

Investigating the Factors that Affect Students' Paragraph Writing in EFL Classroom:-The Case of three Selected High School Grade 9th Students in Goro Dola District, East Guji Zone.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate factors that affect students' paragraph writing in EFL classrooms with special reference to grade 9 students of three selected secondary schools of Goro Dola District, East Guji Zone. The study identified a range of specific factors that could be broadly categorized into student- related factors, teacher- related factors, and pedagogical factors. The findings of the study also revealed that lack of time to practice in the classroom and provision of less interesting topics for writing were identified as the major pedagogical factors that affect the students' EFL paragraph writing. On the basis of the findings of the study, it was recommended for teachers to carefully select, modify and adopt topics of paragraph writing lessons by considering the familiarity and interestingness of the topics of paragraph writing lessons in the classroom

Keywords

Students' paragraph writing, class room, teachers, pedagogy, affecting factors, EFL, Goro Dola District

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

Introduction

Writing is one of the four basic language skills which are important in our life. According to Nguyen (2015), writing seems to have taken on different definitions for different groups of people in order to suit their different needs and purposes for writing. It is not just putting pen to paper or writing down ideas but it is how these ideas are presented or expressed effectively. In support of this, Hall (1982) defined writing as the act of using symbols of a language to discover and to bring that discovery to other people.

Mandal (2009), also stated that, writing is a skill which is helpful not only to write in English, but also useful to improve other language skills considerably. In English learning classroom, the teacher aims at developing four skills of his/her learners' ability to understand to speak, to read and to write. The ability to write occupies the last place in this order, but it does not mean that it is least important; rather, it is an important tool which is in no way less important than reading and speaking. Our abilities in language are made perfect in writing. Writing trains ears and eyes and fixes vocabulary, spelling and patterns in our mind (Mandal, 2009).

In this regard, Blanka (2013) also added that, knowing how to write in foreign language is a valuable asset in foreign language communication. Being good at writing will bring many benefits for the students. Firstly, writing is a good way to help develop their ability of using vocabulary and grammar, increasing the ability of using language. Secondly, writing is an essential tool to support other skills. If a student has good writing ability, he/she can speak and read the text more effectively. Thirdly, writing is a way to approach modern information technology as well as the human knowledge. It is necessary to master writing skill because it can help people be well prepared when finding a job or attend courses (Blanka, 2013; Nguyen, 2015).

According to Caroll (1990) the most important invention in human history is writing. It provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanations, theories, etc. Writing allows us to share our communication not only with our contemporaries, but also with future generations. It permits people from the near and far distance past to speak to us. In fact, writing is originated from the need for saving human's cultural and spiritual values.

In its simplest form, writing may be just using graphic symbols or reproducing something which has been heard or read in written form. Writing becomes more complicated when it involves producing meaningful segments to carry a message in the language. Crystal (1999, p. 214) stated "Writing is not a merely mechanical task, a simple matter of putting down speech on paper. It is an exploration in the use of the graphic potential of a language- a creative process- an act of discovery." To Paul, et al. (2008) writing is one of the ways in which we explore our understanding of the world and discover the meaning of our experience.

Language learning encompasses the learning of sign language, body language, spoken language and written language. The written language or written word offers enduring form of communication than the spoken word. This makes it an ideal choice for recording information so that it can be referred to repeatedly and preserved over a long period of time. Writing has a unique position in language teaching since its acquisition involves a practice and knowledge of the other three language macro skills: listening, reading and speaking (Blanka, 2013). Harmer (1998) emphasized that teaching writing to EFL students is so crucial for reinforcement, language development, and learning styles. Proficient composition of a text indicates successful learning of a second/ foreign language (Hyland, 2003).

Graham & Perin, (2007) defined writing as a cognitive process that tests memory, thinking ability and verbal command to successfully express the ideas, and explained that effective writing requires the writer to spend adequate time generating ideas and sequencing these ideas into the best order before starting to write. identified the following four vital areas in the writing process:(1) knowledge of writing and writing topics,(2) skill for producing and crafting text,(3) processes for energizing and motivating participants to write with enthusiasm, and (4) directing thought and actions through strategies to archive writing goals. Sometimes, this makes writing difficult skill to master.

