



RESEARCH PAPER

Using Writing Assessment Rubrics to Assess English Paragraphs of Pakistani College Level EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

Despite studying English for many years, Pakistani students, like other L2 learners, encounter difficulties while writing in the language for academic and professional success, especially when attempting to convey the intended idea in a paragraph. The study's objective was to assess Pakistani L2 learners' writing abilities, with a particular emphasis on the quality of English paragraphs produced by EFL students, both male and female, enrolled in public sector colleges. Ten English language teachers and fifty-three BS English semester I beginners served as the research's subjects in a mixed-methods approach. Semi-structured interviews, paragraph writing samples and Writing Assessment Rubrics (WARs) were used to gather data. The findings demonstrated that BS English students had difficulty in producing well-written English paragraphs, as seen by their lower scores on structured assessment instruments. Additionally, they displayed issues with organization, coherence, and language. The paragraphs written by female students were determined to be superior to those among students who are male. The study revealed the difficulties Pakistani students encounter while writing in English for academic and professional success, which has ramifications for both academia and pedagogy.

KEYWORDS Coherence, English Paragraph Writing, Grammar, Organization, Rubrics, Writing Skills

Introduction

Given its global understanding, English is regarded as the lingua franca of the modern world (Conrad & Maureen, 2003). It is widely utilized in many spheres of life. It is employed in trade and business. It is the language of science, technology, and education. Mahboob (2014) asserts that English is a major language for communication as well as the exchange of knowledge. For EFL/ESL learners, the English language has grown increasingly important since it gives them access to new opportunities for success. Similar to this, being able to communicate in English is essential for Pakistani students, especially those pursuing higher education.

Since writing is so important to L2 learners' academic success, it has become one of the four skills that receives more focus. The ability to compose coherent and impactful paragraphs is essential for both academic achievement and future professional goals. However, writing a coherent, relevant, and grammatically correct paragraph is more difficult than it might seem for EFL novices. There are a lot of challenges they face when writing a paragraph. In order to produce a well-organized paragraph, they must employ a range of strategies and subskills in the language of instruction. According to Harris and Cunnigham (1994), writing is a challenging endeavor because the writer must constantly move between his or her ideas and the written words. Writing in second language is even a greater challenge (Anwar & Ahmed, 2016). The intricacy results from the requirement to

generate concepts, maintain close observation over written work, assess it, and exercise extreme linguistic restraint (Murcia and Olshtain, 2000). Nunan (1999) goes on to say that composing writing that is understandable is a major problem, especially for L2 students.

EFL students must be proficient writers in order to be linguistically competent. In order to effectively convey their sentiments, emotions, opinions, thoughts, and ideas through words, people need to be proficient in written communication (Alfaki, 2015). However, Pakistani English language learners find it challenging to write an essay as well as a proper paragraph (Farooq et al. 2012 & Anwar et al. 2023). It is an empirical question, nevertheless, if writing English paragraphs is a similar struggle for all first-year college students attending public universities. The English paragraphs of Intermediate and university-level research studies (Hamza et al. 2017; Qamar et al. 2021; Siddiqui et al. 2020; Siddiqui et al. 2023) were subjected to error analysis and thematic analysis. There is a dearth of research on assessment of college-level BS English learners' English paragraph writing abilities using a structured rubric.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to evaluate writing skills of Pakistani learners. The objectives of the study are to assess the quality of English paragraphs, using structured writing assessment rubrics, written by Pakistani BS English semester I students, both male and female, enrolled in public sector colleges. Through the use of a mixed-method approach, this study aims to offer insightful information about the strengths and weaknesses of English paragraph writing abilities in the context of Pakistan.

Literature Review

A crucial component of schooling all around the world is the evaluation of writing abilities, especially in English. Examining students' ability to write English paragraphs becomes crucial in Pakistan, as English is frequently the language of teaching at the higher levels of education. This literature study attempts to shed light on the current studies on evaluating English writing abilities, the application of rubrics, and the unique difficulties Pakistani college-level students experience in this area.

