

ENHANCING STUDENT'S WRITING ABILITY IN PARAGRAPH WRITING THROUGH AN OUTLINE STRATEGY AT PRIMARY LEVEL

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Abstract. *This research was based on classroom action research. The main objective of this research was to know the improvement in students writing skill in writing paragraph through an outline strategy. This research was done at fifth grade students of five Government Primary Schools located at D. G. Khan city. The participants of this research were 15 students of grade five. Such participants were selected through random sampling technique. The obtained data was analyzed in percentage. Pre-Test and Post-Test used as an instrument in this research. In both Pre-Test and Post-Test required items like paragraph title writing, grammar, spelling and total sentences (length) of paragraph were same. In Pre-Test, outline strategy in paragraph writing was not employed but in Post-Test such strategy was used. According to findings, in Pre-Test students writing paragraph were 20.00%, 26.66%, 20.00%, 26.66% (Good), 46.66%, 20.00%, 33.33%, 33.33% (Average), 33.33%, 53.33%, 46.66%, 40.00% (Weak) in paragraph writing title, proper use of grammar, correct spelling and total sentences (length) of paragraph, respectively. After Pre-Test, instructor taught participants about writing paragraph through an outline strategy for a period of 4 weeks and then conducted Post-Test. In this test, participants writing paragraph through an outline strategy were 46.66%, 53.33%, 60.00%, 53.33% (Good), 40.00%, 26.66%, 33.33%, 40.00% (Average), 13.33%, 20.00%, 6.66%, 6.66% (Weak) in paragraph writing title, proper use of grammar, correct spelling and total sentences (length) of paragraph, respectively. This action-based research demonstrated that outline strategy can improve the students writing skills.*

Key words: *Students; Writing, Paragraph, Outline; Strategy*

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning is an important element of society and play a vital role in the development of a nation (Hafeez et al., 2020). English as a language learning is the most crucial challenge for the non-native English learners (Saira et al., 2020). Language is most essential source of communication employed to share ideas and information between two or more people in the execution of their daily tasks (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007). It is the main way due to which humans have the skills to convey messages and contact with each other (Li et al., 2014). In studying language, there are four skills such as

listening, speaking, reading and writing that must be commanded. Among language skills, writing is regarded as most challenging and convoluted skill as compared to other skills (reading, listening and speaking). It is easier to understand meaning by reading and listening as compared to form meaning by writing because writing skill needs a lot of struggles (Dixon & Nessel, 1983; Spörer et al., 2009; Alsmari, 2019). Initially most of the linguists perhaps recommend outline technique for writing something. For writing a good outline provide structures for writing. The outline not only comprises on headings, but also gives information about sub-section heading or specific ideas. It also forms notes

regarding each section as well as any phrases or sentences we could employ in the process of writing (Setyowati & El-Sulukiyah, 2017; Yusuf et al., 2019).

Writing is one of the skills which can be easily acquired by practicing (Nihal, 2017). Andrews, (1999) said that writing is just like an art, which could be strengthened only by practice. Winarti & Cahyono, (2020) reported that commanding on the passive voice form is not the story ending. Learner should experience themselves by using passive voice. Teaching is motivating learners for practicing the language skills. The learning is experience of an individual by its own (personal) and it requires active participation of an individual (Miftah & Raya, 2018). However, psychologists stated that learners not acquire knowledge just like sponge gets in water (Halliday et al 1965; Quinlan, 2004; Chien 2010; Sun & Wang, 2020). For enhancing writing skill in learners, it is most essential that teacher must be competent as well as teaching methodology must be diversified (Jahin, 2012). The purpose of current study is to enhance student's writing ability in paragraph writing through an outline strategy at primary level.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kartawijaya, (2018) executed a classroom-based action research for solving the problems faced in teaching-learning process. The research was aimed to assess the outline technique whether it improve students writing ability (in paragraph) or not with influential factors on descriptive writing. This investigation was executed on students of grade 8th during 2017-18 (academic year). The findings recommended that teacher must use outline method in teaching for improving

the students writing ability. Qalby & Ivery, (2013) determined the writing skill of second year students by implementing the outline method for writing paragraph. In this determination, researcher applied action research by selecting male (11) and female (31) of second grade. The observation revealed that student's writing improved in both tests (cycle 1 and cycle 2) in various scores. In this way, the application of writing process method may raise the learners writing ability.

