



The Assessment of Writing - from Paragraph to Essay for Undergraduate Students at Salahaddin University – Erbil

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Abstract

This paper which is entitled "The Assessment of Writing - from Paragraph to Essay for undergraduate students at Salahaddin university- Erbil." is an attempt made so as to point out the importance and the uses of the paragraph and the essay in the writing process. This research aims to help students to learn more effectively about how to write paragraphs appropriately. It also assists in assessing writing paragraphs and essays academically. Researcher depends on a test about writing as an instrument to collect data from 62 third year students in the department of English College of Education at Salahaddin University in Erbil.

Keywords: Writing, Assessment, Paragraph, Essay, Test.

1. Introduction

Learning English language in academic areas as a second language becomes an important subject because English language is one of the dominant languages in the world. Writing is one of the four English language skills which are (Listening-Reading-Writing-and Speaking). This study deals with notable sides of writing for non-native English speakers who study at academic university level wish to improve their writing skills that will lead to an academic success (Zemach D. and Rumisek L., 2011). Paragraphs and essays are basic and essential parts of writing skills, and they will be effective when they contain information that will satisfy the reader. This research is designed to help students gain confidence in writing academically; also it is designed to take university-level students with an intermediate ability in English as a foreign language from paragraph writing to essay writing.

A paragraph is much more than a collection of connected sentences. It forms the building blocks of an essay. In academic writings a paragraph must explain only one main concept and it should provide supporting details which elaborate the major point which is called the topic sentence. A paragraph should have an introduction (topic sentence), middle (evidence), and end or conclusion (the concluding sentence) (Bailey S., 2011).

Chaplen F. (1976; P.1) defines paragraph "as a unit of information unified by a controlling idea. The paragraph is good only if the reader completely understands the unit of information it contains and if its controlling idea is completely developed".

According to Rumisk L. and Zemach D. (2011) a paragraph in academic writing should explain the writer's main idea about the topic. It is often between about five to ten sentences long, in other words, it can be as short as one sentence or as long as ten or more depending on the topic, but the number is not important. What is important is that the paragraph should be long enough to develop the writer's main point.

1.1 The Problem of the Study

It has been observed that English language foreign students do not have a required ability to write in English appropriately so they always face difficulties while writing paragraphs due



to certain reasons: they might not come up with appropriate ideas and they cannot put idea in its correct position during the process of writing paragraphs and essays. Besides, they might not know how to develop paragraphs to compose good essays; also they might not know how to use a variety of vocabularies in context.

1.2 The Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to illustrate main points of writing paragraphs and essays, and to give directions of how university students can become better in constructing good paragraphs.

1.3 The Scope of the Study

This study is restricted to giving a test to third year students in English department at College of Education, Salahaddin University, to write a paragraph about certain topic.

1.4 The Research hypothesis

It is hypothesized that English language students do not know the instructions of writing and are unable to write good paragraphs as the teachers expect.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The importance of the research is that it illustrates main points about paragraphs and essays that learners can take further information from it, moreover it gives English language learners and students an outline about what steps they should follow to get appropriate writing. It also helps English teachers to assess student's writing paragraphs and essay academically.

2. Parts of a Paragraph

Paragraphs generally include three parts. All paragraphs have a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

2.1. Topic sentence

Topic sentence identifies the subject of the paragraph. The topic sentence is often the first sentence of the paragraph that declares the main point in the paragraph (Annick J., 2014). A topic sentence is important to a paragraph because it clarifies the controlling idea (Ostrom J. and Cook W., 1993).

The controlling idea according to (Chaplen F., 1976), is the writer's idea about the subject. It is the central idea which is developed in a paragraph for that reason; the controlling idea is a summary of almost all the points which is in the paragraph. Therefore, the information that cannot be limited by the controlling idea should not be included in a paragraph.

To sum up, a good writer usually considers two significant points during writing a good topic sentence:

- a) A topic sentence has two elements: a topic and a controlling idea.

Topic

Controlling idea

E.g. Communication with colleagues requires sensitivity and understanding.

A topic sentence is considered as the most general statement of the paragraph for it does not state any particular information only gives the topic sentence and the controlling idea. For example, this statement could be considered as a topic sentence because it is a general statement.

E.g. The Arabic origin of many English words is not always obvious.

On the other hand, the following sentence cannot be regarded as a topic sentence because it is too specific, but it could serve as a supporting sentence.



E.g. The slang expression so long (meaning "good-by") is probably a corruption of the Arabic salaam.