However, these all show that writing is one of the most important language skills for the students to master, and that emphasis should be paid to the skills in language classrooms from the very early phase of language education. Though, despite its importance, a number of studies that had been conducted in the context of our country disclosed that school students' performance in writing skills was found to be lower in secondary schools and higher institutions (Tsegaye, 2006; Desalegn, 2011; Hailemariam, 2012; Anteneh, 2016; Eyasu, 2017). As noted by Eyasu (2017), for instance, one of the weaknesses of Ethiopian students at different levels of education is writing in English and the situation is worse in secondary schools. However, less attention is given to the problem.

The researcher has observed similar situation in EFL paragraph writing in secondary schools of Goro Dola District; particularly, in grade 9 EFL writing skill classes. As a result, the researcher believed that there is a need for conducting study that could explore the factors that affect these students' paragraph writing in EFL writing skill classrooms. That is why the researcher was initiated to conduct this study on three selected high school students at Goro Dolla Woreda of East Guji Zone of Ethiopia.

Methods and Methodology

In the course of the study descriptive survey design was utilized. This was mainly because, in order to attain the research objectives and answer the research questions, multiple data collection instruments will be used. According to (Kothari, 2004) descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group. Several methods (such as observation, questionnaires, interviewing, examination of records, etc.) with their merits and limitations, are available for the purpose and the researcher may use one or more of these methods. Thus, survey study design was found to be the most appropriate one for investigating and describing the factors using data collected through multiple data collection instruments.

In this study, a mixed research approach was employed because the study uses qualitative and quantitative data. . It involves the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study. Thus, it is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data; it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell, 2009).

Results and Discussion on the Findings

The results of study revealed that majority of the students reported that the EFL writing skills lessons in general and paragraph writing lessons in particular were difficult. Similarly, great majority of the students rated the level of interestingness of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in their textbooks as less interesting (pretty boring and not interesting). This shows that the complex nature of writing skills which makes paragraph writing so difficult for the students, the level of difficulty of the topics of paragraph writing lessons in the textbook, and level of interestingness of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in the textbook may affect students' EFL paragraph writing, and thus could be considered as factors that affect their EFL paragraph writing.

In relation to the way students' practice EFL paragraph writing, great majority of the students did nothing before they start to write a paragraph but they just wrote, and some of them listed and chose main ideas before they start to write a paragraph. Only a small number of students discussed with friends or tried to get information from the Internet or books before they start to write a paragraph. The result of the study also revealed that great majority of the students restricted themselves either in doing paragraph writing lessons given by the teacher or doing paragraph writing exercises given in their textbook, and only few of them engaged themselves in doing extra exercises in addition to those given by the teacher and given in the textbook while they practice writing paragraph at their homes. The study confirmed that great majority of the students used no other material than their textbook for practicing paragraph writing, and only few of them use additional materials in addition to their textbook. The study also confirmed that great majority of them received feedback only from their teachers, which means teacher feedback was the most dominant way of feedback provision practiced in these schools, followed by peer feedback and self-correction, respectively. Thus, it is possible to say that the students' practices, that is, the way they practice paragraph writing can be another source of problem that affect their EFL paragraph writing.

Based on the results obtained, it is possible to generalize that great majority of students faced problems related to unfamiliarity of topic for writing, lack of idea, grammar difficulty, and lack of vocabulary. Great majority of the students considered the extent of importance of knowledge of topic of writing/ subject matter, knowledge of grammar, knowledge of vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and clarity of idea and logical sequencing of ideas as having higher importance in paragraph writing, while great majority of the students considered outlining as having lower importance in paragraph writing.

The results of the study revealed that majority of the teachers most frequently involve while writing stage in the classroom techniques/ strategies they use for teaching paragraph writing, while they sometimes involve pre-writing stage in the classroom techniques/ strategies they use for teaching paragraph writing; and post writing stage is the least frequently considered one.

The study identified a range of specific factors affecting these students' EFL paragraph writing. The factors were categorized into student- related factors, teacher- related

factors, and pedagogical factors. The major student- related factors identified in this study were lack of knowledge of grammatical pattern, inability to write appropriate sentence structure, and inability to use the correct cohesive, lack of practice outside the classroom, lack of confidence on their own ability to write, lack of motivation, and lack of knowledge in the skills and conventions of writing (Lack of strategic writing skills), lack of knowledge about appropriate writing style, inadequacy of vocabulary, and insufficient topic-specific knowledge.

In terms of teacher- related factors, teachers' failure of providing adequate feedback continuously, and teachers' tendency to urge them for rote learning and exam-oriented language production were identified in the study as the major teacher- related that affect EFL paragraph writing, while lack of time to practice in the classroom and provision of less interesting topics for writing were identified in the study as the major as the pedagogical factor that affect the students' EFL paragraph writing seriously, and large and unmanageable class sizes, and the testing system as pedagogical factors that affect the students' EFL paragraph writing to some extent.