Grammar, vocabulary, structure, coherence, and clarity are some of the written expression elements that are evaluated while evaluating writing skills. Because they offer precise standards for grading and feedback, rubrics are frequently utilized tools for writing assessment. Numerous studies stress the need of evaluating writing abilities holistically as opposed to concentrating only on obvious flaws (Bangert-Drowns, 1993; Huot, 1996).

The use of rubrics as an organized and clear mechanism for writing evaluation and assessment is growing. Andrade's (2000) research demonstrates how rubrics improve the validity and reliability of writing evaluation. Rubrics may be tailored to fit certain educational situations and used with a variety of writing assignments, including paragraphs. They provide teachers the ability to encourage students' writing development and offer constructive criticism (Reddy & Andrade, 2010).

Pakistani EFL students have particular difficulties when it comes to composing paragraphs in English. Some of the major issues are the effect of English as a second language, the lack of access to authentic English texts, and the wide range of language competency levels among students (Khan & Khan, 2016). Additionally, Pakistan's current evaluation methods frequently favor rote memorization over creative expression and critical thought, which might impede students' ability to enhance their writing (Shafqat et al. 2019).

In order to get a thorough knowledge of the evaluation and assessment process, a mixed methods strategy is suggested in this study. This technique combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches. While qualitative data can reflect the subtleties of

students' writing experiences and obstacles, quantitative data can shed light on the efficacy of rubric-based assessment and evaluation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

There is a chance to raise the standard of English writing instruction by grading English paragraphs among Pakistani BS 4 years program students using a rubric-based method. This study intends to provide important insights into improving writing instruction and assessment processes for Pakistani students by addressing the problems particular to this setting and using a mixed methods approach.

Zenika's (2021) research aims to identify errors students make in using simple present tense in tenth grade at SMK N 4 Bandar Lampung. Using descriptive qualitative research, the study found 258 errors, indicating low grammatical skills. The origins of these errors were interference errors, intra-lingual errors, and developmental errors. The study used surface approach taxonomy to assess, classify, and percentage the mistakes. The findings highlight the need for improved grammatical skills in students using simple present tense.

Rohim (2019) conducted descriptive research at the Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang. The fourth-semester students of the academic year 2017-2018 comprised the sample of the study. The objective of the study was to analyze their skills in paragraph writing. The researcher analyzed the data through mixed methods and found that the highest average score was reflected in the organization used by the student in their writings. It was followed by content, mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary. Overall, the results of their paragraphs were categorized as good. This has been seen from the average gain, which is 15.13.

The primary goal of Qamar et al.'s (2021) study was to determine the state of paragraph writing skills in a private school in Islamabad. This research was designed as a survey to measure the paragraph writing skills of Grade 3 pupils in private schools. This study included grade 3 kids from a private school. As a sample, nine males and eight girls were chosen. During the survey, students were asked to choose four themes and write a paragraph about them. They were only allowed 90 minutes to finish this mission. The data were analyzed using the SPSS 22 program. dependability analysis was used to assess the test's dependability. The paragraph writing was evaluated using scoring rubrics. It was suggested that improving teaching methods such as the communicative approach might enhance paragraph writing.

Hamza et al. (2017) examined the errors in the writings of Pakistani English learners. The study's goal was to detect, categorize, describe, and then explain the sources of the inaccuracies. The investigation was quantitative in character. The study included 20 individuals (10 males and 10 females) from the Department of Computer Science at Sindh Madrassatul Islam University Karachi and Orasoft Training Institute Karachi as samples. They were required to write a paragraph about the "Importance of Education." The acquired data was examined by marking mistakes, and tables were created for each kind of inaccuracy. According to the data, the student committed 111 faults in 11 distinct categories. The statistics also revealed that punctuation problems were the most prevalent form of error committed by pupils. There was no significant variation in the mistake patterns of male and female beginners.