- b) A topic sentence is a complete sentence; that should have at least one subject and one main verb.

E.g. Communicating with colleagues.

The above example cannot be regarded as a topic sentence because it is an incomplete sentence which does not contain a subject and a verb. (Oshima A. & Hogue A, 2014)

2.2. Supporting Sentences

Rumisek L. and Zemach D. (2011) explain the supporting sentences as once the writer has presented the introduction (the topic sentence), the writer develops the topic sentence by supporting sentences.

Supporting sentences are sentences that expand on the topic, explain the topic sentence, and are more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.

Langan J. (2010) states that the topic sentence only provides general ideas of the paragraph and expresses to the reader how the topic or main idea relates to the paragraph's core thesis. Change this verb be

Although Ostrom J. and Cook W., (1993) stated that students often face difficulties in writing and cannot support their ideas adequately, they need to use specific supporting details for their ideas to be convincing to the reader, there can be two types of supporting details: major and minor supporting details. Major supporting details support and explain the topic sentence. Minor details expand on, or give examples and causes of the major details.

There are different types of specific supporting details as quotations, facts, examples, and statistics. When writers express their ideas, they often distinguish between facts and opinions. Opinions are subjective statements based on writers own beliefs or attitudes and are not acceptable as supporting details. If one wants to express an opinion. He /she must support it with facts.

E.g. Women live longer than men. (Opinion)

Facts are objective statements based on truths.

E.g. At sea level, water boils at 100 degrees Celsius. (Facts)

Sometimes, even facts need proof, so the writer has to use specific supporting details for instance 'examples' to convince the reader that these statements are true facts as the following examples:

E.g. Fashion models are extremely true. (Facts but needs proof)

E.g. The average model weighs 23 percent less than the average woman of the same height. (Specific supporting details)

Also examples are one of the easiest types of supporting details because people usually take examples from their own opinions and experiences. They do not always have to check the internet and the library for supporting materials (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014).

2.3. The Concluding Sentence

The concluding sentence serves two purposes: it sums up the main points by reminding the reader of writers main points and supporting points or it restate the main information in a slightly different way by using dissimilar word order (paraphrasing) (Zemach D. and Rumisek L., 2011). Besides, Bryson Sh. (2018) adds that the concluding sentence should give the reader the sense of closure and satisfaction. In the concluding sentence the writer strengthens his ideas by logically following from: the preceding paragraphs also by reinforcing the central idea of his paper.



The concluding paragraph generally starts with summing-up transitions such as in brief, in conclusion, consequently or finally. When it comes to concluding paragraphs, the writer should avoid:

- Ending the paragraph with a quote (it is often preferable to end with writer's own words, as this is his last chance to make his effect on the reader.)
- Introducing completely new ideas as this makes the reader wishing for more information.
- Rewording introductory paragraph because usually readers do not read the same general opening paragraph (Annick J. et al. 2014). Moreover Oshima A. & Hohue A. (2014) state that in paragraph sentences are connected together so that a reader can softly read through the paragraph. The connection between sentences can be achieved using transition words or phrases that shows the relation between ideas; for example, moreover, as a result, on the other hand, then,...etc. also the writer can achieve the connection between sentences by repeating pronouns that refer to something/someone in a previous sentences.

An example to parts of a paragraph

Title: Take a Break

Topic sentence:

In today's busy world, it is easy to forget about the importance of taking time off.

Supporting Sentences:

Whether it lasts for a couple of hours or a few days, leisure time has specific benefits. First of all, relation reduces stress that can lead to serious health problems. For example, some people spend a restful day watching movies or reading. Others play sports. Whatever the activity, they begin to feel physically and emotionally stronger. The next benefit is creativity. Individuals with hobbies such as photography, travel, and music develop new talents and get ideas that they can use at school or in the office. Finally, interests outside of work can lead to a positive attitude. For instance, when volunteers help children learn to read, they feel wonderful about what they have achieved. Then they feel like working harder when they return to their regular responsibilities.

Concluding sentence:

All in all, leisure time helps people stay healthy and has the additional benefit of allowing them to work more industriously and productively. Cited in (Oshima A., and Hogue A., 2014: P.52)

3. The Essential Elements of a Paragraph

In general, in order for a paragraph to be effective, it must have two important features: unity and coherence.

3.1. Unity

Unity means "oneness of thought" (Ohlsen W. and Hammond F., 1970: P.3). The first feature of an effective paragraph is unity, which is a key element in a well-written paragraph. All sentences in a paragraph must be related to the topic sentence. A unified paragraph most focuses on the main idea which is stated in the topic sentence.