Table 1: Response Rate of Questionnaires

Nome of School	Students' Questionnaire						Teachers' Questionnaire					
	Distributed		Returned		Unreturned		Distributed		Returned		Unreturned	
	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Harakelo Secondary School	161	48.1	155	46.3	6	1.8	6	50	6	50	0	0
Jidola Secondary School	100	30.1	98	29.3	2	0.6	4	33.3	3	25	1	8.3
Genale Secondary School	73	21.8	71	21.2	3	0.9	2	16.7	1	8.3	1	8.3
Total	324	100	324	96.7	11	3.3	12	100	10	83.3	2	16.7

The focus group discussion was used for collecting data from all the 12 teachers who were teaching grade 9 English in these schools during the academic year (2020/2021). Two rounds of classroom observations were also conducted while 6 selected sample English teachers of grade 9 were teaching paragraph writing during EFL classrooms.

Student respondents by school

Figure 1 below shows the number of student samples participated in the study. A total of 324 grade 9 students were participated in the study. They were selected from the three secondary schools of Goro Dola District. Among the total 324 student participants, 155 (47.8%) of them represented Harakelo Secondary School, while 98 (30.3%) represented Jidola Secondary School, and the rest 71 (21.9%) represented Genale Secondary School and total 324 students.

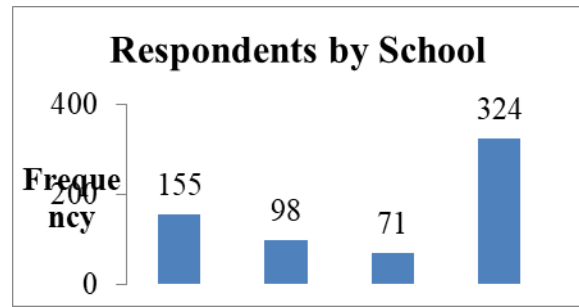


Fig 1: Student respondent by School (Source: Survey data, 2020)

Student respondents by Sex

As shown in figure 2 below, 216 (66.7%) of the student participants were males, while 108 (33.3%) of them were females.

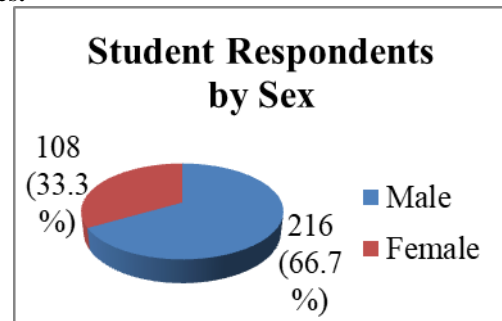


Fig 2: Student respondent by School (Source: Survey data, 2020)

Age of student respondents

As shown in table 4 below, the analysis of data collected regarding the age of student respondents depicts that 170 (52.5%) of the student respondents were in the age group ranging from 16 to 18 years, while 68 (21%) of them were in the age group ranging from 19 to 21 years. Whereas 56 (17.3%) of the student respondents were 15 years and below, and the rest 30 (9.3%) of them were 22 years and above. This shows that the great majority (82.7%) of the students were aged 16 years and above. The implication is that majority of the student respondents were matured enough to respond to the questionnaire.

Table 2: Student respondents by Age

Age group	Frequency	%
15years old and below	56	17.3
16-18 years old	170	52.5
19-21 years	68	21.0
22 years old and above	30	9.3
Total	324	100

(Source: Survey data, 2021)

Table 3: Items referring to the contents and topics of paragraph writing lessons in the textbook

No	Items
1	How do you rate the level of difficulty of writing skills as compared to other macro skills?
2	How do you rate the level of difficulty of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in your textbook?
3	How do you rate the level of interestingness of the topics of paragraph writing lessons in your textbooks?

The analyses of data collected in response to these questions are presented in tables 4a and 4b below. For the ease of presentation, data collected in response to the first two items

Table 4a: Students' ratings on the difficulty level of EFL paragraph writing contents in their textbook

Item No	Level of Difficulty													
	Very Difficult		Difficult		Total Difficult		Medium/Average		Easy		Very easy		Total easy	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	81	25.0	88	27.2	169	52.2	90	27.8	40	12	25	7.7	65	20.0
2	74	22.8	68	21.0	142	43.8	98	30.2	44	14	40	12.3	84	25.9

(Source: Survey data, 2020)

The analysis of data presented in table 4a above also depicts that 142 (43.8%) of the students rated the level of difficulty of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in their textbook as very difficult or difficult, while 98 (30.2%) of the students rated the difficulty level as normal/ average, which means that the level of difficulty of the contents of

are presented in table 4a, and the third item is treated separately in table 4b below.

