OPEN ACCESS

Received: 28 -08 -2024 Accepted: 20- 11-2024



Challenges in writing paragraph among pre-university EFL learners: Teachers' perceptions

Dr. Elamin Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed 🍺

e-mohammed@ut.edu.sa

Abstract:

This study aims to investigate the Sudanese EFL teachers' perceptions about the challenges which face their learners in writing paragraph with reference to vocabulary and grammar. To achieve its objectives, the study applied the descriptive-analytical method, in which a questionnaire was used to address the research inquiries and goals. A total of 100 employed teachers participated in responding to the questionnaire. The study reported that the majority of Sudanese EFL teachers (93%) reported that their students in pre- university stage face difficulty to select appropriate words to convey their ideas clearly. In addition, 88% of the teachers reported that their students face grammar challenges affect the clarity while writing. They found it difficult to maintain the correct verb tenses throughout their paragraphs writing, as well as the using of complex sentence structures in English. Moreover, 90 % of the Sudanese EFL teachers indicated that their students find it helpful if their instructor provides feedback on their writing and support them with regular assign to improve their paragraph writing.

Keywords: Challenges, EFL learners, EFL Teachers, Pre-university stage, writing paragraph.

Cite this article as: Elamin. A. M. A. (2025). Challenges in writing paragraph among pre-university EFL learners: Teachers' perceptions, 7(1): 610 -625.

^{*} Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Department of Languages and Translation, Duba University College, Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia.

[©] This material is published under the license of Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0), which allows the user to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format. It also allows adapting, transforming or adding to the material for any purpose, even commercially, as long as such modifications are highlighted and the material is credited to its author.





التحديات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية في كتابة الفقرات قبل الالتحاق بالجامعة من وجهة نظر المعلمين

 $(a, b)^*$ د. الأمن أحمد محمد أحمد

e-mohammed@ut.edu.sa

الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في تصورات معلى اللغة الإنجليزية، بوصفها لغة أجنبية، في السودان عن التحديات التي تواجه طلابهم في كتابة الفقرات، بالإشارة إلى المفردات والقواعد؛ لتحقيق أهدافها، استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، إذ تم مشاركة الاستبيان مع 100 معلم يدرسون في المدارس الأساسية. أفادت الدراسة أن الغالبية العظمي من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، بوصفها لغة أجنبية في السودان (93%)، أشاروا إلى أن طلابهم يواجهون صعوبة في اختيار الكلمات المناسبة لنقل أفكارهم بوضوح. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أبلغ (88%) من المعلمين عن أن طلابهم يواجهون تحديات تتعلق بالقواعد تؤثر على وضوح الكتابة. كما أوضح المعلمون أن الطلاب يجدون صعوبة في استخدام الأزمنة الصحيحة للأفعال طوال كتابة فقراتهم، بالإضافة إلى استخدام تركيبات جمل معقدة باللغة الإنجليزية. كما أوضحت الدراسة أن (90%) من معلى اللغة الإنجليزية في السودان يشيرون إلى أن طلابهم يرغبون في أن يقدم لهم معلمهم تعليقات على كتاباتهم ودعمهم بواجبات منتظمة لتحسين مهارات كتابة الفقرات لديهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: معلمو الإنجليزية، تحديات كتابة الفقرة، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية، مرحلة ما قبل الجامعة.

للاقتباس: أحمد، ١. أ. م. (2025). التحديات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية في كتابة الفقرات قبل الالتحاق بالجامعة من وجهة نظر المعلمين، الآداب للدراسات اللغوية والأدبية، 7 (1): 610-625.

^{*} أستاذ اللسانيات التطبيقية المساعد - قسم اللغات والترجمة - كلية ضباء الجامعية - جامعة تبوك - المملكة العربية السعودية.

[©] نُشر هذا البحث وفقًا لشروط الرخصة (CC BY 4.0) Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)، التي تسمح بنسخ البحث وتوزيعه ونقله بأي شكل من الأشكال، كما تسمح بتكييف البحث أو تحويله أو الإضافة إليه لأي غرض كان، بما في ذلك الأغراض التجاربة، شريطة نسبة العمل إلى صاحبه مع بيان أي تعديلات أُجربت عليه.



