

# EFFECTIVENESS OF WRITING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING PARAGRAPH WRITING

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## Abstract

This study applied the concept of a descriptive type of research. Likewise, 80 Grade 11 students of Don Manuel Rivera Memorial Integrated National High School, Pila, Laguna, S.Y. 2020-2021 were selected as the respondents of the study. Similarly, the study aimed to identify the status of the learners' performance in pre-writing; the learners' performance in post-writing following the concept of the three paragraph strategies such as clustering, outlining and freewriting; lastly, the significant difference in the status of the learners' paragraph writing performance after being introduced to writing strategies. Weighted Average Mean and Standard Deviation was used to determine the level of the learners' writing performance both in pre-writing and post-writing. While, Anova was used to identify if there was difference in the status of the learners' performance after being introduced to the writing strategies. As the result shows, the learners' performance in pre-writing was interpreted as Average. Meanwhile, during the post-writing, the learners performed Very Good using the clustering writing strategy, Good following the concept of outlining and also Good applying the freewriting writing strategy respectively. Likewise, based on the computation, the learners' performance in the pre-writing and post-writing was significantly different which explains that there was an improvement in their writing performance after being introduced to paragraph strategies. Thus, there was significant difference in the learners' writing performance after being introduced to the writing strategies; therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the learners' writing performance after being introduced to paragraph writing strategies is rejected. Based on the results and findings of the study, it is highly recommended that Learners from all grade levels shall be introduced to the paragraph writing strategies.

Keywords: Writing, Writing Skill; Paragraph Writing; Writing Strategies

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## 1. Main Text

### Introduction

An effective paragraph is similar to a short essay. It has a distinct start, middle, and end. Focus and attention to detail are combined in an excellent paragraph to fully develop one theme. Additionally, it aids in the reader's movement from one thought to another (Andres, 2017). On the other hand, a paragraph should be unified with the main point, and it should be clear to the reader.

Writing an assignment for academic purposes may be a difficult process for the beginning writer. As well as understanding how to interpret what is required in the assignment, the student needs to have efficient and planning strategies. It also helps to realize that it is very useful to write several drafts, rather than attempting to write the final version in one step. Another important strategy is managing time, so that there is sufficient time for reflection and getting feedback. In this way the final version will have advanced from the initial ideas to an edited and more polished version. Understanding how to manage the parts of the process is therefore an important part of assignment writing.

Reading and Writing is one of the subjects offered in Senior High School curriculum, the subject leads the learners to critique a chosen sample of pattern of development focusing on information selection, organization, and development; to write 1000-word critique of a selected text on the basis of its claims, context, and properties as a written material; to produce each type of academic writing and professional correspondence following the properties of well written texts and process approach to writing.

With the above set of performance standards, it is very clear that senior high school students are expected to produce

numerous written outputs such as book review, literature review, research report, project proposal, position paper, and other forms of academic writing. Thus, effective writing skills must be possessed among the students. However, based on the anecdotal reports done by the researcher, it was found out that students were having difficulties in producing the following outputs.

As respond to the occurring observed problems, the researcher was highly motivated to utilize different techniques in paragraph writing such as post-writing, free writing, clustering, and outlining. Then, it will determine the significant difference in the status of learners' paragraph writing performance after being introduced to writing strategies.

### Background of the Study

In accordance to the legal mandate of this study, it shall be anchored to Department of Education Order No. 21 s. 2019, entitled, "Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program". Learners are expected to be holistically developed with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills ready for higher education, entrepreneurship, and work. In addition, learners should be well-rounded, happy and smart.

In order to meet the above standards, learners must access programs responsive to their needs and consistent with their interests and aptitudes; learners actively participate in a learner-friendly environment; and learner completes complete education and attain learning standards. Thus, senior high school students under the Reading and Writing subject shall be producing academic writing and professional correspondence following the properties of well written text.

Learners who understand the paragraph writing strategy frequently create written works that have theme, depth, and clincher phrases. Their sentences are well-written, using a consistent point of view, consistent tense, logically-ordered concepts, and suitable transitions (Paragraph Writing Strategy, n.d.)

Ramzan and Hafeez (2021) analyzed the improvement of students' writing skills in writing paragraphs through the outline strategy. Results of the study showed that the outline strategy can improve students' writing skills in terms of paragraph heading, use of proper grammar, correct spelling, and length of paragraphs. Another related study by Laud and Patel (2018) proved that writing strategy enhanced the organization and cohesion of paragraphs written among by students with writing difficulties.

