



Sudan University of Science & Technology
College of Graduate Studies
College of Languages



**Paragraph Writing Difficulties Encountered by EFL
Students**

الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية في كتابة الفقرة

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Degree of M.A
in English language (Applied linguistics)

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Verses of the Qur'an

الإستهلال

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال الله تعالى: (وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (31) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (32)

صدق الله العظيم

البقرة الآيات 31- 32

The Heifer

(31) And He taught Adam the nature of all things; then he placed them before the angles, and said: “Tell me nature of these if you are right.”(32) They said “Glory to you, if knowledge of have none, save what than taught us: In truth who are perfect in knowledge and wisdom.”

The Heifer

Verses of the Qur'an 31-32

Dedication

To my beloved parents, brothers, sisters, friends and classmates.

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The greatest praise is due to Allah the Almighty for the enormous graces who bestowed upon me to achieve this research. I am greatly indebted to my supervisor Dr Hillary Marino Pitia who supported me and stood behind me for the remarkable guidance, advice and patience. I am so privileged and honored to the English language Department and special note of thanks goes to the head of the department Dr Negla Taha Bashari. My deep appreciation is also due to my professor, Dr Tag Elsir Hassan Bashoum, Dr. Abdallah Yaseen, Dr. Alfatih Balah, Dr. Areeg Osman, Dr. Abbas Mokhtar who tough me. Also special thanks to my professor Alnour Sabit Abdalkareem, Dr. Jamal Osman who supported me and stood behind me, and fellow worker Ali Ahmed Mohammed, Abdallah Abbas Issa, for their unconditional support, sincere thanks are also due to all my colleagues in Batch 9 who contributed to accomplish this thesis.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at Paragraph writing difficulties encountered by EFL University Students. The researcher adopted a descriptive analytical method, which followed quantitative analysis. A test was used as a tool for data collection. The sample of the study consisted of (50) students drawn from Comboni College of Science and Technology, Department of languages. The data were analyzed using the statistical package of social studies program (SPSS) which provided percentage results for the test. The study came up with the following important results: second year students encountered difficulties in writing English paragraph. Second year students are not aware to identify parts of a paragraph, second year students are not able to identify different types of a paragraph, and are not able to use cohesive devices correctly. Based on the main findings, the researcher recommends that more attention should be paid to give students more intensive exercises to identify Parts of a paragraph. In addition, attention should be paid to the use of cohesive devices, identifying parts of a paragraph, types of a paragraph and punctuation marks.

ABSTRACT (Arabic)

هدفت هذه الدراسة الي إستكشاف الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية في كتابة الفقرة. استخدم الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي كما استخدم الأختبار كأداة لجمع البيانات و شملت العينة (50) دارساً مقيداً في السنة الثانية, كلية الكمبوني للعلوم و التكنولوجيا بقسم اللغات؛ استخدم برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الانسانية حيث كانت النتائج في شكل نسبة مئوية. و توصل الباحث الي اهم النتائج التالية هي: أن طلاب الفرقة الثانية بقسم اللغات يواجهون مشاكل في كتابة الفقرة , ايضا طلاب الفرقة الثانية بقسم اللغات ليس بمقدورهم التعرف علي انواع الفقرات في اللغة الانجليزية, و إضافتاً لذلك طلاب الفرقة الثانية بقسم اللغات ليس لديهم القدرة علي استخدام أدوات الربط. ختاماً أوصي الباحث بضرورة الإهتمام بأجزاء الفقرة. يجب اللأهتمام بأستخدام أدوات الربط و علامات الترقيم ؛ تزويد الطلاب مزيد من التطبيقات حول التعرف علي الجملة الافتتاحية, الجمل المساعدة و الجملة الختامية. و ايضاً التعرف علي أجزاء و أنواع الفقرة.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

The writing skill is one of the most important four skills of any language learning, as well as it is a major way to learn English language Ezemach, D. & Liza, A. (2000). Writing is worth learning. It is of immediate practical benefit in almost any job or career. Certainly there are many jobs in which you cannot get along without being able to write clearly. This study is concerned about Paragraph Writing Difficulties that face EFL Students in writing, a paragraph is a new of sentences that describe or explain a topic or idea and each sentence in a paragraph must give information about the topic. Also, the sentences must be in the right order so that your readers can understand and appreciate the information.

A good paragraph presents a complete and interesting picture to the reader.