Introduction

Writing is a critical skill for pre-university students, especially those learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). However, paragraph writing can be particularly challenging for these learners (Al-Bataineh, 2023). Many students may feel intimidated by the structure and coherence required, leading them to "skip" this crucial skill. EFL teachers play a significant role in addressing these challenges by creating a supportive learning environment that encourages students to practice and improve (Alsariera & Yunus, 2023). Through targeted strategies and engaging activities, teachers can help students build confidence and competence in paragraph writing, preparing them for the academic demands of higher education (Hernández-García et al., 2019). This article explores various effective methods EFL teachers can use to motivate students to tackle the challenges of paragraph writing and develop strong foundational skills in written. For pre-university English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, writing is an essential skill for academic success. Yet, writing clear and cohesive paragraphs remains a significant challenge. According to research, EFL learners often struggle with paragraph structure, coherence, and topic development, which are crucial for effective communication and argumentation in academic settings (Hyland, 2019). When faced with these challenges, some students may choose to "skip" or avoid writing tasks altogether, resulting in missed opportunities for skill development and self-expression.

The role of EFL teachers is critical in addressing these challenges. Studies show that effective EFL instruction incorporates strategies that engage students, build confidence, and promote gradual skill acquisition (Li, 2020). Methods like using structured writing exercises, fostering peer collaboration, and providing constructive feedback are shown to reduce students' anxieties around writing (Baleghizadeh & Gordani, 2012). Additionally, creating a supportive and low-pressure classroom environment can empower students to experiment with writing without fear of failure (Brookhart, 2017).

This article explores some Sudanese EFL teachers' perceptions about the complexity their students face in vocabulary mastery, grammar difficulty while writing paragraph. It also checks EFL teachers about the importance of teacher's use of certain vocabulary technique to help students in their wiring tasks. By implementing research-based strategies, teachers can help students build essential writing skills, confidence, and the resilience needed to succeed in higher education and beyond. This study aims to explore effective strategies for encouraging pre-university EFL students to engage in paragraph writing and overcome the challenges associated with it. Many EFL learners experience difficulties in paragraph structure, cohesion, and coherence, often leading to writing avoidance and increased anxiety. Previous research focused on the students' challenges of writing at college levels (Algamal, et al., 2021; Hasan, 2016; Taye & Mengesha, 2024).



This study explores the challenges that EFL students at pre university level encounter while writing paragraph. Gaps in previous research also pertained in their focus on analyzing students' writing to show the challenges, this study on the other hand focus on teachers' perceptions to report the challenges that their students' face. Hence, the objectives of the study are:

- 1. To determine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the vocabulary difficulties that pre-university EFL students encounter while composing paragraphs,
- To examine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the grammar difficulties that preuniversity EFL students encounter while composing paragraphs,
- To gauge the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the techniques used in aiding students to develop their vocabulary mastery.

Through these objectives, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of how targeted instructional methods can enhance paragraph writing skills among pre-university EFL students, ultimately preparing them for academic success.

Literature Review

To address the topic of EFL teachers encouraging and helping pre-university students overcome challenges in paragraph writing, the researcher outlines a structured literature review. This review focuses on how EFL master teachers approach the challenges faced by students in paragraph writing, strategies they employ to motivate students, and the impact of these methods on improving writing skills.

1Challenges in paragraph writing among pre-university EFL students

Writing is considered one of the most complex skills in language learning, especially for EFL learners. Researchers highlight the cognitive load involved in organizing ideas, structuring arguments, and adhering to grammatical norms (Alkodimi & Al-Ahdal, 2021; Che Mat, 2020), all of which pose challenges for preuniversity students who may lack sufficient language exposure (Kellogg, 2008). Writing involves a mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and cohesion, which can overwhelm students and reduce motivation (Graham & Harris, 2018). EFL students often face additional barriers in writing due to differences in their first language's structure, cultural nuances, and stylistic norms (Alsariera & Yunus, 2023, Hamad, 2024). This is particularly true for languages with significant differences from English, such as Arabic or Mandarin, where students may struggle with syntax and paragraph structure (Kaplan, 1966). Writing, particularly in a second language, requires advanced cognitive processing, including planning, organization, translation of ideas into words, and fine-tuning language mechanics.