Another characteristic of unity is that every supporting sentence should support the controlling idea or the main idea (Arnaudet M. and Barrett M., 1990)."A paragraph must stick to its announced subject, it must not drift away in to another discussion, in other words, a good paragraph has unity" (Wyrick J., 1993: P.67). Ostrom J. and Cook W. (1993) stated that a well around created paragraph relies upon the author's control of materials and strategy. Having built up a properly limited topic sentence, with its controlling point, the essayist at that point develops the passage by clarifying them. The clarification appears as supporting



statements. All the sentences within the paragraph must apply to the point sentence that has been expressed.

An example for a unified paragraph that contains sentences which are off topic (lacks unity).

Miracle Medicine

Topic sentence:

Advances in medicine can come from surprising places, including water.

Supporting Sentences:

Many scientists are interested in the medical uses of small aquatic animals. They believe these animals are useful for new medical products. *Some ancient civilizations used berries and grasses for medical purposes. These plant-based medicines were often quite effective. (Off topic)* In the future, important drugs may be made from aquatic organisms. In addition, these organisms may be used as models to understand human diseases. Many years from now, sea creatures may help people lead healthier and longer lives. Cite in (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014: P.25)

However in this paragraph the reader can see that there were two disunited sentences, in other words, they contradict with the writer's purpose and are not related to the topic sentence, but all the other sentences in the paragraph are clearly related to the topic sentence also with the writer's purpose.

3.2. Coherence

The origin of the word coherence related to the Latin verb coheres, that means "to hold together." So in order for the writing to be coherent the sentences should hold together, in other words, the movement of the sentences that come after each other should be logical and smooth. There must not be sudden jumps. (Langan J., 2009).

Coherence is a process of arrangement. In a paragraph coherence relies on the correct series of sentences, but it also depends on properly connecting sentences. To gain proper sequence, the writer must organize sentences in a way which will most successfully convey the thought to the mind of the reader. The paragraph should be organized according to a restrictive arrangement and the result is that all the sentences are not just about the same major topic but also should stick together and push the reader softly from the beginning of the paragraph till the end of the paragraph which means from the topic sentence to the concluding one. (Ostrom J. & Cook W., 1993).

According to Oshima A. & Hogue A. (2014); Wyrick J. (1993) there are a number of ways to achieve coherence:

1. Using an ordering principle to achieve coherence, arrange the sentences so that they bear a logical relationship to each other. Details and ideas should follow one another in the proper sequence.
2. Another way to achieve coherence is the use of transition signals. Transition signals are words or phrases that express connections between two or more ideas, and they provide bridges between sentences within the paragraph and between paragraphs. So transition signals can be signal words such as first, finally, and however, or phrases such as in conclusion, on the other hand.....etc.
3. Using pronouns, pronouns are used to refer to nouns in preceding sentences in the paragraph, and they are helpful techniques to gain coherence; for instance, if the writer mentions people in one sentence then can go back to that noun in the following sentences by using the pronoun (them).





4. Using repetition to achieve coherence, important words or phrases and the synonyms may be repeated throughout a paragraph to connect the thoughts into a coherent statement. The influential key to use repetition of words and phrases is to maintain the reader in mind. (Oshima A. & Hogue A, 2014; Wyrick J., 1993)

A Sample of a Coherent Paragraph

My Eyes' Problem

(1)Throughout most of my school days my eyes failed to focus correctly when reading. (2)Consequently, I saw different symbols every time I read a sentence. (3)As a result, the printed page was a chaotic kaleidoscope of constantly changing letters that made no sense. (4)For example, when reading the last sentence I would see: "Attars made sense" or "As the latter that made no sense," or "Letters made no sense," depending on how my eyes focused on a sentence. (5)After my eyes problem was corrected, my real problems began because it was assumed that I could now read like everyone else. (6)This was a big mistake that overlooked the psychological effects created by my visual disability. (7)Most importantly, I was left doubting my understanding when reading unfamiliar material while teachers began to give me increasingly complex material to read.

- The writer creates coherence by using transition signals like, consequently, as a result, for example.....etc.
- The writer then creates coherence in sentence (6) by using a pronoun, "this", to refer back to an event he described in sentence (5).
- In sentence (5), he creates a narrative relationship between events by beginning his sentence with "after" and repeats a key concept, "eye problem", from the topic sentence. Cited in (McCloud- Bondoc L., P.15).

