their overall writing performance. An online version of the survey was constructed. The estimated time for completing the survey was four minutes.

The survey consists of 12 items that ask learners to rate their confidence in relation to certain aspects of L2 writing (see Table 1). The first ten items involve assessing learners' beliefs about handling specific key aspects of writing, namely 'content', 'organization', 'grammar', 'word usage', 'punctuation', and 'spelling'. The last two items involve assessing the learners' confidence in completing/performing writing tasks. The survey takes response formats ranging from 0 to 10, where 0 refers to 'I am completely sure I cannot do it', and 10 refers to 'I am completely sure I can do it'.

**Table 1: Self-Efficacy for Writing Measure**

Writing Self-Efficacy Survey Items
1. I can write a clear focused piece of writing
2. I can use details to support my idea.
3. I can write a well-organized piece of writing with a clear beginning, developed middle, and meaningful ending
4. I can correctly use paragraph format
5. I can write with a tone appropriate to various types of content.
6. I can use correct words when writing.
7. I can write well-constructed sentences.
8. I can use correct grammar.
9. I can correctly spell all words most of the time.
10. I can correctly use punctuation most of the time.
11. I can write a topic that will earn a high grade.
12. Generally speaking, I am satisfied with my level of writing

**Note.** Participants were asked to rate their confidence to perform 12 items using any number between 0 (I am completely sure I cannot do it) to 10 (I am completely sure that I can do it).

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was used to calculate the reliability of the questionnaire. According to Woody et al. (2014), the scale has high internal consistency, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient reported of .97. For the modified scale in the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .95.

**Writing Test:** Learners' writings were collected during their mid-term exam, and they were scored for the purpose of this study.

**Analytic Scoring Rubric:** The scoring rubric created by (Weir, 1990) to assess writings in English for educational purposes settings was utilized to assess learners' writing performance (see Appendix B). Consistent with social cognitive theory guidelines, scoring criteria are aligned with the dimensions that were used to gauge learners' writing self-efficacy; that is, the components of the scoring rubric included: 1) relevance and adequacy of content, 2) compositional organization, 3) cohesion, 4) adequacy of vocabulary for purpose, 5) grammar, 6) punctuation, and 7) spelling. These grading components were also used in the teaching of the course. Each component could be scored from 0 (poor) to 3 (excellent), and the different point values were calculated to find the total score. Descriptors are provided for each component, so raters could use the full scale.



## Procedure

The writing test was administrated during the mid-term exam. Two days later, a link to the online writing self-efficacy survey was circulated among the potential participants. Only forty-four students agreed to take part in this study and completed the survey. The respondents' writings were independently scored by the two researchers, both TEFL instructors, using the analytic scoring rubric. The average for each sub-score assigned by the two raters was taken as the main score for computation for subsequent analyses. To determine the inter-rater reliability of the writing scores, a two-way mixed intraclass correlation (ICC) was conducted for each aspect and the values were as follows: total score (.94), content (.84), organisation (.83), cohesion (.88), vocabulary (.89), grammar (.89), punctuation (.87), and spelling (.92). Alpha was set at .05.

## Data Analysis

The data consisted of the results of the writing self-efficacy survey on the one hand and the scores of the writing task on the other hand. To analyze the obtained data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 26) software was used. First, a descriptive analysis was conducted. Then, a correlation analysis was run to determine the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy beliefs and their writing performance. Normality and homogeneity of variance assumptions were tested and checked for the variables under examination. Data were analyzed using the Spearman correlation coefficient test. The analyses were carried out at a significant level of  $p < .05$ .

## Findings

### 1- Findings of Descriptive Analysis

The questionnaire was used to examine the learners' perceptions in relation to their writing self-efficacy. The aspects within the Writing Self-Efficacy Scale included content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and overall writing performance. Writing self-efficacy scores ranged from 0 to 10. Table 2 presents the findings regarding students' perceptions of their self-efficacy in English writing.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Students' perceptions of Writing Self-Efficacy (n= 44)**

Dimensions	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Content	2.5	9.5	5.852	1.9247
Organization	3.0	10.0	6.534	1.8721
Cohesion	2	10	6.30	1.972
Vocabulary	2	10	6.66	2.332
Grammar	1.0	10.0	6.307	2.1054
Punctuation	1	10	6.95	2.372
Spelling	2	10	6.95	2.515
Overall Writing Performance	1.0	10.0	6.034	2.2345



The examination of data presented in Table 2 allows a description of the respondents' writing self-efficacy perceptions and gives information about which dimensions of writing self-efficacy students endorse most and least. Overall, the mean of higher than 5 per item could suggest that the respondents were reasonably confident about their writing ability in terms of the different dimensions. Punctuation and spelling dimensions came first with a mean of (6.95), while content and overall writing performance dimensions came last with a mean of (5.85) and (6.034), respectively.

## 2- Findings of Correlation Analysis

A Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was performed to test the relationship between the different dimensions of writing self-efficacy scale and writing performance. The results are summed up in Table 3.