Cognitive Load Theory suggests that writing in English requires EFL learners to juggle multiple tasksgenerating ideas, applying grammar rules, and maintaining coherence-which can easily overwhelm them (Sweller, 1988). These processes can be especially difficult for younger learners or those with limited language exposure, leading to frustration and reluctance toward writing tasks (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Research has shown that differences between English and students' native languages (L1) often interfere with writing skills in English. Kaplan's (1966) theory of "cultural thought patterns" illustrates that students may struggle to organize paragraphs according to English rhetorical norms if they come from language backgrounds with contrasting structures. For example, Arabic speakers might prefer a circular or parallel argument structure, whereas English writing requires a more linear, thesis-driven organization (Hale & Basides, 2023). This divergence can lead to "negative transfer" from the L1, impacting the clarity and coherence of their writing (Connor, 1996).

2 The role of EFL teachers in addressing writing challenges

Experienced EFL teachers use scaffolding techniques that help students gradually build up their writing skills. Scaffolding can include modeling, peer review, and structured feedback sessions, which provide students with the necessary support while encouraging autonomy over time (Wood et al., 1976). Additionally, methods like genre-based approaches allow students to become familiar with the conventions of academic writing in English. Motivation is crucial for EFL learners to develop their writing skills. Studies have shown that master teachers can increase motivation by creating a positive learning environment and emphasizing the value of writing beyond the classroom (Dörnyei, 2001). Activities that connect writing tasks to students' personal interests and future academic or career goals can help lower anxiety and foster a growth mindset, making students more open to attempting challenging tasks (Cheng, 2002). Scaffolding is a technique grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, which argues that learners can accomplish tasks beyond their independent capabilities with guided support. EFL master teachers often employ scaffolding strategies—such as breaking down tasks, providing models, and offering structured support—to guide students through the stages of writing. For instance, a teacher may model paragraph construction by creating an outline together with students, thereby providing a clear framework they can emulate independently later (Wood et al., 1976).

Genre-based instruction is effective in helping students understand the conventions of different types of writing. According to Hyland (2003), this approach provides students with explicit examples of how paragraphs are structured in specific genres (e.g., argumentative, descriptive), helping them gain confidence and familiarity with English rhetorical styles. Teachers might analyze sample paragraphs in class, identifying the introduction, supporting details, and conclusion to make students aware of organizational patterns within specific contexts. Effective feedback plays a critical role in improving EFL students' writing. According to Ferris



(2004), corrective feedback that targets specific errors—such as verb tense, article use, and sentence structure—enables students to internalize grammatical rules and apply them correctly in future writing tasks. In practice, master teachers may provide focused feedback on students' drafts, addressing common errors in grammar and organization, and encouraging students to revise accordingly.

Effective Strategies for Paragraph Writing Instruction in EFL Contexts

The process writing approach, which encourages students to brainstorm, draft, revise, and edit, has been found to be effective in EFL contexts. This method allows students to focus on different aspects of writing incrementally, improving their overall skills and reducing the pressure to produce a perfect paragraph on the first try (Hyland, 2003). Research shows that collaborative writing activities, such as peer review and group discussions, can improve paragraph writing by enabling students to learn from each other. Peer feedback allows students to reflect on their work and that of others, enhancing critical thinking skills (Storch, 2005). Dörnyei (2001) emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive learning environment that fosters intrinsic motivation. Teachers can make writing assignments more engaging by relating them to students' interests or future academic goals, thereby fostering a sense of purpose and relevance. Autonomy-supportive practices, such as giving students choice in topic selection, have been shown to increase motivation and reduce writingrelated anxiety (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Teachers might encourage students to write on personally meaningful topics, helping them feel more invested in their writing tasks. Writing anxiety is common among EFL students, particularly when they fear judgment or lack confidence in their language skills. Research by Cheng (2002) suggests that anxiety is heightened in high-stakes or unfamiliar writing situations. Master teachers can reduce anxiety by establishing a non-judgmental classroom environment and incorporating low-stakes writing assignments, such as journal entries or free-writing exercises, which allow students to practice writing without fear of significant errors. Additionally, teachers might employ group writing activities where students collaborate, helping reduce individual pressure.: Online grammar-checking tools such as Grammarly and ProWriting Aid offer immediate feedback on writing mechanics, which can support EFL students in selfcorrecting errors and gaining confidence in their grammar. Li and Cumming (2001) found that these tools can be particularly helpful for EFL learners, as they allow students to identify and address recurrent issues in realtime, promoting a more autonomous learning process.: Digital platforms like Google Docs and Turnitin provide opportunities for peer review, a method shown to improve writing quality and critical thinking (Storch, 2005). EFL teachers can use these platforms to facilitate peer feedback sessions where students review each other's paragraphs and provide constructive criticism, fostering collaborative learning and helping students gain insights into writing improvement strategies from peers (Al Abri et al., 2023).: Blended learning, which combines traditional instruction with online resources, allows EFL students to practice writing outside