Siddiqui et al. (2023) recently analyzed errors in the unity, development, and coherence of paragraphs composed by Pakistani college students. Aside from that, the study looked at the elements that lead to paragraph mistakes. To achieve the study's aims, writing samples from 20 college participants were assessed using Liu and Wang's (2011) mistake analysis categorization. Following that, 5 participants were interviewed in semi-structured interviews to investigate the causes of paragraph mistakes. According to the findings, pupils made mistakes in terms of paragraph development, unity, and coherence. The data from

semi-structured interviews revealed three important characteristics that contribute to errors: cramming culture, excessive emphasis on grammar, and a lack of feedback.

Siddiqui's (2020) study examined the elements that impact paragraph structure in the English language works of six intermediate level students at IBA University Sukkur. Participants' semi-structured interviews were evaluated using a theme analysis approach. The statistics showed that the students were still unable to write well-organized texts. The data also revealed that rote learning, a greater emphasis on grammar, and surface level feedback from teachers were the most important elements at work.

Anwar et al. (2023) investigated the factors linked to difficulties with Pakistani EFL learners' English essay writing skills. The study employed qualitative methodology. The data were collected from college-level students and English language teachers with the help of open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The analyzed data suggested that Pakistani students face difficulties in essay writing such as shortage of ideas, lack of vocabulary, poor grammar, weak spellings etc. owing to different internal as well external factors. The external factors contribute more to the problems in essay writing.

For EFL students to be linguistically competent, they must write well. In order to use words to express their feelings, emotions, opinions, thoughts, and ideas, people must be proficient in written communication (Alfaki, 2015). However, Pakistani students of English find it difficult to compose even a decent paragraph (Farooq et al. 2012). Additionally, they struggle with writing English essays (Anwar et al., 2023). Error analysis and thematic analysis of university-level students' English paragraphs were carried out in previous research studies (Hamza et al., 2017; Qamar et al., 2021; Siddiqui, 2020; Siddiqui et al., 2023) and revealed that Pakistani learners (male and female) enrolled in public-sector institutions have difficulty writing English paragraphs. The earlier research studies' findings cannot be applied to all BS students in Pakistan. Therefore, it is determined that a study examining the efficacy of writing assessment rubrics in evaluating English paragraphs of college-level BS English students is required.

Material and Methods

In this study, English paragraphs written by Pakistani college students enrolled in the first semester of BS English were analyzed using a mixed-method research approach in relation to a predetermined set of criteria. The mixed-method approach combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a thorough understanding of the students' proficiency with paragraph writing and alignment with the rubric. Mixed-methods research is important since it ensures that the replies are accurate and dependable (Brown, 2015).

Sampling

The study involved a sample of 53 BS English semester-I students (sixteen males and thirty-seven females) and ten English language instructors from two educational institutions in Lahore, Pakistan: Government Graduate College of Science Wahdat Road and Government MAO Graduate College. Purposive sampling is a technique that was used to select participants based on the characteristics that the researcher felt would best serve the study's objectives (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

Data Collection Instruments

Three research tools were employed to collect data: semi-structured interviews, writing assessment rubrics, and writing samples. The study's samples were instructed to produce an English paragraph titled "Beggary: A curse." With the aid of a second study tool, writing assessment rubrics, the students' writing samples were used as data to evaluate the

quality of their writing. Semi-structured interviews were the third tool utilized to draw attention to typical problems and difficulties associated with paragraph writing.

Data Collection Phases

The researchers collected the data in two phases. The phases have been explained below:

Quantitative Phase

In the initial quantitative phase, the researchers collected the data in the form of written manuscripts. The students were asked to write a paragraph. Their responses were evaluated quantitatively with the assistance of a writing assessment rubric adapted for this study. The rubric included criteria such as structure, writing mechanics, grammar, and coherence and cohesion. Each paragraph was evaluated on a predetermined scale, allowing for numerical data analysis.