4. Constructing a Good Paragraph

A good paragraph should consist of: Structure, Unity and coherence, Ordering and Completeness

4.1. Paragraph structure

In academic areas, writing a good paragraph is important because it will encourage the reader to enjoy the way of your writing and understanding it in a better way. Good ideas in writing effective essays and paragraphs are not enough instead they should be organized in a good way to express the required sense so that the writer has to keep one idea to a paragraph which is the most important point of a paragraph. In a paragraph the writer might give several supporting points to develop the main idea also these supporting details should be related directly to the topic sentence in a paragraph if not the writer should give each supporting evidence its own title so there will be several paragraphs to discuss about.

4.2. Unity and Coherence

A paragraph should be unified, coherent, and well developed. Almost all of the paragraphs have only one controlling idea which is demonstrated and expressed in the topic sentence so a paragraph is unified around this main idea and supporting sentences add more information to the topic sentence. In the paragraph all sentences have to relate to each other and work together. Besides they should relate to the main point within that paragraph (best IELTS preparation, 2013).

4.3. Paragraph Order

The way of organizing the writer's supporting sentences in academic writing is presented by paragraph ordering. The writer can organize and arrange paragraphs in many ways:



- **Comparison/contrast:** equalities and dissimilarities between ideas are examined.
- **Cause and effect:** an idea in a paragraph will cause another idea and will influence a certain situation.
- **Chronological order:** a sequence of events is ordered by time.
- **Spatial:** shows the way of arranging ideas in a space.
- **Emphatic:** expressing ideas in a clear and organized way to show their importance.

4.4. Paragraph Completeness

A well- developed paragraph is considered as paragraph completeness. It means there must be enough ideas to support the main idea. In addition to a topic sentence and a concluding sentence, usually three supporting sentences in a paragraph are required for a paragraph to be complete (Liberty University online centre, 2011).

5. The Difference between Paragraph and Essay

Paragraph	Essay
A paragraph is a group of related sentences about one main idea that will be developed in the following sentences in the paragraph.	An essay is a piece of writing composed of several paragraphs. Because the essay's topic sometimes is so complicated to discuss in one paragraph, there will be several paragraphs about one topic and all the paragraphs in the essay are connected via introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph.
In the paragraph the main idea is called topic sentence which appears in the introductory sentence and is developed by supporting sentences (Lagan J., 2010).	In the essay, the main idea is called a thesis statement that appears in the introductory paragraph and is developed by the supporting paragraphs (Lagan J., 2010).
An academic paragraph structure: Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting sentence • Supporting sentence • Supporting sentence Concluding sentence Cited in (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014)	An academic essay structure: I- Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General statement - Thesis statement II- Body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Supporting sentences 2- Supporting sentences 3- Supporting sentences (concluding sentence) B. Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Supporting sentences 2- Supporting sentences 3- Supporting sentences (concluding sentence) C. Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Supporting sentences 2- Supporting sentences 3- Supporting sentences (concluding sentence) III- Conclusion



	<p>- Restatement or summary of the main points, final comment. Cited in (Oshima A. and Hohue A., 2014)</p>
<p>The topic sentence is usually the first sentence in the paragraph. It identifies the subject of the paragraph and clarifies the controlling idea which is the main part in the paragraph that states the writer's viewpoint about the entire paragraph (Chaplen F., 1976).</p>	<p>A good way to ensure that paragraphs in an essay are clearly related to the thesis statement is to show that the essay has a good topic sentence. In the essay the introductory paragraph has some functions such as it attracts the reader, presents a thesis statement, and it indicates the plan of development of the entire essay (Bryson Sh., 2018). Thesis statement is a sentence that introduces the reader to the topic and the writer's opinion about the topic, it may indicates the pattern of organization of the essay, it lists the subtopics of the major topic, and it often locates at the of the introductory paragraph (Annick J. etal., 2014).</p>
<p>Supporting sentence or body paragraph: supporting sentences are sentences that expand on the topic, explain and support the topic sentence. There should be specific supporting details that consist of examples, facts, statistics, and proofs to expand and support the topic sentence (Rumisk L. and Zemach D., 2011).</p>	<p>The body paragraphs in the essay are like the supporting sentences in a paragraph. In the body paragraphs the writer develops the topic and states his point of view about the topic and introductory paragraph.</p>
<p>Patterns of organization help to maintain coherence and state the writer's purpose about the paragraph. There are some common kinds of organization which are chronological order (series of steps in an action), logical division of ideas (the division of topic in to separate parts), and comparison /contrast (differences and similarities between two or more thing and ideas) (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014).</p>	<p>Pattern of organization helps the reader to focus on the order of the body Paragraphs, like paragraphs, the main and basic pattern of organization in the essay is logical division of ideas. The writer divides the topic into some subtopics then he will discuss each subtopic separately in the essay in which each subtopic develops an important idea about the main topic. This pattern of organization is appropriate for prompts, kinds, types.....etc. (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014).</p>
<p>Zemach D. and Rumisek L. (2011) explained that the concluding sentence sums up the main points by reminding the reader of the main points or paraphrasing the main ideas slightly in a different way. The concluding sentence should not end with a new idea or with a quotation.</p>	<p>Annick J. etal. (2014) states that concluding paragraph is the final paragraph in the essay that strengthens the ideas that the writer put forth in the essay often by summarizing the main point (thesis statement) and the main supporting points. it should flow logically from the preceding paragraphs. There are several techniques that professional writers use to make the concluding paragraph memorable to the reader like making an inference, suggestion results, recommending a solution or calling for an action, and quoting an authority on the topic (Oshima A. and Hogue A., 2014).</p>