However, you will get along faster and farther. We create ourselves by words. Before we are teachers or students, we are human beings. Writing is a way of growing. No one would argue that being able to write will make you morally better. But it will make you more complex and more interesting.

1.1 Statement of the Study Problem

As a Sudanese English language teacher who has been teaching English for specify years in different governmental and private Universities, I have noticed that our Sudanese students, who learn English as foreign language, always encounter a lot of problems when it comes to writing. Paragraph writing difficulties have been observed that very problems have been recurring, these have prompted the researcher's attention urgently investigate these problems.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Finding out whether EFL students aware of writing English paragraphs.
2. Identifying EFL students how to use cohesive devices correctly in an English paragraph.
3. Developing EFL students' understanding how to write different types of English paragraphs.

1.3 Questions of the Study

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are EFL students able to identify the parts of an English paragraph?
2. To what extent are students able to use cohesive devices correctly to write a paragraph in English?
3. To what extent EFL students identify different types of English paragraphs?

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

1. EFL students are not able to identify the parts of an English paragraph.
2. Students are not able to use cohesive devices correctly in a paragraph.
3. EFL students are not able to identify different types of English paragraphs.

1.5 The significance of the study

This study will be significant for both EFL teachers and students majoring in English, also it will help teachers of English language to adopt appropriate techniques of teaching and solving problem of writing that faced by most students of English as a foreign language, difficulties that face EFL University Students, New Techniques for Teaching Writing skills / Paragraph Writing.

This study will be of immense help and usefulness not only to those who related to linguistics studies but also to the ELT teachers as well as it will be beneficial for the students of English language. It will help them in communication.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

This study adopts the descriptive analytical method, test used as primary tool to help in collecting the research data. Test consists five questions each question consists four or five items, which are designed to check whether the students are able to identify the parts of a paragraph, using of cohesive devices, and different types of a paragraph.

1.7 Limits of the Study

The Delimitations of this study are as follows:

1. Place delimitation:

This study will be undertaken in Comboni College of Science &Technology, Department of Languages.

2. Time delimitation:

The study is conducted in the academic year: 2019-2020.

3. Topic delimitation:

This study is limited to Paragraph Writing Difficulties Encountered by EFL University Students.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PERVIOUS STUDIES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter concerned with review of some literature relevant to this study. Students of English as a foreign language undergo several difficulties in their learning process, particularly in writing which is one of the most difficult skills, and exploring the difficulties encountered by EFL students of writing a paragraph. This chapter contains definition of a paragraph, topic sentence, types of a paragraph, and parts of a paragraph, brainstorming, putting things in order, transitional words, paragraph length, paragraph unity, paragraph coherence and punctuation marks. It will also present some previous studies which were conducted in the same field.

2.1 Definitions of Paragraph

As stated by Oshina, A & Hogue, A (2006)."A paragraph is a group of related sentences which a writer develops about a subject. The starting sentence explains the certain idea while the other sentences are stated to support it".

They also explained that it is emphasized by identifying the first word from the left hand margin. So, a paragraph is made up of three sorts of sentences, the topic sentence which is described as around about sentence, the body and the conclusion. However , they think it must be written in the start in order to give the reader an idea of what he is going to say and it will help him to be on the same subject to determine its nature . So, the topic sentence can help summarizing the idea from

general to specific. As far as it concerns with supporting statements, Alice and Ann state that statements can develop the topic sentence through specific details by illustrating various facts, examples, reasons etc. The simplest way is to rephrase the topic sentence asking a question of how it can be proved.

In terms of the last point of paragraphing, writing a concluding sentence or summing up a sentence which tells the reader that the paragraph is finished and the paragraph development has ended. Both writers compare between the concluding sentence and the topic one, stating that, the two are general statements. The topic is the first while the concluding is the final and the later reminds the topic sentence. Oshina, A & Hogue add that, in writing a concluding sentence some methods can be chosen, stating the topic sentence in a various words and summarizing some or all points in the paragraph. They also explain that the concluding sentence can be begun by some specific phrases and words such as all in all, in any event, in brief indeed, in short, in other words, therefore. A new idea added by the writer that is adding a concluding comment to describe the writer's final thought about the paragraph so that the reader is given something to think or to remember concerning to the paragraph.

As stated by Yule (2014). Paragraph is a form of written communication which contains a minimum of five sentences. Each sentence in a paragraph "talks about" or develops one single main idea. If a paragraph does this, it is said to have unity. In addition, each sentence in a paragraph must be tied to the one before and after it, like links in a chain, by using special words called transitions. If your paragraph contains these links, it is said to have coherence.