the classroom while receiving targeted feedback from digital resources. Blended learning environments can be particularly effective for language learners, as they allow students to practice at their own pace, explore supplementary resources, and receive feedback asynchronously, which can help alleviate anxiety (Al Abri et al., 2023; Andrade & Bunker, 2009; Kurniawan et al., 2023, Hussain, 2024).

4. The impact of technology in overcoming writing challenges

Technology, such as grammar-checking software, collaborative platforms, and online writing aids, has been shown to support EFL learners in improving their paragraph writing. Digital tools provide immediate feedback on grammar and vocabulary usage, which can help students self-correct and learn from their mistakes (Li & Cumming, 2001). Moreover, online writing communities offer a space for EFL students to practice writing outside of the classroom. Blended learning, which combines in-person and online learning, enables teachers to integrate multimedia resources and digital writing exercises. Studies show that this approach can reduce anxiety by allowing students to practice independently and receive feedback at their own pace (Al Abri et al., 2023; Kurniawan et al., 2023).

Methodology

This section outlines the research design, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed in this study to explore effective strategies for enhancing paragraph writing among preuniversity EFL students. The study uses a cross-sectional research design to capture a snapshot of the experiences of EFL teachers. To accomplish its aims, the research employed a descriptive-analytical approach, utilizing a questionnaire to tackle the research questions and objectives. The study was conducted at the River Nile State, Atbra Locality, Sudan for the school year (2023-2024).

Instruments

Survey: A structured questionnaire is distributed to participants to gather quantitative data on the common challenges that students at basic education face, such as determine the vocabulary difficulties, the grammar challenge, and recommendations to assist EFL students in surmounting difficulties associated with paragraph. The survey consists of five points Likert-scale questions to assess the frequency and severity of these challenges. The questionnaire's details. The study focuses into three key aspects concerning Sudanese EFL learners at the Preuniversity level. Firstly, it examines teachers' opinions regarding the vocabulary difficulties that their pre-university EFL students have while composing paragraphs (1-2-3-4-). Secondly identifying the teachers' opinions on the grammar challenge faced by pre-university EFL students in paragraph writing, (5-6-7-8-). Thirdly it examines for EFL instructors' perception on the their students' preference to receive assistant while writing paragraphs (9-10-11-12). The students' questionnaire is briefly summarized in Table 1 below:



Table 1. Variables of teachers' questionnaire

| Variable measure | Measure by |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. To determine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding | Items 1 to 4 |
| the vocabulary difficulties that pre-university EFL students encounter | |
| while composing paragraphs | |
| 2.To examine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding | Items: 5,6,7and 8 |
| the grammar difficulties that pre-university EFL students encounter | |
| while composing paragraphs. | |
| 3. To gauge the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the | Items 9, 10, 11and12 |
| techniques used in aiding students to develop their vocabulary | |
| mastery. | |