Qualitative Phase

Following the quantitative evaluation, ten English instructors were chosen for semi-structured interviews. The interviews with the teachers were done in order to undertake an in-depth qualitative analysis. It was assumed that English language teachers were more knowledgeable and could provide their professional opinion regarding the elements that contributed to pupils' inability to write acceptable English paragraphs. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were undertaken to get information on students' writing processes, obstacles, and perceptions of paragraph writing.

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the data in two ways i.e., quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Quantitative Analysis: Statistical software (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data. To summarize students' overall performance, descriptive statistics such as mean scores, median and standard deviations were generated.

Qualitative Analysis: Besides quantitative analysis of the students' paragraphs, they were also analyzed qualitatively through a content analysis approach to gain in-depth insights into the challenges of paragraph writing. Moreover, qualitative data taken through semi-structured interviews was transcribed, categorized, and thematically analyzed. Themes and patterns that emerged from the qualitative data allowed for a more in-depth knowledge of English language instructors' opinions of paragraph writing.

Integration of Findings

The quantitative and qualitative data were combined to offer a full assessment of the alignment between students' paragraph writing abilities and the criteria. This integration assisted in identifying not just the writing talents and shortcomings of students but also the variables impacting their performance.

Procedure

Initially, the researchers created structured writing assessment rubrics to examine the English paragraphs in the study samples. Louise Pasternack's (2014) recommendations were used by the researchers as they constructed the rubric. The rubrics were given to four English language teachers who teach writing and paragraphs in order to ensure their

validity and reliability. A few unclear terminology and statements were changed by the faculty members. Following the development of writing assessment criteria, the study participants provided the researchers with samples of their English paragraphs. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were carried out with the English language instructors. After that, the data were examined both qualitatively and quantitatively to ascertain the study's conclusions.

Ethical Consideration

Since social science research frequently entails gathering data from and about individuals, researchers in this field should be ready to address any ethical issues that may arise. This is according to Bieber-Hesse and Leavey (2006). Getting participants' consent was the first ethical dilemma. Every participant in the study—53 pupils and 10 teachers—gave their informed consent. The data's confidentiality was the second problem. The study participants were given the assurance that the information collected from them would be utilized exclusively for this purpose. Therefore, rigorous adherence to ethical criteria was maintained for this research involving human subjects.

Results and Discussion

The objectives of the study were to gauge the standard of English paragraphs produced by Pakistani college students and identify any disparities between the paragraphs written by male and female students. The study also sought to determine the typical problems and difficulties students faced when crafting strong paragraphs.

Quality of Paragraphs Assessed through Writing Assessment Rubrics (WARs)

The students enrolled in BS English semester-I were asked to write a paragraph. The data, in the form of paragraphs, were analyzed quantitatively through rubrics. The quantitative results are as follows:

Table 1
Assessment through WARs

Features	Mean	Mode	SD	Min	Max
Topic Sentences (TS) & Concluding Sentences (CS)	1.11	01	0.63	00	02
Supporting Sentences (SSs)	1.19	01	0.93	00	02
Writing Mechanics	1.04	01	0.19	00	02
Grammar	1.07	01	0.42	00	02
Cohesion & Coherence	0.81	0.5	0.42	00	02

The mean comparison of the sample points obtained versus the evaluations made using WARs is shown in Table 1. The statistics show that the study's subjects were still unable to create paragraphs that met the required standard. The average score in this category was 0.81, indicating that the writers' writings lacked coherence and cohesiveness. Not promising were the scores assigned to elements like writing mechanics (1.04), grammar (0.81), and coming up with a topic and concluding sentence (1.11). Despite having somewhat higher mean scores for supporting sentences, students struggle greatly to write pertinent supporting elements.

Additionally, qualitative analysis was done on English paragraphs written by first-semester BS English students. The works' content analysis indicated that the study participants had significant challenges when it came to producing effective paragraphs. Generating topic sentence is their main area of difficulty. Due to poor subject formulation and controlling idea, the majority of the topic sentences in their paragraphs were quite weak. Below are reproductions of a few of the theme sentences:

A social evil is starting in our society. (B12)

First of all, we all know that there are a lot of beggars in our country which is not good in our society due to which it impacts on our country and the beggars increases day by day in our society. (B10)

Beggary is ever considered social evil in our society.