The analysis of data presented in table 4a below depicts that in response to the first item, 169 (52.2%) of the students rated the difficulty level of EFL writing skills as compared to other macro skills as very difficult or difficult, while 90 (27.8%) of the students rated the difficulty level as medium/ average, which means that writing skills has the same level of difficulty to that of the other three macro skills, and 65 (20%) of them rated the difficulty level of EFL writing skills as easy or very easy. From the table it is possible to deduce that majority of the students rated the level of difficulty level of EFL writing skills as very difficult or difficult.

paragraph writing in their textbook are medium/ average, and 84 (25.9%) of them rated the level of difficulty of the topics of paragraph writing lessons in their textbook as easy or very easy.

On the basis of the result obtained above, it is possible to generalize that majority of the students rated the level of difficulty of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in their textbook as very difficult or difficult.

Table 4b Students' Responses on the level of interestingness of the topics of paragraph writing in their textbooks.

Item No	Level of Interestingness													
	Pretty boring		Not interesting		Total negative		Medium/Average		Interesting		Very interesting		Total positive	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
3	76	23.5	72	22.2	148	45.7	81	25.0	55	17.0	40	12.3	95	29.3

(Source: Survey data, 2020)

The analysis of data presented in table 4b above depicts that in response to the item, 148 (45.7%) of the students rated the level of interestingness of the topic of paragraph writing in their textbooks as pretty boring or not interesting, while 95 (29.3%) of the students rated the level of interestingness of the topics of paragraph writing in their textbooks interesting or very interesting, and 81 (25%) of them rated as medium/ average. Based on the result obtained above, it is possible to generalize that great majority of the students rated the level

of interestingness of the topics of paragraph writing in their textbooks as pretty boring or not interesting, and that a quarter (25%) of the student respondents did not decided whether the topics of paragraph writing in their textbooks were interesting or not.

Table 5: Activities students do before starting to write paragraph.

Item	Responses	Frequency	%
What do you do before you start to write a paragraph?	List and choose main ideas	104	32.1
	Discuss with friends	45	13.9
	Getting information from the Internet or books	18	5.6
	Do nothing, just write the paragraph	157	48.5

Total	324	100
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(Source: Survey data, 2020)

Based on the result obtained above, it is possible to generalize that great majority of the students did nothing, and some of them listed and chose main ideas before they start to write a paragraph Only a small number of students discussed with friends or tried to get information from the Internet or books before they start to write a paragraph.

Table 6: Teacher- related and pedagogical factors

Item No.	Items	Level of Importance													
		Very High		High		Total Higher		Undecided		Low		Very low		Total Lower	
		f.	%	f.	%	f.	%	f.	%	f.	%	f.	%	f.	%
1	Teachers' lack of using appropriate strategies to teach paragraph writing	35	10.8	49	15.1	84	25.9	124	38.3	53	16.4	63	19.4	116	35.8
2	Lack of time for practicing paragraph writing	117	36.1	105	32.4	222	68.5	60	18.5	37	11.4	5	1.5	42	13
3	Teachers' failure to provide us the opportunity to edit our papers rather than being the sole reader of his/her students writings	50	15.4	59	18.2	109	33.6	103	31.8	65	20.1	47	14.5	112	34.6
4	Inconsistent feedback from teachers	39	12	50	15.4	89	27.5	120	37	52	16	63	19.4	115	35.5
5	Teachers' failure of providing adequate feedback continuously	78	24.1	84	25.9	162	50	67	20.7	56	17.3	39	12	95	29.3
6	Large and unmanageable class sizes	116	35.8	107	33	223	68.8	58	17.9	34	10.5	9	2.8	43	13.3
7	Teachers' incompetence in promoting creative skills	35	10.8	49	15.1	84	25.9	124	38.3	53	16.4	63	19.4	116	35.8

8	Teaching strategy which does not consider the students' learning styles and cultural backgrounds	35	10.8	49	15.1	84	25.9	124	38.3	53	16.4	63	19.4	116	35.8
9	Teachers' tendency to urge us for rote learning and exam-oriented language production	65	20.1	85	26.2	150	46.3	107	33	40	12.3	27	8.3	67	20.7
10	The testing system	65	20.1	85	26.2	150	46.3	107	33	40	12.3	27	8.3	67	20.7
11	Less interesting topics for writing	110	34	102	31.5	212	65.4	71	21.9	22	6.8	19	5.9	41	12.7

(Source: Survey data, 2020)

Items 2, 6, 10 and 11 are not fully considered as teacher-related factors. As, a result, they were discussed separately as other pedagogical factors.