Participants

The participants in this study are EFL teachers enrolled in Pre-university stages institutions. A purposive sampling technique is used to select a diverse sample of teachers from various schools approximately 100 teachers are invited to complete the survey. Teachers are with a teaching experience between 5-10 years (n=41%) and 10-and above years (n=59). They were chosen randomly from English language teachers of the locality of Rever Nile State (Male & Female). Table 2 clarifies the distribution of gender among a sample of 100 individuals. Among these, 68 participants identified as male, constituting (68%) of total sample, whereas 32 participants identified as Female, constituting (32%) of total sample. The participants were recruited from three grade, i.e., and eighth degree, seventh degree and fifth degree. Table 2 also shows that 32 (32%) of the teachers were in eighth grade and 27 (27%) were in seventh grade and 41 (41%) in fifth degree. Such a gender and levels distribution could possibly affect the various aspects of the study or research being conducted, as gender may play demographic factors play a significant role in influencing viewpoints, experiences, and reactions to specific questions or subjects. Consequently, researchers must take these demographic variations into account when analyzing and interpreting the data gathered from their studies.





Table 2. Distribution of the sample according to gender and their studying grades

| Variables | | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| | Male | 68 | 68% |
| Gender | Female | 32 | 32% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |
| | Eighth grade | 32 | 32% |
| Grade | Seventh grade | 27 | 27% |
| | Fifth grade | 41 | 41% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |
| Experience | 5-10 years | 41 | 41% |
| | 10 and above | 59 | 59% |
| | Total | 100% | 100% |

Validity and reliability

A panel of three assistant professors with expertise in the English language verified the questionnaire. They used the following standards to inform their points of views regarding assertions, items, and directions' clarity. The objects' ease of use and their relevance to the topic and the wording employed. The reliability was calculated and reached 0.67. This rate is considered acceptable.

Options are supplied specifically for the sample, the ability to listen intently to the policy makers' recommendations, ask insightful questions, and engage in open communication with some of them when the researcher is ready. The reliability of the questionnaire was checked using pilot study. The questionnaire was predemonstrated with a sample of 20 teachers who were excluded in the final demonstration. These participants were not included in the 100-sample mentioned in the participants section. The researcher asked them about the clarity of the items for them. The aim was to check the understandability of the students to the questionnaire items and whether there were any problems that needed fixation before the final administration. The teacher's questionnaire was distributed to them in their WhatsApp group. Ethical considerations were taken care of in this study. The researcher got permission from the administration of education in River Nile State to apply the study. Also, the permission was taken from the Supervisor of English language Department. With reference to students, they were told the aim of the study. Their consent to participate was assured and they were clarified that their responses will be used for this study. They were told not to write their name. As soon as the questionnaire versions were



administrated, then they were given enough time to respond and fill out the questionnaire. The result of the pilot study reached 0.67.

Data Analysis

As this study is purely descriptive, descriptive analysis is used to process the data. Frequency and percentages were used to show the students' degree of agreement to the research items. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis, are used to explore relationships between students' English levels and the specific challenges they face, and Key themes related to such as determine the vocabulary difficulties, the grammar challenge, and recommendations to assist EFL students in surmounting difficulties associated with paragraph writing.

4. Results and Discussion

The teacher's questionnaire covers the EFL Sudanese teachers' perceptions about the challenges in vocabulary and grammar that their pre-university students encounter of paragraph. The questionnaire includes 12 items divided into three parts:

RO 1: To determine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the vocabulary difficulties that preuniversity EFL students encounter while composing paragraphs,

Table 3. Teachers' views in difficulties which pre-university EFL students have while composing paragraphs

| Statements | Strongly | Agree | Not | Disagree | Strongly |
|---|----------|-------|------|----------|----------|
| | agree | | sure | | disagree |
| EFL students often feel limited by their | 82 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| vocabulary when writing paragraphs in | | | | | |
| English. | | | | | |
| EFL students find it difficult to select | 85 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| appropriate words to convey their ideas | | | | | |
| clearly. | | | | | |
| EFL students confident is low in | 89 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| understanding the meanings of new words | | | | | |
| encountered while writing. | | | | | |
| EFL students frequently use translation tools | 77 | 11 | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| or dictionaries to complete their paragraphs. | | | | | |
| Total | 83.25 | 9.75 | 3.5 | 2.25 | 1.25 |