In addition to producing poor topic sentences, the students showed weakness in their ability to write conclusion sentences. The majority of the written works lacked finishing sentences. If they were written down, they were unclear, flawed, and unimportant.

The statistics showed that the pupils' writing examples contained multiple grammatical faults. The following are some examples of grammatically incorrect sentences:

*Beggars on the roads, streets everywhere **should be eradicate.** (G11)*

***They has** no surety of food and safety of food for living their life. (G4)*

*Beggars **should eliminated** from our society. (B7)*

*Begging is found in **unemployment societies** people are facing poverty then this situation **compilted** it to do of this evil. (B13)*

Furthermore, the data abounds in writing mechanic errors. Some of the sentences reflecting writing mechanic errors have been reproduced below:

*One **obivious** reason for this evil is **littercy, Poverty and and unemployment.** (B5)
It becomes most **commen** in Pakistan. (B8)*

*Many people do not find job but they are **poor in this case they** adopt begging to Fulfill their needs. (G32)*

One other persistent problem with the sample writings was the lack of cohesive devices and connectors in the text. The majority of the supporting sentences lacked coherence and were irrelevant. Therefore, the phenomenon seriously interfered with the paragraphs' cohesion.

According to the data, BS English semester I students' English paragraphs do not meet the required threshold of quality. The findings shown in this section are entirely consistent with the assertions made by (Anwar et al., 2023; Hamza et al., 2017; Qamar et al., 2021; Siddiqui, 2020; Siddiqui et al., 2023, etc.) that EFL students struggle with paragraph writing. It could be caused by a variety of factors, including rote learning, the influence of a negative L1, practice deficiency, inadequate training, and low desire.

Difference between the Writings of Male and Female Learners

In order to determine the quality of the English paragraphs of male and female students, the written paragraphs were assessed and scored separately. The scores gained by them have been represented below:

Table 2
Comparison of scores gained by male and female students

Groups	Mean	Mode	SD	Min	Max
PELs Male (n=16)	0.78	0.5	2.65	0.5	1.5
PELs Female (n= 37)	1.14	01	0.54	00	02

The mean comparison of the results attained by male and female students is shown in Table 2. The data analysis showed that when it came to paragraph writing, female learners did better than male beginners. Students who identify as feminine (1.14) had higher mean scores than students who identify as male (0.78). According to the results, there was a decreased frequency of errors in the paragraphs written by female pupils. However, there were a number of mistakes in the male students' writing samples.

When comparing male and female students at public-sector institutions, the qualitative analysis of their English paragraphs revealed that the female students could create stronger topic and ending sentences. Below are representations of a few topic sentences and closing sentences for your reference.

Pakistan is a poor country. (TS: B9)

It become habit of them. They don't leave this habit. (CS: B9)

Begging, a social evil, plagues communities globally. (TS: G27)

Addressing the root causes of begging this pervasive problem can be curbed. (CS: B27)

In addition, the supporting details in the paragraphs written by male and female students differ. When compared to the supporting information produced by male students, the supporting sentences composed by female students were more coherent and cohesive.

In terms of grammar and writing mechanics, the written paragraphs of the male students were more deficient than those of the female ones. The female students were better able to write a variety of error-free sentences, ranging from simple to complex and complex-compound sentences. On the other hand, the male students were not able to create error-free compound and complex sentences. Some sentences have been reproduced below:

I saw a group of beggars, they distribute each other the different points of road and begging. (B7)

Beggars beg almost every day and get very little amount of money. (G15)

Besides, in grammar, female students outperformed male learners in bringing writing mechanics to their writing. There were a lesser number of errors of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in the writings of female learners.