For the paragraph example look at the page (7).	An example for the essay (The Advantages of Advertising)
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The Advantages of Advertising

The introductory paragraph:

Advertising is everywhere. It is pervasive in mass media, on TV, the radio, in magazines and newspapers, and on the internet. It is also on buses, buildings, and even on the clothes we wear. Therefore no one in the modern world can avoid being influenced by advertising. Like all things, advertising has both positive and negative effects. However, to me, the positive aspects outweigh the negative. *There are many advantages of advertising, but I will mention only two: to stimulate business growth and to create jobs.* (Thesis statement)

Supporting paragraph:

First, advertising is one of the principal factors in stimulating business growth. There are many factories and businesses that make the same products. They must compete with each other to get the attention of consumers and sell their products. To achieve this goal, they must invest to advertise their products. If their advertising is successful and their sales increase, their business grows. They make profits that they can then invest. This investment stimulates the economy and helps other companies make money too. This is how the capital list system works. A good example of a company with a successful advertising campaign is Burger King. Burger King used to be a small company with not many customers, but several years ago it started putting clever ads on TV to try to get some of the fast food business from McDonald's. These ads made Burger King's hamburgers look as good as or better than McDonald's. Today, you can see many more Burger King Restaurants, with many customers around the country. One of the results of a stimulated economy is creation of jobs. If a company grows and must produce more, it needs more employees. It must employ more workers at every level, from janitors to vice-presidents. This creates jobs for many people. As Burger King has grown, for example, it has hired many new people to fill both management and blue-collar jobs in its restaurants. An example of a local company that has grown and created jobs is the New Orleans Shirt Company. It is becoming famous for its elegant shirts, which are distributed all over the south. Although, it only started five years ago to receive orders from many large department stores, therefore, it is hiring more people

Concluding paragraph:

In summary, advertising is essential to the development of the capitalist economy. Advertising stimulates business growth and creates jobs. Through advertising, companies grow and consumers are provided with information about products. Without advertising, the economy would stagnate and may even collapse. Cited in (Ruetten M., 2012: PP. 106-107)

6. Data collection, Instruments, Participants and Reliability of the Test:

This paper presents the applicable procedures of the reliability of the research test; therefore it consists of participants, instruments, reliability of the test, results and data analysis.

The research instrument is a test. The test was about writing a paragraph in the form of a question entitled (write a paragraph about "apology" your paragraph should have a clear topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence, and transitional signals/ pay attention to your grammar, spelling, and punctuation. 10marks). Reliability refers to the consistency of the results that follow from the use of a test and the statistical formula has been obtained from the test (White R. V. and Funstone R. 1992:P.17).

The participants of this study are limited to 3rd year students at the department of English / college of Education / Salahaddin University for the academic year 2018-2019. The total



number of the participants is 62 students and they were all Kurdish native speakers and English learners, they were following intensive courses on paragraph and essay writing.

7. Results and Analysis

The participants consisted of 62 students in College of Education and the frequencies of their marks in the test summarized in table 1 below.