According to the information on Table 3, 93 (93%) of the survey participants were agreed that EFL students often feel limited by their vocabulary when writing paragraphs in English.5 (5%) of the respondents not sure and 2% disagreed. Table 3 showed that 97 (97%) of the sample of the survey agreed that EFL students find it difficult to select appropriate words to convey their ideas clearly, which represents the main challenge that face the students while writing paragraph. Table 3 clarified that 94 (94%) of the participants' agreed that EFL students confident is low in understanding the meanings of new words encountered while writing, while 3 (3%) notsure, and 3% disagreed. Table 3 informed that 88 (88%) of survey sample agreed that EFL students frequently use translation tools or dictionaries to complete their paragraphs, whereas 4 (4%) notsure and 8 (8%) disagreed. The result of this study is in line with Hasan (2016) who found that the majority of EFL instructors reported that their students' have limited mastery of vocabulary which hinder their paragraph writing. Hence, studies like Siyanova-Chanturia and Webb (2016) affirm the necessity of developing comprehensive approach for vocabulary teaching.

RO 2: To examine the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the grammar difficulties that pre-university EFL students encounter while composing paragraphs.

Table 4. Teachers' views about the grammar challenges faced by pre-university EFL students in paragraph writing.

| Statements | Strongly | Agree | Not | Disagree | Strongly |
|--|----------|-------|------|----------|----------|
| | agree | | sure | | disagree |
| EFL students find it challenging to maintain | 77 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 3 |
| correct verb tenses throughout their | | | | | |
| paragraphs. | | | | | |
| EFL students often face grammar mistakes that | 81 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| affect the clarity of their writing. | | | | | |
| EFL students feel uncomfortable with using | 76 | 15 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| complex sentence structures in English. | | | | | |
| EFL students face difficulties with subject-verb | 74 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| agreement while writing paragraph in English. | | | | | |
| Total | 77 | 11.75 | 7 | 2.75 | 1.5 |

As seen in Table 4, 88 (88%) of the participants agreed that EFL students find it challenging to maintain correct verb tenses throughout their paragraphs, while 8 (8%) was not sure and 4 (4%) disagreed. Table 4



indicates 90 (90%) of the sample agreed that EFL students often face grammar mistakes that affect the clarity of their writing, 5 (5%) notsure, and 5 (5%) disagreed. Table 4 shows that 91 (91%) of surveyed teachers agreed that EFL students feel uncomfortable with using complex sentence structures in English. 7 (7%) was not sure about this statement and 2 (2%) disagreed. Table4 showed that 86 (86%) of the respondents agreed that EFL students face difficulties with subject-verb agreement while writing paragraph in English, 8 (8%) was not sure, and 6 (6%) disagreed. This result agreed with Karim et al. (2018) who showcased that Bangladeshi EFL learners faced writing problems stemmed from the use of appropriate vocabulary and idioms. Furthermore, Hernández-García et al. (2018) demonstrated the necessity for developing students in mastering the tense through tool like Tense Buster prototype. Hernández-García et al. (2018) also confirmed that the misuse of tense in writing distort the meaning of the paragraph.

RO 3: To gauge the perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the techniques used in aiding students to develop their vocabulary mastery.

Table 5. Perceptions of Sudanese EFL teachers regarding the techniques used in aiding students to develop their vocabulary mastery

| Statements | Strongly | Agree | Not | Disagree | Strongly |
|--|----------|-------|------|----------|----------|
| | agree | | sure | | disagree |
| EFL students find it helpful if their instructor | 74 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| provided more vocabulary-building exercises. | | | | | |
| English teachers provide feedback on EFL | 82 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| students written assignments is helpful in their | | | | | |
| writing paragraph improvement. | | | | | |
| EFL students benefit from more grammar- | 79 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| focused workshops. | | | | | |
| English teachers support their students with | 75 | 12 | 9 | 4 | 0 |
| regular assigns to improve their paragraph | | | | | |
| writing. | | | | | |
| Total | 77.5 | 12.25 | 6.5 | 2 | 1.75 |