**Table 3. Correlations between Writing Self-Efficacy Dimensions and Writing Performance (n=44)**

Dimensions	Content	Org.	Cohesio n	Vocab.	Gramma r	Punct.	Spelling	Overall
<b>Content</b>								
Correlation	<b>0.099</b>							
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>.522</b>							
<b>Organization</b>								
Correlation		<b>0.027</b>						
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)		<b>.864</b>						
<b>Cohesion</b>								
Correlation			<b>0.086</b>					
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)			<b>.580</b>					
<b>Vocabulary</b>								
Correlation				<b>0.268</b>				
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)				<b>.079</b>				
<b>Grammar</b>								
Correlation					<b>0.367*</b>			
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)					<b>.014</b>			
<b>Punctuation</b>								
Correlation						<b>0.257</b>		
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)						<b>.092</b>		
<b>Spelling</b>								
Correlation							<b>0.194</b>	
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)							<b>.208</b>	
<b>Overall</b>								
Correlation								<b>0.464*</b>
Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)								<b>.001</b>

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).





Results of the correlational analysis indicated that only two dimensions of writing self-efficacy were significantly correlated with writing achievements. The perceptions students have of their grammar competence have a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship with their score of grammar ( $r=0.367$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). In addition, the perceptions students have of their overall writing self-efficacy have a significant positive relationship with their overall performance score ( $r=0.464$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). These findings suggest that students who exhibit high confidence in their writing abilities would significantly perform better in comparison to those with low self-efficacy and lack of confidence.

However, writing achievement did not share a significant relationship with writing self-efficacy in the other dimensions, that is, content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. These findings suggest that there is no significant relationship between students' self-efficacy beliefs about their abilities in the aforementioned writing dimensions and their performance.

Effect sizes were calculated to estimate the strength of the relationship between variables under investigation. This also allows comparisons across studies that use different statistical analyses. Ellis (2010) proposes  $r=.10$  as a small effect,  $r=.30$  as a medium effect and  $r=.50$  as a large effect. The writing self-efficacy was found to have a medium effect size with grammar performance ( $r=.36$ ) and overall writing performance ( $r=.46$ ), indicating that writing self-efficacy is moderately related to grammar and overall writing performance.

## Discussion

The ultimate goal of the current study was to explore the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance. In terms of the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing overall performance, there was a significant, positive correlation between students' perceived writing competence and their overall writing score. That is, the more confident the students are in their writing competence, the higher their overall writing score rates. This finding supports a number of studies that asserted that students' self-efficacy beliefs can be associated with their academic performance and success, see for example (Pajares et al., 2000; Woodrow, 2011; Chea, 2012; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012; Zhang & Guo, 2012; Huang et al., 2015).

A deeper look into the analysis conducted shows that writing self-efficacy accounted for statistically significant variance in grammar accuracy scores. It had a moderate positive effect on learners' performance in grammar. However, the analysis did not reveal any correlations between students' perceptions of their writing self-efficacy and their performance in the other examined different aspects of writing. This



could be due to the learners' unawareness of the actual requirements related to these aspects.

### **Implications of the study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of EFL university learners regarding their writing skills. Findings can be used by educational decision-makers in designing writing courses and training programs. The findings of this study also contribute to the understanding of the psychological effects of efficacy beliefs on writing, suggesting a number of pedagogical implications and practices that could foster positive effects. Writing instructors are highly encouraged to promote conducive learning environments that could simultaneously enhance confidence and competence. As argued by Bandura (1986), educational practices should be evaluated not only for the knowledge and skills they equip students with but also for how they develop their positive self-efficacy. To this end, it is important to provide praise and encouragement since these actions might boost students' persistence and efforts and cause them to feel more efficacious. In line with concepts of self-efficacy, in comparison to students who have higher confidence in their writing competence, those who are less confident may be more reluctant to write and exert less effort. If the students' perceived self-efficacy is enhanced, this in turn can promote higher levels of exerted efforts and successful achievements (Troia, Shankland and Wolbers, 2012).

Furthermore, instructors should offer and design writing tasks that could proactively target their learners' different proficiency levels and writing needs, utilizing the scaffolding approach. Scaffolding means offering support for learning and problem solving, such as providing examples, modeling, cues, and encouragement, all of which guide learners towards greater autonomy and help them become effective writers in L2. Group tasks may also contribute to increased self-efficacy, as students can relate to others' achievements and hence increase their own self-efficacy (Woodrow, 2011). Writing instructors should also offer appropriate constructive feedback that explicitly highlights the students' strengths and areas of weakness in addition to providing suggestions for improvements.

### **Limitations and suggestions for future research**

Although these results provide insights into the relationship between EFL learners' writing self-efficacy beliefs and writing performance, there were certain limitations that might limit their generalizability. First, the writing test was given at the end of their mid-term exam, so it is possible that participants experienced test fatigue, which might have influenced their performance. Another limitation may reside in the features and the small number of participants. All participants were females at one department in a single university in Jeddah. Therefore, it would not be feasible to extrapolate the study findings to all university-level EFL writing instruction in Arabic contexts.