Hence, the quantitative as well as qualitative data claimed that female students were better at writing English paragraphs than male learners. The results of this part of the study are in consonance with the results of the previous study conducted by Hamza et al. (2017). There may be different reasons for this phenomenon. One main reason is the socio-economic pressure, which puts more financial responsibility on male members, and they remain unable to study properly. On the other hand, female students are excelling in every field of life. Apart from it, lack of motivation, lack of opportunities to learn English writing, etc. may be considered other examples.

Common Issues and Challenges in Writing English Paragraphs

One of the objectives of the study was to identify common issues and challenges in English paragraph writing through semi-structured interviews with 10 college English language professors. The interviews were conducted with five main questions and sub-questions, and responses were recorded and transcribed to extract distinct themes. The identification of themes in qualitative research involves studying relevant literature and drawing themes from the phenomenon being studied. The study also used keyword analysis,

comparison, contrast, word or key phrase analysis, and procedural steps to identify themes and sub-themes, focusing on missing information and linguistic elements.

The data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed through a content analysis approach. The key themes that emerged from the data are as follows:

Proficiency in Paragraph Writing

In response to the first question whether BS English semester-I students are proficient in English paragraph writing majority of the participants claimed that they are not proficient in writing paragraph.

They don't have any kind of foundation properly. (TR2)

As far as their grades in the previous exams are concerned, they are good in their results. But if they judged on the basis of their performance the results are not positive. (TR5)

When they come to us, they are raw handed. (TR6)

As they shift from memorization to creativity, their strength is not developed. (TR3)

Teacher respondents, in response to a question about gender difference in paragraph writing, claimed that female students are better writers as compared to male ones.

Female students with science background are very good while female students with humanities are just mediocre. Over all girls are performing well. (TR1)

The performance of girls is better. (TR5)

Girls are better. They are more hardworking. They are more attentive. (TR8)

According to the majority of the teacher respondents there are different reasons to the poor performance of the students in composing paragraphs at this stage.

The system is number based. They are asked to memorize the paragraphs and write them. (TR9)

They have just been cramming. That's why they are unable to write. (TR3)

They have been trained for MCQs. They have been trained for cramming. When they are asked write a paragraph of their own. They feel hesitation. (TR2)

As they have been used to objective type paper, when they are asked to write subjective type paragraphs it becomes very difficult for them. (TR1)

Therefore, it may be concluded that students still struggle to compose paragraphs in English even after twelve years of language training. On the other hand, female students perform better than male students. The flawed method is the primary cause, since students end up cramming different paragraphs that they anticipate being asked on exams. To get good grades, the pupils cram. They haven't received any encouragement to write creatively.

Problems Encountered by Students

While responding to the second main question, the teacher respondents threw light on the problems encountered by students while writing English paragraphs.

Organization

The first issue has to do with how the paragraph is structured. According to the majority of participants, students still struggled to formulate appropriate topic sentences, provide supporting sentences, and compose effective paragraph endings. Furthermore, it was asserted that the pupils' compositions lacked clarity and cohesiveness. The instructor responders' remarks below highlight the difficulties pupils face in terms of coherence, cohesiveness, and organization.

Their writings are not organized. They are not aware of topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentence. (TR9)

As they switch from cramming to creativity. They don't have any idea of the structure of a paragraph. (TR4)

Making topic sentence is a big problem for them. (TR6)

Cohesion and Coherence

Along with issues with organization, the pupils also struggle to give their paragraphs coherence and cohesiveness. English language teachers' comments revealed that students are unaware of these writing characteristics. The following is a summary of the teachers' highly astute responses:

They write haphazardly. Their writings are collection of information. (TR3)

There is no cohesion and coherence in their writings. Their paragraphs have loose structure. (TR2)

They are not aware of the connectors which bring cohesion in writing. (TR6)

Grammar

Despite having learned grammatical principles in their prior classes, the beginners are still unable to construct sentences without errors. The majority of participants stated that there are several grammatical faults in the students' work. They believed that poor sentence structure could be found in the majority of their works. They have trouble with the simple present and simple past tenses. In addition, they still struggle with appropriate pronoun and preposition usage. For your reference, a few sentences from the instructor respondents are included below.