Table1: demonstrates the total number of students' marks

Grammar (1M)	Spelling (1M)	Punctuation (1M)	Topic sentence (2M)	Supporting sentences (2M)	Concluding sentence (2M)	Transition signals (1M)	Total (10 Marks)
0.76	0.73	0.64	1.20	1.25	0.84	0.59	6

In the test students have been asked to give their paragraph a clear topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, and to use appropriate transition signals in which there are important parts of constructing good paragraphs also students were asked to pay attention to their grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The paragraph was out of 10marks and the marks have been divided according to the following rubric:

Grammar (1) mark, spelling (1) mark, punctuation (1) mark, topic sentence (2) marks, supporting sentences (2) marks, concluding sentence 1 mark, and transition signals (1) mark.

The first element which is shown in the above table is grammar. Those students who did not make any grammatical mistakes got 1 mark out of 1, and among 62 students 35 of them got full mark. While students who made some grammatical mistakes got 0.5 out of 1, so among 62 students 24 students got half mark, in addition, 3students got zero for their incorrect grammar. Finally, the marks of all of the students in grammar; were collected of 62 and the average number in grammar is 0.76 as it is shown in table 1.

The second element in table1 is spelling. In spelling 33 students out of 62 got 1mark out of 1 because their spelling was totally correct whereas 24 students made some spelling mistakes and got 0.5 out of 1. Also some students' spelling was extremely bad as a result they got zero and their number was 5students. As a result all the students' marks in spelling were calculated and was divided them into 62 and the average is 0.73 out of 1 in spelling.

The third element is punctuation which is out of 1 mark. In the test 27 students got 1 out of 1 since they did not do any mistakes while 22 students out of 62 got half mark (0.5) and 13 students made so many mistakes in punctuation therefore, they got zero out of 1. All in all, students' punctuation marks has been calculated and divided to 62 and the total average in punctuation is 0.64 out of 1.

The fourth element in writing paragraph was topic sentence according to the table1. Students were required to write a good and clear topic sentence moreover according to the answers 15 students got full mark (2 out of 2), because their topic sentence was completely fitting the subject besides, 5 students got 1.5, 32 students got 1, and 10 students got 0.5 for their poor topic sentence. As a result the average is 1.20 for students' level in writing topic sentence.

The fifth element in the test is supporting sentences. Students who wrote supporting sentences that completely suit the topic got 2 out of 2 so 18 of them got full marks whereas, 12 students got 1.5 for their good writing, also 19 students out of 62 got 1 and 9students wrote poor supporting sentences, therefore, got 0.5 while 4 students did not write anything for that reason they got zero. Finally, their marks have been calculated and got 1.25 as an average for supporting sentences.