As shown in the table, the analysis of data collected about the extent to which teachers' lack of using appropriate strategies to teach paragraph writing affected their (the students') EFL paragraph writing reveals that 124 (38.3) of them had not decided the influence of this factor, while 116 (35.8%) of them rated as lower (low or very low), and 84 (25.9%) of them rated as higher (high or very high). This implies that the majority of students confirmed that teaching strategies used by teachers have not affected their EFL paragraph writing, and that large number of students did not decide whether teachers' lack of using appropriate strategies to teach paragraph writing affected their EFL paragraph writing or not.

In response to item No. 3, 112 (34.6%) of the students rated the extent to which teachers' failure to provide us the opportunity to edit our papers rather than being the sole reader of his/her students writings affected their EFL paragraph writing as lower (low or very low), while 109 (33.6%) of them that students rated as higher (high or very high), and 103 (31.8%) did not decide whether this factor affected their EFL paragraph writing or not.

Item No. 4 of the table shows the analysis of data collected on the extent to which inconsistency of feedback from teachers affected their EFL paragraph writing. The data reveals that 120 (37%) of the students did not decide the extent to which this factor affected their EFL paragraph writing, while 115 (35.5%) of them rated the extent to which inconsistency of feedback from teachers affected their EFL paragraph writing as lower (low or very low), and 89 (27.5%) of them rated as higher (high or very high). This shows that the majority of students were not sure that whether teachers provide consistent feedback or not and that this has affected their EFL paragraph writing or not.

As shown in item No. 5 of the table depicts that 162 (50%) of the students indicated that teachers' failure of providing adequate feedback continuously affected their EFL paragraph writing to a higher (very high or high) extent, and 95 (29.3%) of them rated the influence of this factor on their EFL paragraph writing as (very low or low). This implies that majority of the students confirmed that teachers' failure of providing adequate feedback continuously affected their EFL paragraph writing.

Similar data were obtained in response to items 7 and 8. The items required the students to rate the extent to which teachers' incompetence in promoting creative skills, and use of teaching strategies which do not consider students' learning styles and cultural backgrounds, respectively. In response to the items, 124 (38.3%) of the students have not decided on the extent to which the factors affected their EFL paragraph writing, while 116 (35.8%) of them rated the extent of influence of these factors as lower (very low or low) and 84 (25.9%) rated as higher. This shows that majority of the students confirmed that they were not sure whether teachers' incompetence in promoting creative skills, and teachers' use of teaching strategies which does not conform to students' learning styles and cultural backgrounds affected their EFL paragraph writing or not.

In response to item 9 of the table, 150 (46.3%) of the student respondents indicated that teachers' tendency to urge them for rote learning and exam-oriented language production affected their EFL paragraph writing to a higher (high or very high) extent, and 67 (20.7%) of them rated the influence of this factor on their EFL paragraph writing as lower (low or very low). Whereas, 71 (21.9%) of them did not decide whether this factor affected their EFL paragraph writing or not. This implies that majority of the students confirmed teachers' tendency to urge them for rote learning and exam-oriented language production affected their EFL paragraph writing, although there were a large number/percentage of students who did not decide whether this factor affected their EFL paragraph writing or not.

From the result obtained above, it is possible to deduce that great majority of the students confirmed teachers' failure of providing adequate feedback continuously, and teachers' tendency to urge them for rote learning and exam-oriented language production as the major teacher- related factors that affect EFL paragraph writing to a higher extent. The result also revealed that large number/ percentage of the student respondents did not decide whether some of the factors affected their EFL paragraph writing or not. These include teachers' lack of using appropriate strategies to teach paragraph writing, inconsistent feedback from teachers, teachers' incompetence in promoting creative skills, teaching strategy which does not consider the students' learning styles and cultural backgrounds, and teachers' tendency to urge them for rote learning and exam-oriented language production.