They don't have any idea of sentences construction. (TR5)

The very first issue they face is the grammar. They are not aware of the tenses, the use of pronouns and many other things. (TR10)

They commit grammatical errors. But they are not blunders. (TR3)

Their expression is not better. (TR 2)

Writing Mechanics

Questions on the students' writing mechanics were posed to the teacher respondents. In response, they said that spelling and capitalization are not major issues for their novices. The main issue they have is with punctuation. Despite having studied punctuation in Intermediate First Year, they still exhibit really poor punctuation. The punctuation issue is explained in the phrases that follow.

Majority of the students are better. But nobody is perfect in writing mechanics. (TR10)

Punctuation is their gray area. Punctuations like comma, colon, and semi-colon are problematic. (TR9)

They have no idea of punctuation. (TR4)

The major area of their weakness is punctuation. They are not good in using pause, colon, semi-colon, and question mark. (TR4)

Vocabulary and Ideas

The pupils struggle with concepts and terminology. They lack the vocabulary and thoughts necessary to write in paragraphs. The primary cause of the pupils' lack of vocabulary and concepts is that they are not accustomed to reading and observing. With these comments, the teachers' responses shed light on this issue.

They lack ideas because they don't have reading habits. (TR1)

Their vocabulary is not appropriate and flowery. (TR6)

Strategies to Improve Paragraph Writing

In response to another question, the teachers shared the strategies that may be used to improve the paragraph writing skills of the students. These strategies are as follows:

Focus on Structure

The paragraph form is the first crucial concept that educators should instill in their students. In semi-structured interviews, the majority of the teachers stated that they begin teaching paragraph writing by emphasizing structure. The teaching practices of the teachers are illuminated by the following sentences.

I focus on topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. I involve them in practice. (TR9)

As they don't know about structure. So, from day one I begin with teaching structure of the paragraph. (TR3)

Focus on Grammatical Features

Alongside teaching coherence and structure, grammar instruction should also focus on improving students' grammar. In response, the teachers said that they instruct the kids on sentence building. One of the educators who responded stated:

For improving their writings, I focus on three things i.e., use of verbs, tenses, and prepositions. (TR10)

Intense Practice

Teachers who responded to the interview questions also recommended that students engage in intensive practice as a means of enhancing their paragraph-writing abilities. They ought to have topic sentence creation training and be skilled at defining topic sentences with a governing theme. After that, give them some time to compose statements that support one another. They ought to be required to compose concluding sentences at the conclusion. Here are some of the recommendations made by the educators:

The writing of the students can be improved through practice because it is a skill. (TR5)

I ask them to shift from cramming to creativity. I ask them to read and then write again and again. (TR4)

Feedback

The instructor participants emphasized the value of feedback during semi-structured interviews. Students' papers can be enhanced by providing criticism because it allows them to identify their areas of weakness. A teacher made the following statement:

Feedback is very important. I give them feedback on the paper. (TR2)

Conclusion

The present study aimed to conduct a thorough evaluation of the English paragraph writing proficiency of male and female college-level BS English semester I students. The study also made an effort to pinpoint typical problems and difficulties with paragraph writing. After twelve years of language training, the students' writing samples evaluated using writing evaluation rubrics showed that they were still having difficulty structuring paragraphs in the English language. However, female students outperform their male counterparts. The pupils struggle with organization, grammar, writing mechanics, and a deficiency of ideas and vocabulary. The management of these issues can be achieved by emphasizing structure, grammar, and writing mechanics as teaching strategies. Furthermore, they ought to engage in rigorous practice. Additionally, they must to be provided with feedback.

This study described a mixed-method investigation that used a rubric-based evaluation to gauge Pakistani college students' proficiency in English writing. The results of this study may help build curricula and instructional practices that may improve students' English writing competency in the Pakistani educational system. Researchers in the future will be able to perform comparable studies using a huge number of samples. A study experiment examining the potential of technology-based learning to enhance paragraph writing skills may also be carried out.

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