The survey results in Table 5 showed that 90 (90 %) of the sample respondents agreed that EFL students find it helpful if their instructor provided more vocabulary-building exercises. While 4 (4%) notsure



and 6 (6%) disagree. Table 5 informed that 93 (93%) of the survey sample agreed that English teachers provide feedback on EFL students written assignments is helpful in their writing paragraph improvement. Whereas 6 (6%) notsure. Table 5 showed that 89 (89%) of the respondents agreed that EFL students benefit from more grammar-focused workshops. While 7 (7%) of the sample was not sure, and 4 (4%) disagreed. According to the information in Table5 87 (87%) of the respondents agreed that English teachers support their students with regular assigns to improve their paragraph writing. Whereas 9 (9%) notsure and 4 (4%) disagreed. This reported finding aligns with Amiryousefi (2015) who showed that both EFL students and teachers reported the importance of developing vocabulary knowledge. Terfa (2014) revealed that teachers should develop their vocabulary teaching strategies to improve their students' lexical knowledge.

These findings point to several common challenges and potential solutions for EFL pre- university students when learning to write paragraphs in English. Many EFL students feel constrained by their limited vocabulary, which impacts their ability to express themselves fully and accurately. Furthermore, pre-university students struggle with choosing words that convey their intended meaning clearly, often leading to vague or incorrect expressions. To overcome vocabulary issues, EFL teachers are expected to provide their students with techniques which contribute in building their vocabulary and which help.

Maintaining consistent and correct verb tenses is a common struggle, resulting in errors that can confuse readers. Many students feel uncomfortable using more advanced sentence structures, leading to simple and sometimes repetitive language use. EFL teachers are responsible to focus on this complexity and consider different teaching techniques which ensure teaching grammar by enabling students to use grammar in language use, not just to memorize the roles for the examinations.

Conclusion

Sudanese EFL teachers reported that their pre-university students face a range of challenges in writing, from vocabulary limitations and word choice difficulties to grammar and structural issues. They also highlight that targeted support, including vocabulary exercises, structured feedback, grammar workshops, and regular writing practice, can help students improve their writing abilities. Addressing these areas may lead to a more comprehensive and supportive learning environment for EFL students in improving their English writing skills

EFL teachers are required to employ a range of strategies, including scaffolding, genre-based instruction, motivation-building, and technology integration, to support pre-university students in overcoming the challenges of writing paragraphs. These approaches not only help students improve linguistic accuracy and organization but also promote positive attitudes towards writing. Future research could examine the longterm impact of these methods on students' academic writing skills and investigate how specific strategies, like



digital tools or genre-based learning, influence outcomes across diverse EFL context Self master teachers play a pivotal role in addressing the challenges of paragraph writing among pre-university students. By applying scaffolding techniques, motivating students through engaging activities, and leveraging digital tools, they help students develop the confidence and skills necessary to write effectively in English. Further research could explore the long-term impacts of these methods on students' academic success and language acquisition. These resources provide a foundation for understanding the theoretical and practical approaches in this area and can guide future studies aimed at enhancing paragraph writing instruction in EFL contexts

References

- Alkodimi, K. A., & Al-Ahdal, A.A.M.H. (2021). Strategies of teaching writing at Saudi tertiary-level institutions: reality and expectations. Arab World English Journal, 12(2) 399-413. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol12no2.27
- Amiryousefi, M.R. (2015). Iranian EFL teachers and learners' beliefs about vocabulary learning and teaching. International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning, 4. https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrsll.2015.1016
- Andrade, M. S., & Bunker, E. L. (2009). A model for self-regulated distance language learning. Distance Education, 30(1), 47-61.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Gordani, Y. (2012). Motivation and quality of work life among secondary school EFL teachers. Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online), 37(7), 30-42.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2017). How to give effective feedback to your students. ASCD.
- Cheng, Y. (2002). Factors associated with foreign language writing anxiety. Foreign Language Annals, 35(5), 647-656.
- Connor, U. (1996). Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing. Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). Motivational strategies in the language classroom. Cambridge University Press.
- Ferris, D. R. (2004). The "grammar correction" debate in L2 writing: Where are we, and where do we go from here? (and what do we do in the meantime...?). Journal of Second Language Writing, 13(1), 49-62.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. College Composition and Communication, 32(4), 365-387.
- Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2018). Evidence-based practices in writing instruction. Reading & Writing, 31(4), 595-616.
- Hamad, S. M. S. (2024). The Influence of Social Media's on Student English Proficiency: A Study of University EFL Teachers' Perspectives. Arts for Linguistic Literary Studies, 6(3), 508-532. https://doi.org/10.53286/arts.v6i3.2082
- Hasan, A.K. (2016). The effect of lack of vocabulary on English language learners' performance with reference to English Departments students at Salahaddin University-Erbil. Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences, 20, 211-227