Rohim, (2018) performed a descriptive research (qualitative) for assessing the writing ability of students in paragraph writing. This research was based on assignment compiled by the learners of English department (fourth semester). The research main focusing points were paragraph parts unity and paragraph coherence. Hussien, (2015) carried out descriptive research for examining the learners paragraph writing issues. In this investigation, English tutors (4) and learners (50) of grade 10th were selected on random basis. In this research 3 tools (observation, questionnaire and analysis of document) for data collection were considered. The learner paragraph writing issues were point out by using analysis of document technique, questionnaire (open-ended) and observation of class. On quality basis all data was collected and find out various issues like spelling, unity, grammar, organization, punctuation, adequacy and capitalization. Beside this, some influential factors regarding paragraph writing were observed namely deficient knowledge for strategic application, learners writing

apprehensiveness, vocabulary and practice lacking and instructors associated factors like instructors' methods of giving feedback.

Setyowati & Sukmawan, (2016) conducted a research and recommend that a teacher must teach grammatical concepts to its pupils for improving the grammar in students writing. Kuyyogsuy, (2019) concluded in a research that it is highly advantageous to instruct grammar linked problems such as diversity as well as application in the writing context than approaching the topic through teaching related skills. In this way, mostly instructors are motivated for grammar-based items teaching to their students who faced main grammar mistakes (Alrouji, 2020). If the learners are doing mistake in their writing for verb selection, then a teacher must deliver short lecture on grammar concept. Therefore, instruction on grammatical elements influences the students writing skill positively (Graham et al., 2019).

White & Arndt, (1991) stated that the process of writing is a type of problem solving that includes producing ideas, goal setting, planning, monitoring as well as judging what has been written. A paragraph is a group of sentences that develops a single topic or idea (Aminloo, 2013). Rohim, (2018) stated in a study that in university classes, mainly paragraph writing is taught by the instructors as a subject which is taught mostly in English classes. Ingels, (2006) stated that in reality writing is regarded still as an arduous assignment for mainly initial as well as foreign language students. It was observed that learners (second language writers) agree with many constraints like choosing

vocabulary, punctuation mistakes, producing ideas and managing problems, spelling mistakes and proper grammar application in writing works (Hailemariam, 2011). Writing paragraph in English is a great challenge for the non-native English learners. Most of the learners face grammatical, paraphrase and content problems in writing English paragraph (Ryan, 2011; Mistar et al., 2014; Maolida & Mustika, 2018; Al-Jarrah et al., 2019). To overcome these challenges and to evaluate the influence of outline strategy for the enhancement of ability of the learners for writing paragraph among grade five students of public schools in District Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab, Pakistan, a research has been conducted.

III. METHODOLOGY

Design of Study

A descriptive case study research method was used in this research to evaluate the grade five students paragraph writing through an outline strategy by using Pre-Test and Post-Test.

Population

In this research, population comprised of students (grade five) of five government primary schools located in D. G. Khan city. In each school, there were thirty students of grade five. It was not feasible to obtain data from all the participants or members of a population. Thus, 3 of participants from each school were chosen for data collection.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The participants of the research were grade five students. By using simple random sampling technique, 15 participants were selected from the population.

Data Collection Procedure

The data was recorded from all the participants by using test technique. The pre-Test was administered to 15 participants (sample) to gather the baseline or initial data. After collecting the initial data, English instructor taught their participants about writing paragraph by using outline strategy for a period of four weeks. Then, a Post-Test was taken from 15 participants (sample) to check whether the intervention favorable for the students to gain good results or not.

Table 1: Criteria for Ranking

Data Analysis Method

Ranking	Percentage (%)
Good	70-100
Average	50-69
Weak	Less than 50

After gathering the data through Pre-Test and Post-Test, recorded data was analyzed by using quantitative data analyzing method. In this way, score of participants from both tests were counted into percentages. Finally on the basis of observed data analysis, researcher summarized the findings and draw conclusion.

Instruments

Pre-Test and Post-Test instruments were used for collecting in this research.