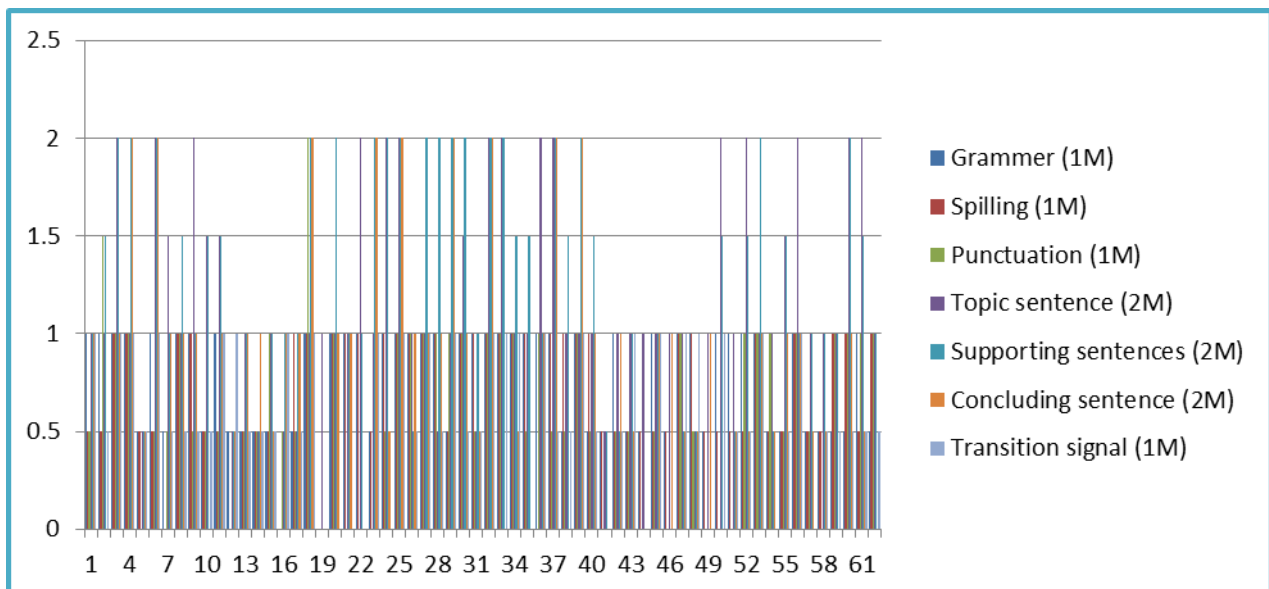


The sixth element is concluding sentence and as usual 10 students got 2 out of 2, 22 students got 1, 16 students got 0.5, and 12 students got zero for they did not write the concluding sentence. As a result the average for concluding sentence is 0.84 out of 1.

The final element is using transitional signals. Some students use very appropriate transitions so they got 1 out of 1 and they were 23 students while 27 students got 0.5 because there were some mistakes in their writing at the same time 12 students got zero, for they did not use any transitional signals. The average number of students' level in using transitional signals is 0.59 out of 1. Indeed, the results of all the elements in the test have been collected and it has been discovered that the total number of students' level in writing paragraph in college of education is 6 out of 10.

That is why the hypothesis which says "English language students do not know the instructions of writing and are unable to write good paragraphs as the teachers expect" is disapproved. Which means that more than half the number of students know how to write paragraph and are aware about elements of paragraph writing.

Chart1: regarding students' number and the their marks



The chart1 consists of three parts which are row, column, and categories. The columns are concerned with students' marks that start from zero till (2), whereas the rows show the students' number which start from 1 till 62 students. The categories are grammar (1M), spelling (1M), punctuation (1M), topic sentence (2M), supporting sentence (2M), concluding sentence (2M), and transition signals (1M) and the categories colored differently for the sake of differentiation between them. All in all, chart1 demonstrates each student's marks in each topic, for example; the chart shows that the first student got (1) in grammar, (0.5) in spelling, (0.5) in punctuation, (1) in topic sentence, (1) in supporting sentence, (1) in concluding sentence, and that he got (1) for using transitional signals and the rest of students' marks and numbers are measured in the same way as the first student.

Conclusion:

It is hoped that this paper has revealed some useful information for students to better understand about writing paragraphs and essays. Eventually, this paper arrived the following concluding points:

1. This research is aimed to give directions of how university students can be better in constructing good paragraphs.



2. Paragraphs and essays are a basic and essential part of writing skills, and they will be effective when they contain information that will satisfy the reader.
3. A test of writing paragraph has been conducted and a number of 3rd year students at English department / college of Education / Salahaddin University participated. According to the results it is clear that students in English department need more abilities and instructions to write a good paragraph as their teachers expect.
4. Here we can reach to the conclusion based on the analysis of the test which demonstrates that among (62) students only (33) students were good enough in grammar and spelling which were two basic components of writing paragraph, while the results shows that students' ability in using punctuation and transition signals were not good enough because in punctuation only (27) students have the required abilities, meanwhile in using transition signals only (22) students were good. At the same time results of the test analysis declares that students' abilities in writing the important test elements which were topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence were extremely bad for only between (10-17) students had the required ability to write them. This lack of students' skills and abilities in writing paragraphs is a reference to the lack of good instructions in these two language components (paragraph and essay). They need more instructions and information to develop their skills and to be good paragraph writers.