The researcher aims to determine the status of learners' performance in Pila, Laguna in paragraph writing, utilize the different strategies in paragraph writing, and its significant difference in the status of learners' performance in paragraph writing after being introduced to writing strategies.

### Theoretical Framework

Since this study focuses on improving the paragraph writing strategy of learners, the researcher aimed to look for theories that talk about writing and writing strategies.

These theories may support the concentration of this paper.

According to Hodges (2017), the sociocultural theory of writing "emphasizes motivation, affect, and social influences as components of writing" (p. 141). Sociocultural theory builds on Vygotsky's social development theory which identifies social interaction as essential to a child's cognitive development. Also, Vygotsky identifies the importance of a learner having access to a more knowledgeable other (MKO). For many, this could be teachers or parents, but MKO can also be. With regard to writing instruction, the sociocultural theory applies when students collaborate. In the past, writing has been viewed as an individual task, but by integrating collaborative writing and peer feedback students have the opportunity to improve their writing through peer interaction. (Vygotsky as cited by Hodges, 2017)

The research also builds upon self-efficacy as articulated in social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory with self-efficacy is rooted in Bandura's social learning theory. Social learning theory involves students learning through the observations of peers' behavior, attitude, and outcomes of these observation. Hodges (2017) when students improve their self-efficacy, through the implementation of writing instruction, they see improvements in writing outcomes. Writing strategies that include social cognitive theory with self-efficacy involve class brainstorming sessions and student discussion about the writing prompt. Another method allows students to critique another writing sample to practice revising and editing.

### Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of the study is to determine the significant difference on the status of the Grade 11 learners' writing performance after being introduced to the paragraph writing strategies.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the status of the learners' performance in pre-writing?
2. What is the status of the learners' performance in post-writing in terms of:
  - 2.1 Freewriting;
  - 2.2 Clustering; and,
  - 2.3 Outlining?

3. Is there significant difference in the status of learners' paragraph writing performance after being introduced to writing strategies?

### Research Methodology

This research explores the different writing strategies in learning paragraph writing. However, specifically, it addressed the effectiveness of writing strategies such as clustering, outlining and freewriting in teaching paragraph writing.

### Research Design

This research study will use the descriptive research design to determine the significance of the writing strategies among the selected Grade 11 students of Don Manuel Rivera Memorial Integrated National High School, Pila, Laguna, specifically, to further determine if the paragraph writing strategies are helpful to improve their writing skill.

According to Key (2011) descriptive research was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or condition in a situation. The methods involved range from the survey which describes the status quo, the correlation study which investigate the relationship between variables, to developmental studies which seek to determine changes over time.

Descriptive research design was used since this study tries to figure out the impact of phenomenon to a certain variable.

### Population and Sampling Technique

The Purposive Sampling Technique was used in this study; it is a technique in which respondents are picked based on the researcher's judgment and on respondents' attributes

Purposive sampling, according to Vijayamohan (2022), is the process of picking samples from a larger sample size depending on the survey taker's or researcher's assessment. In other words, a purposive sample is chosen to meet the needs of the test, survey, or research for which it will be utilized.

### Research Procedure

For the smooth conduct of the study, the researcher asked permission from the school principal of Don Manuel Rivera Memorial Integrated National High School in Pila District where the respondents are currently enrolled. Before the administration of the data gathering process, the respondents were oriented on the objectives of the study. Then, the respondents were distributed with the module they had to study and performed both the pre-writing and post-writing activities. Also, the researcher asked assistance from his fellow English language teachers to check or evaluate the output of the respondents using a scoring rubric.

Then, the data were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted with the assistance of the competent statistician.

### Research Instrument

In pursuance of this research study, the researcher reviewed various reading materials to gained ideas regarding the concentration or focus of his study. In the same manner, the researcher constructed a self-made module that contains the discussion on the paragraph writing strategies as well as the pre and post-tests to measure whether there would be improvement on the writing skill of the learners after they were introduced to the writing strategies. Similarly, the writing module was validated by the English teachers of the school where the researcher is currently deployed.

Moreover, the module is divided in three (3) parts wherein each part consists of discussion on the paragraph writing strategies – freewriting, clustering and outlining.