Several areas for future research can be proposed. First, the inherent limitation of the quantitative research method may have limited the study's scope, and, thus, a



mixed-method research design should be adopted to further understand the role of self-efficacy on writing achievements. Interview qualitative data that delve into the students' subjective perceptions could offer insights into any potential factors that could mediate the relationship between the examined variables. A range of latent factors including apprehension, writing attitudes (Bulut, 2017), anxiety (Woodrow, 2011), and gender difference (Pajares & Valiante, 2001) go hand in hand with self-efficacy beliefs. In light of this, it could be worthwhile to employ measurements that could examine these factors and ascertain whether they could potentially manipulate the relationship between self-efficacy and writing performance.

As noted, the findings of this study were limited to a group of Arabic EFL learners taking a writing course at The University of Jeddah. Future studies need to examine a larger sample of university-level EFL learners and broaden the scope of their inquiry to include other universities in Saudi Arabia and Arabic contexts.

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## Appendix A

### Self-Efficacy for Writing Measure (borrowed from Woody et al., 2014)



#### Self-Efficacy for Writing Measure

Note: Test name created by PsycTESTS

PsycTESTS Citation:

Woody, J. D., Zeleny, M. G., D'Souza, H. J., Harder, J., Reiser, J., & Szto, P. (2014). Self-Efficacy for Writing Measure [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t60343-000>

Instrument Type:  
Rating Scale

Test Format:

Participants are asked to rate their confidence to perform 11 items using any number between 0 (I am completely sure I cannot do it) to 100 (I am completely sure that I can do it).

Source:

Woody, Jane D., Zeleny, Mary G., D'Souza, Henry J., Harder, Jeanette, Reiser, Jacqueline, & Szto, Peter. (2014). Student progress in a social work writing course: Self-efficacy, course objectives, and skills. *Journal of Social Work Education*, Vol 50(3), 507-524. © 2014 by Taylor & Francis. Reproduced by Permission of Taylor & Francis.,

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Contact Publisher and Corresponding Author.

#### Self-Efficacy for Writing Measure

##### Items

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*I can:*

1. Write a clear focused essay.
2. Use details to support my idea.
3. Write a well-organized essay with a clear beginning, developed middle, and meaningful ending.
4. Correctly use paragraph format in an essay.
5. Write with a tone appropriate to various types of content.
6. Use correct words when writing an essay.
7. Write well-constructed sentences in an essay.
8. Use correct grammar in an essay.
9. Correctly spell all words in an essay.
10. Correctly use punctuation in an essay.
11. Write an essay that will earn a high grade.

---

Note. Participants are asked to rate their confidence to perform 11 items using any number between 0 (I am completely sure I cannot do it) to 100 (I am completely sure that I can do it).



## Appendix B

### An Analytic Scoring Rubric (borrowed from Weir, 1990)

Scoring Criteria	Details
<b>1.Content of your answer</b>	The content must be relevant to the topic and it should have adequate supporting details.
<b>2.Organization of your ideas</b>	Your main idea must be well-developed and flow in a logical sequence.
<b>3.Cohesion</b>	You must use appropriate sentence connectors and transitions to make a strong paragraph.
<b>4.Vocabulary</b>	Vocabulary must be appropriate for the purpose of the paragraph.
<b>5.Grammar</b>	Writing is excellent and fluent, with none or very few grammar errors.
<b>6.Punctuation</b>	Your punctuations must be accurate.
<b>7.Spelling</b>	Your spellings must be accurate.

#### A. Relevance and adequacy of content

0. The answer bears almost no relation to the task set. Totally inadequate answer.
1. Answer of limited relevance to the task set. Possibly major gaps in the treatment of topic and/or pointless repetition.
2. For the most part answers the tasks set, though there may be some gaps or redundant information.
3. Relevant and adequate answer to the task set.

#### B. Compositional organization

0. No apparent organization of content.
1. Very little organization of content. Underlying Structure not sufficiently controlled.
2. Some organizational skills in evidence, but not adequately controlled.
3. Overall shape and internal pattern clear. Organizational skills adequately controlled.

#### C. Cohesion

0. Cohesion almost totally absent. Writing so fragmentary that comprehension of the intended communication is virtually impossible.
1. Unsatisfactory cohesion may cause difficulty in comprehension of most of the intended communication.
2. For the most part satisfactory cohesion although occasional deficiencies may mean that certain parts of the communication are not always effective.
3. Satisfactory use of cohesion resulting in effective communication.





*D. Adequacy of vocabulary for purpose*

0. Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication.

1. Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or repetition.
2. Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
3. Almost no inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/ or circumlocution.

*E. Grammar*

0. Almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate.

1. Frequent grammatical inaccuracies.
2. Some grammatical inaccuracies.
3. Almost no grammatical inaccuracies.

*F. Mechanical accuracy I (punctuation)*

0. Ignorance of conventions of punctuation.

1. Low standard of accuracy in punctuation.
2. Some inaccuracies in punctuation.
3. Almost no inaccuracies in punctuation.

*G. Mechanical accuracy II (spelling)*

0. Almost all spelling inaccurate.

1. Low standard of accuracy in spelling.
2. Some inaccuracies in spelling.
3. Almost no inaccuracies in spelling.