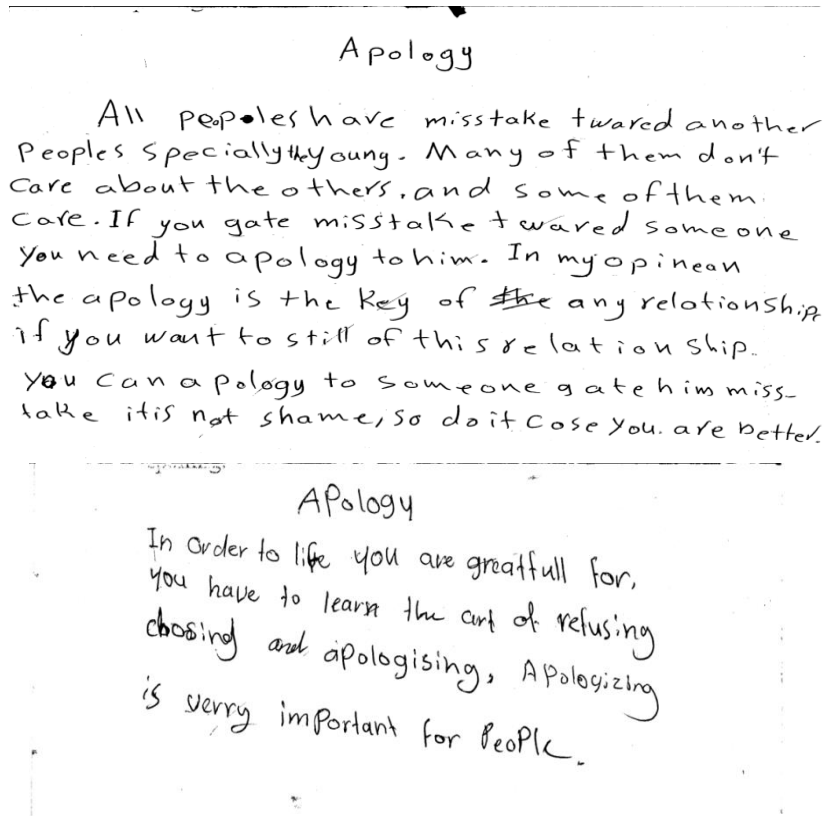
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Appendix (some examples of paragraphs which is written by students)





Apology

Apology happens when someone feels sorry about doing wrong things and they want you to accept their apology.

People do wrong things against each other sometimes unconsciously so they want the others to forgive them and sometimes they regret that they did this bad behaviour or action against others. Apology is a good thing but sometimes not every body deserve it. Sometimes Apology can't rectify their mistake and bad behaviours. In deed, Apology is something good to the ones who deserve it and we should forgive the ones that are regretful.

Apology

- At the beginning apology is an reflection of sadness or remorse for actions that have been done by the mistaken someone.

Also, a right apology does not over do, it stays based on acknowledging the feelings of the hurt part without over shadowing them with your own pain or remorse, it does not get caught up in who's to blame or who started. It's important to apologize even if the reason and the mistake have been done in a rude way.

Howevr, apologizing doesn't make you the weak individual among the group, it actually makes you the strong and confident person and make you a happy person because it need many courages to admit that it's your fault and to understand the feelings of the hurt person. Finally it is considered a strength and not a weakness.



تقييم الكتابة - من فقرة الى مقالة لطلاب المرحلة الجامعية في جامعة صلاح الدين- أربيل

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ملخص

هذه الدراسة التي تحمل عنوان "تقييم الكتابة - من فقرة إلى مقالة لطلاب المرحلة الجامعية في جامعة صلاح الدين- أربيل". هي محاولة بذلت لتوضيح أهمية واستخدامات الفقرة والمقال في عملية الكتابة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى مساعدة الطلاب على التعلم بشكل أكثر فعالية حول كيفية كتابة الفقرات بشكل مناسب. يعتمد الباحث على اختبار حول الكتابة كأداة لجمع البيانات من 62 من طلاب السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغة الإنكليزية في كلية التربية في جامعة صلاح الدين في أربيل.

الكلمات الدالة: كتابة، تقييم، فقرة، مقال، إختبار.

هه لسه نگاندى نووسين له پهره گرافه وه تاكو وتار بۇ قوتاياني زانكۆ له زانكۆى سه لاهدين

نازين شيخ محمد باير

زانكۆى سه لاهدين - كۆليژى پهره رده - به شى زمانى ئينگليزى

پوخته

ئەو توژينه وه به كه به ناوئيشانى "هه لسه نگاندى نووسين له پهره گرافه وه تاكو وتار بۇ قوتاياني زانكۆ له زانكۆى سه لاهدين" هه وليكده دراوه له پيناو روون كردنه وهى گرنكى و به كار هيتانه كانى پهره گراف و وتار له پرۆسهى نووسيندا. ئامانجى ئەم توژينه وه به برىتى به له يارمهتى دانى قوتاياني بۇ فېربوون به شيوه بهكى كارا تر چۆن پهره گرافه كان بنووسيتته وه به شيوه بهكى گونجاو. توژهر پشت ده به ستيت به تاقي كردنه وه بهكى سه بارهت به نووسين وهك ئامرازىك بۇ كۆكردنه وهى زانبارى به كان له 62 قوتايى قوناعى سن به شى زمانى ئينگليزى له كۆليژى پهره ردهى زانكۆى سه لاهدين له هه وليتر.

ووشه كلييه كان: نووسين، هه لسه نگاندى، پهره گراف، وتار، تاقي كردنه وه.