The respondents would first write a paragraph on the pre-writing activity as an initial task. Then, they would read and study the discussion for each of the three paragraph writing strategies. After each paragraph writing strategy they would study, they would compose a short essay of a similar topic following the concept learned from each strategy. The outputs of the learners were checked by English teachers to gather a more valid result and their outputs were categorized as to:

SCALE	RANGE	INTERPRETATION
5	4.21-5.00	EXCELLENT
4	3.41 -4.20	VERY GOOD
3	2.61-3.40	GOOD
2	1.81-2.60	AVERAGE
1	1.00-1.80	POOR

**Statistical Treatment of Data****Table 1. Statistical Treatment of the Study**

ANALYSIS	STATISTICAL TOOLS
1.The level of status of the learners' performance in pre-writing.	Mean & SD
2. The level of status of the learners' performance in post-writing in terms of:	Mean & SD
2.1 Freewriting	
2.2 Clustering	
2.3 Outlining	
3.The significant difference in the status of learners' paragraph writing performance after being introduced to writing strategies (e.g., freewriting, clustering and outlining).	Anova

**Results and Discussion****The Status of the Learners' Performance in Pre-Writing****Table 2. The Status of Learners' Performance in Pre-Writing**

PRE-WRITING		
<b>Mean</b>		2.36
<b>SD</b>		0.93
<b>Interpretation</b>		Average

  

SCALE	RANGE	INTERPRETATION
5	4.21-5.00	EXCELLENT
4	3.41 -4.20	VERY GOOD
3	2.61-3.40	GOOD
2	1.81-2.60	AVERAGE
1	1.00-1.80	POOR

Table 2 shows the level of learners' performance in pre-writing. As the result shows, the pre-writing obtained the computed weighted mean of 2.36 and standard deviation of 0.93 which is verbally interpreted as Average.

The learners' performance in pre-writing was interpreted average because their struggle in organizing the ideas in the paragraph was evident. Also, it was observable that the learners have difficulty in achieving unity and coherence in their composition.

De Silva (2014), stated that writing skills for learners of foreign languages are a challenge because understanding and knowledge of subjects using foreign languages is a very complex process. These difficulties are caused by several factors such as vocabulary choice, sentence structure, and paragraph coherence. In line with this fact, there are some private universities allowing their students to write their final projects using Bahasa.

**The Status of the Learners' Performance in Pre-Writing****Table 3. The Status of Learners' Performance in Post-Writing in terms of Clustering**

POST-WRITING	CLUSTERING
<b>Mean</b>	3.74
<b>SD</b>	0.78
<b>Interpretation</b>	Very Good

Table 3 shows the level of learners' performance in post-writing in terms of Clustering. As the result shows, the writing performance of the learners obtained the computed weighted mean of 3.74 and standard deviation of 0.78 which is verbally interpreted as Very Good.

The writing performance of the learners improved after studying and applying the concept of clustering on their composition because they were able to join sentences with similar ideas together in a paragraph.

Ariyanti & Rinda (2017) pointed out that writing needs huge effort as well as practicing it in terms of paragraph organization, language use, and mechanics, for the reason that those three aspects are potential in influencing the writing performance such as content and vocabulary including elements of how to formulate ideas, develop and analyze them before displaying the essay writing as a final draft. In addition, essay writing provides students opportunities to build and develop critical thinking, so that students are trained to make their own judgement, decide their writing styles, and pick out scientific diction for their academic writing task.

**Table 4. The Status of Learners' Performance in Post-Writing in terms of Outlining**

POST-WRITING	OUTLINING
Mean	3.35
SD	0.72
Interpretation	Good

Table 4 shows the level of learners' performance in post-writing in terms of Outlining. As the result shows, the writing performance of the learners obtained the computed weighted mean of 3.35 and standard deviation of 0.72 which is verbally interpreted as Good.

The learners' writing performance improved after applying the discipline of Outlining because they were able to organize ideas in a sense that had an overview on the potential structure of their composition since they had to come up first with an outline before they plot their ideas into a paragraph.

Ariyanti & Rinda (2017) pointed out that writing needs huge effort as well as practicing it in terms of paragraph organization, language use, and mechanics, for the reason that those three aspects are potential in influencing the writing performance such as content and vocabulary including elements of how to formulate ideas, develop and analyze them before displaying the essay writing as a final draft. In addition, essay writing provides students opportunities to build and develop critical thinking, so that students are trained to make their own judgement, decide their writing styles, and pick out scientific diction for their academic writing task.

**Table 5. The Status of Learners' Performance in Post-Writing in terms of Freewriting**

POST-WRITING	FREEWITING
Mean	2.98
SD	0.67
Interpretation	Good

Table 5 shows the level of learners' performance in post-writing in terms of Freewriting. As the result shows, the writing performance of the learners obtained the computed weighted mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.67 which is verbally interpreted as Good.