Instrument Development

Pre-Test

The Pre-Test question was only about writing paragraph on topic “My Self” of maximum five sentences (short paragraph). The purpose was to check whether the students were able to know how to write correct sentences and then to follow the correct technique of writing paragraphs. The participants were allowed only 20 minutes to answer the test. Then, Pre-Test of all the participants were marked. Pre-Test mainly focused on required

items like title, grammar, spelling and total sentences in paragraph.

Post-Test

Before conducting Post-Test, all participants were taught about writing paragraph through an outline strategy for a period of 4 weeks. The Post-Test question was about writing paragraph on “Picnic”. Participants were allowed only 20 minutes to answer the test. After Post-Test, such test of all participants was marked by focusing the same required items as in Pre-Test.

IV. RESULTS

In both Pre-Test and Post-Test, required items like paragraph title, grammar, spelling and total sentence (length) of paragraph were similar but in Pre-Test paragraph writing through an outline was not employed. While in Post-Test, participants wrote paragraph through an outline strategy.

Pre-Test Analysis

Table 2: For Paragraph Title Writing in Pre-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	3	20%
Average	7	46.66%
Weak	5	33.33%

Table 1 showed that out of 15 participants, only 3 participants (20%) ranked good, 7 participants regarded as average (46.66%) while 5 participants (33.33%) considered as weak in Pre-Test for paragraph writing title.

Table 2 For Proper Use of Grammar in Pre-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	4	26.66%
Average	3	20%
Weak	8	53.34%

From above Table 2, it was clear that most of the participants (53.33%) were weak, 3 participants as average, 4 participants were good in the use of grammar in Pre-Test.

Table 3 For Correct Spelling in Pre-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	3	20%
Average	5	33.33%
Weak	7	46.66%

This Table 3 represented 20% participants were good in correct spelling in Pre-Test while 33.33% and 46.66% participants ranked as average and weak, respectively.

Table 4 Total Sentences in Paragraph in Pre-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	4	26.66%
Average	5	33.33%
Weak	6	40%

Table 4 demonstrated various ranking of participants in case of total sentences in paragraph such as 26.66% participants were good, 33.33% average and 40% weak.

Post-Test Analysis

Table 5 For Paragraph Title Writing in Post-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	7	46.66%
Average	6	40%
Weak	2	13.33%

Table 5 showed that 46.66% participants were good in Post-Test for paragraph title writing. Forty percent of the participants considered as average. Only 2 participants ranked as weak in this required item.

Table 6 For Proper Use of Grammar in Post-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	8	53.33%
Average	4	26.66%
Weak	3	20%

This table exhibited that most of the participants (53.33%) were good, 4 participants as average, 3 participants were weak in the use of grammar in Post-Test.

Table 7 For Correct Spelling in Post-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	9	60%
Average	5	33.33%
Weak	1	6.66%

This Table 7 represented 60% participants were good in correct spelling in Post-Test while 33.33% and 6.66% participants ranked as average and weak, respectively.

Table 8 Total Sentences in Paragraph in Post-Test

Ranking	No. of Participants	Percentage
Good	8	53.33%
Average	6	40%
Weak	1	6.66%

Table 8 demonstrated various ranking of participants in case of total sentences in paragraph such as 53.33% participants were good, 40% average and 6.66% weak.

Table 5 to Table 8 of Post-Test exhibited that the results of the participants were improved as compared to Pre-Test. This was due to the outline strategy because in Post-Test this strategy was used.

V. DISCUSSION

Our findings are in conformity with Kartawijaya, (2018) who stated that students writing by outline method increased from 58.25 to 76.87%. Qalby and Ivery, (2013) stated that the student scores in observing test was increased from 66.64 (in cycle I) to 70.79% (in cycle II) by the application of sentence outline technique. In cycle I, 2 learners attain poor (4.76%), 27 attain fair (64.29%) and 13 attain good (30.95%) but in cycle II, 17 get fair (40.48%) and 25 attain good (59.52%). The results of Hussen (2015) encourage the present study, who said that writing paragraph is an ability which can be strengthened by habitual practicing.

Conclusion

The use of outline strategy may improve students writing skill especially in descriptive paragraph writing at grade five. Outline enhances students writing skill, learners feel easy to design their writing, organized idea and constructed their sentences into a good paragraph. Outlining strategy is a really beneficial for both teacher and learner which make the students more active in writing especially in writing paragraph ability.

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