- Hernández-García, F., Agathangelou, P., Chacón-Beltrán, R., Hadjileontiadou, S. (2019). Improving EFL students' writing with the help of technology: the case of verb tenses in secondary education. In, Tsitouridou, M., A. Diniz, J., Mikropoulos, T. (eds) *Technology and Innovation in Learning, Teaching and Education. TECH-EDU 2018. Communications in Computer and Information Science*, (Vol 993). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20954-4_27
- Hussain, S. S. (2024). Attitudes of Saudi Students Towards EFL, English teachers and learning situations. Arts for Linguistic & Literary Studies, 6(3), 486–507. https://doi.org/10.53286/arts.v6i3.2081
- Hyland, K. (2003). Second language writing. Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. Language Learning, 16(1-2), 1-20.
- Karim, S.M., Maasum, T.N., & Latif, H. (2018). Writing challenges of Bangladeshi tertiary level EFL learners. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 12 (2), 296-306
- Kellogg, R. T. (2008). Training writing skills: A cognitive developmental perspective. *Journal of Writing Research, 1*(1), 1-26.
- Li, J., & Cumming, A. (2001). Word processing and second language writing: A longitudinal case study. *International Journal of English Studies*, 1(2), 127-148.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Siekmann, L., Parr, J. M., & Busse, V. (2022). Structure and coherence as challenges in composition: A study of assessing less proficient EFL writers' text quality. *Assessing Writing*, *54*, 100672.
- Siyanova-Chanturia, A., Webb, S. (2016). Teaching vocabulary in the EFL context. In: Renandya, W., Widodo, H. (eds)

 **English language teaching today. English language education, (Vol 5). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-38834-2_16
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *14*(3), 153-173.
- Sweller, J. (1988). Cognitive load during problem-solving: Effects on learning. Cognitive Science, 12(2), 257-285.
- Terfa, M. A. (2014). An assessment of the practice of vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classes: Kellem Secondary School Grade 9 And 10 English teachers in focus. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 7(7), 581-589
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Harvard University Press.
- Al-Bataineh, A. (2021). Language policy in higher education in the United Arab Emirates: proficiency, choices and the future of Arabic. *Lang Policy* 20, 215–236. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-020-09548-y



- Alsariera, A.H., & Yunus, K. (2023). Issues and challenges in the use of coherence among Jordanian EFL students in writing academic essays. Journal of Nusantara Studies (IONUS), 8(2), 141-156. https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol8iss2pp141-156
- Taye, T., & Mengesha, M. (2024). Identifying and analyzing common English writing challenges among regular undergraduate students. Heliyon, 10(17). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e36876
- Algamal, A. A. M., Bin-Hady, W. R. A., & Ezzaldin, A. S. (2021). Paragraph writing efficacy among Yemeni EFL university learners. Albaydha University Journal, 3(2), 863-874. https://doi.org/10.56807/buj.v3i2.17
- Che Mat, N. (2020). Understanding academic writing practices in Malaysian university classrooms (Unpublished PhD dissertation). University of East Anglia.
- Al Abri, A., Al Baimani, S., & Al Bahlani, S. (2021). The role of web-based peer feedback in advancing EFL essay writing. Computer-Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal, 22(1), 362-377.
- Kurniawan, D., Jaya, H. P., & Wijaya, A. (2023). EFL learners' experiences of peer feedback in paragraph writing through cloud collaboration. IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 10(1), 37-62.