The learners' writing performance improved after understanding and considering the discipline of Outlining because they were taught to generate a lot information about the subject matter before they went directly to writing their paragraph which is useful in coming up with plenty of ideas that will be support the discussion of the subject matter.

Ariyanti & Rinda (2017) pointed out that writing needs huge effort as well as practicing it in terms of paragraph organization, language use, and mechanics, for the reason that those three aspects are potential in influencing the writing performance such as content and vocabulary including elements of how to formulate ideas, develop and analyze them before displaying the essay writing as a final draft. In addition, essay writing provides students opportunities to build and develop critical thinking, so that students are trained to make their own judgement, decide their writing styles, and pick out scientific diction for their academic writing task.

Table 6 presents the significant difference between the students' performance in Pre-writing and Post-writing.

As shown above, students' performance in the pre-writing and post-writing was significantly different in terms of freewriting ( $f=9.44$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), clustering ( $f=3.90$ ,  $p=0.012$ ) and outlining ( $f=9.50$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). All p-values are lower than 0.05 level of significance which supports the results of the analysis.

This further implies that the writing strategies introduced to the learners lead to the improvement of their skills in freewriting, clustering and outlining.

On the same manner, it can be understood that the improvement on the performance of the learners in paragraph writing was merely influenced by the understanding they gained on the concept of the three paragraph writing strategies namely clustering, freewriting and outlining which help them structure and organize their ideas and thoughts better in paragraph.

Tegbar et al. (2017) advocated that writing is definitely requiring hard work. In other words, writing is an activity which should be done with great care and should be thought to communicate with a reader effectively. These imply that writing is a difficult skill which needs to be thoroughly practiced. The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill.

**Significant Difference in the Status of Learners' Performance after being Introduced to Paragraph Writing**  
**Table 6 Significant Difference Between the Students' Performance in Pre-Writing and Post-writing**

	FREEWRITING		CLUSTERING		OUTLINING	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
<b>Mean</b>	2.363	2.975	2.363	3.738	2.363	3.350
<b>f-value</b>	9.44		3.90		9.50	
<b>p-value</b>	0.000		0.012		0.000	
<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Significant</b>		<b>Significant</b>		<b>Significant</b>	

Significant at 0.05 level of Significance

### Summary of Findings

This chapter includes the presentation of a summary, findings, conclusion based on the hypothesis, and the corresponding recommendations.

### Summary

The general objective of the study was to determine if there significant is significant difference on the status of the learners' writing performance after being introduced to the writing strategies such as freewriting, clustering and outlining.

The researcher created a writing module that had to be studied by the learners. The writing module contained discussion and writing activity of the three writing strategies namely freewriting, clustering and outlining.

From the instrument that yielded the data gathered by the researcher summarize the following findings.

As the result shows, the learners' performance in pre-writing was interpreted as Average. Meanwhile, during the post-writing, the learners performed Very Good using the clustering writing strategy, Good following the concept of outlining and also Good applying the freewriting writing strategy respectively. Likewise, based on the computation, the learners' performance in the pre-writing and post-writing was significantly different which explains that there was an improvement in their writing performance after being introduced to paragraph strategies.

Improvement in the status of the learners' performance in paragraph writing was observable because they were able to learn concepts helpful in organizing the ideas they have about the subject of their composition. Learners were guided with principles addressing the organization and structure of a paragraph.

Similarly, students' performance in the pre-writing and post-writing was significantly different in terms of freewriting, clustering and outlining.

### Conclusion

There was significant difference in the learners' writing performance after being introduced to the writing strategies; therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the learners' writing performance after being introduced to paragraph writing strategies is rejected.

### Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusion posted in the study, the following recommendation was formulated to the following.

1. Learners from all grade levels shall be introduced to the paragraph writing strategies.
2. Teachers shall exert great effort in making the students learn the paragraph writing strategies such as clustering, freewriting and outlining.
3. Learners shall be given a writing activity from time to time to serve as a practice to improve their skill better.



4. The writing module shall be tested to other set of respondents from other schools whether public or private.
5. When writing, learners shall always consider the concept of the paragraph writing strategies in order to ensure that they will come up to a well-constructed composition.
6. Teachers shall be encouraged to participate on training intervention programs regarding the finished study.
7. Similar study shall be conducted to a different grade level to validate the result of the concluded research.

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