The result of qualitative data from questionnaire shows that the students have identified the most serious problems that they think can affect their in writing EFL paragraphs. The problems they identified were put in order of their seriousness (from the most serious to the least serious one) as follows:

- i. lack of knowledge of grammatical pattern,
- ii. inadequacy of vocabulary,
- iii. insufficient topic-specific knowledge,
- iv. lack of confidence on their own ability to write due to lack of motivation,
- v. lack of time for practice in the classroom,
- vi. lack of practice outside the classroom,

Table 7: FGD Data on Student- related factors

No.	Factors/ Items	Responses
1	Lack of knowledge of grammatical patterns	1
2	Inability to write appropriate sentence structures	1
3	Inability to use the correct cohesive devices	1
4	Lack of confidence on their ability to write	2
5	Negative attitude towards writing in English	3
6	Lack of motivation to write in English	3
7	Lack of knowledge in skills and conventions of writing (Lack of strategic writing skills)	2
8	Lack of knowledge about appropriate writing style	2
9	Inadequacy of vocabulary	1
10	Insufficient topic-specific knowledge	1
11	Lack of awareness about the purpose of their written paragraphs for their EL learning	3
12	Lack of practice outside the classroom	1

(Source: Survey data, 2020)

The of data collected in response to this question shows that, the group identified lack of knowledge of grammatical patterns, inability to write appropriate sentence structures,

inability to use the correct cohesive devices, inadequacy of vocabulary, insufficient topic-specific knowledge, and lack of practice outside the classroom as the first rank student-related factors that affect the students' EFL paragraph writing seriously. This was supported by Muhammad et al. (2016) who found that lack of knowledge of grammatical patterns and inability to write sentence structures that is appropriate to the subject matter.

while they identified lack of confidence on their ability to write, lack of knowledge in skills and conventions of writing (lack of strategic writing skills), and lack of knowledge about the use appropriate writing style as second rank student- related factors that affect the students' EFL paragraph writing to some extent.

The second question of the FGD required the groups to identify teacher-related and other pedagogical factors that affect their students' EFL paragraph writing in their schools by putting numbers 1 to 3 in front of each of the statements in the list (by writing number "1" in front of those affecting seriously, number "2" in front of those affecting to some extent, and number "3" in front of those which affecting the students in writing paragraphs to small extent

Conclusion

The study confirmed that the target students encountered writing difficulties whenever they were engaged in paragraph writing activities in EFL writing skills classrooms. The study revealed that the learners' EFL paragraph writing difficulties emerged from the complex nature of writing skills, which makes it so difficult for the students to master, the level of difficulty of the topics of paragraph writing lessons in the textbook, and level of interestingness of the contents of paragraph writing lessons in the textbook may affect students' EFL paragraph writing, the way students practice EFL paragraph writing; that is, the way they practice paragraph writing can also be another source of problem that might have affected their EFL paragraph writing. The results of study depicted that great majority of students face problems related to unfamiliarity of topic for writing, lack of idea, grammar difficulty, and lack of vocabulary. Majority of the students considered the extent of importance of knowledge of topic of writing/ subject matter, knowledge of grammar, knowledge of vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and clarity of idea and logical sequencing of ideas as having higher importance in paragraph writing. On the basis of the study, it can be generalized that majority of the grade 9 English teachers of the target schools frequently involve while writing stage in the classroom techniques/ strategies they use for teaching paragraph writing, while they sometimes involve pre-writing stage in the classroom techniques/ strategies they use for teaching paragraph writing; and post writing stage is the least frequently considered one. The study identified a range of factors affecting these students' EFL paragraph writing. The factors can be categorized into student- related factors, teacher- related factors, and pedagogical factors. Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that:

Recommendations

1. Teachers should carefully select, modify and adopt topics of paragraph writing lessons before they let the students write. In selecting the topics of writing, the teachers should consider the familiarity of the topics, level of interestingness of the contents of paragraph writing lessons; the teacher may engage the students in the selection of the topics
2. Before students actually start writing, it would be better to give them some information about what to write (content), with whom to do/ discuss, how to write the paragraph. This arouses expectation and helps to familiarize the topic.
3. Teachers need to involve all the three stages of writing in the classroom techniques/ strategies they use for teaching paragraph writing as frequently as possible.
4. The way students practiced paragraph writing can affect their EFL paragraph writing. Thus, teachers are expected to teach them writing strategies, and practice them continuously, In order to avoid the linguistic factors that affect these students' paragraph writing, teachers should help students develop their knowledge of grammatical pattern, practice writing write appropriate sentence structure and using the correct cohesive devices through frequent practice

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