2.2 The Topic Sentence

As explained by Kemper, D. Rathan, R. & Sebrank, P. (2016). The topic sentence is the most general statement of the paragraph. It is the key sentence because it names the subject and the controlling idea: the writer's main idea, opinion, or feeling about that topic.

The topic sentence can come at the beginning or at the end of a paragraph. You should write your topic sentence as the first sentence of your paragraph for two reasons. First, it will tell the reader what you are going to say. Second, you can look back at the topic sentence often as you write the supporting sentences. It will help you stay on the subject as you write.

The topic sentence is a complete sentence. It has three parts: a subject, a verb, and a controlling idea. Determining the subject of a topic sentence is a process of narrowing down an idea from general to specific. When your instructor suggests a very general topic, such as college, vacations, or nuclear power, for a writing assignment, you must narrow it down to a limited topic that can be discussed in one paragraph. For example, the topic of sports is too general to write about. There are many specific things about sports, such as professional sports, team or individual sports, or water sports that you can discuss. One writer might narrow down the subject of sports to the more specific subject of river rafting.

The Topic Sentence

The topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is about. A good topic sentence does two things: (1) it names the topic, and (2) it gives the focus or main point.

Formula: An interesting topic

 + a specific focus or feeling

 = a good topic sentence

2.3 Types of Paragraph

According to Kemper, D. Rathan, R. & Sebrank, P. (2016).

There are four main types of paragraphs.

To describe something, write a **descriptive** paragraph.

To tell a story, write a **narrative** paragraph.

To explain something, write an **explanatory** paragraph.

To express your opinion, write a **persuasive** (argument) paragraph.

2.3.0 Descriptive Paragraph

In a descriptive paragraph, you describe a person, a place, a thing, or an idea. When you write a descriptive paragraph, use words related to the five senses. Tell your audience about the sights, sounds, colors, smells, and textures related to the subject. This will help your readers feel as if they are right there with you.

2.3.1 Narrative Paragraph

In a narrative paragraph, you share a personal experience. You try to pull your readers into the story and keep them wondering what will happen next. Be sure to include specific details to make your experience come to life.

2.3.2 Explanatory Paragraph

Your main purpose in an explanatory paragraph is to give information about a subject. You may give directions, present ideas, or explain how to do something. An explanatory paragraph often uses transition words such as first, after, and finally.

2.3.3 Persuasive Paragraph

In a persuasive or argument paragraph, you give your opinion about a topic and try to prove its value or worth. To do this, you need to give strong facts and examples that support your opinion. Otherwise, you won't be convincing.

2.4 The Parts of a paragraph

As stated by Kemper, D. Nathan, R Sebraswek, P. (2016). A paragraph has three main parts. The topic sentence states the main idea. The sentences in the body of the paragraph are all connected to the main idea. The ending sentence sums up the main idea and brings the paragraph to a close.

Topic	Tree may be the most important form of
Sentence	plant life on earth. First of all, trees add beauty to the landscape and give shelter to wildlife. They also provide wood, paper, food, medicines, and many other useful products.
Body	On top of that, tree roots prevent soil erosion
sentences	and help store water. Though it is something you cannot see, the most important thing trees do is help clean the air, trees absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, and it's
Ending	oxygen that people need to breathe. People
sentence	can thank trees for a lot more than shade!

2.4.0 Topic sentence

According to Kemper, D. Rathan, R. & Sebrank, P. (2016). Trees (an interesting topic) may be the most important form of plant life on earth (a specific focus)

2.4.1 The Body

The sentences in the body of the paragraph include the specific details the reader needs to understand the topic. The following sentences include plenty of specific details.

First of all, trees add beauty to the landscape and give shelter to wildlife. They also provide wood, paper, food, medicines, and many other useful products. On top of that, tree roots provide soil erosion and help store water.

2.4.2 The Ending Sentence

The ending sentence comes at the very end and sums up the main point of the paragraph. Ending sentence: People can thank trees for a lot more than shade!

As stated by Oshina, A. & Hugue, A. (2006). A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develops one main idea, which is the topic of the paragraph. Each paragraph is a separate unit. It is marked by indenting the first word from the left-hand margin or by leaving extra space above and below the paragraph.

A paragraph is made up of three kinds of sentences that develop the writer's main idea, opinion, or feeling about a subject. These sentences are (1) the topic sentence, (2) supporting sentences, and (3) the concluding sentence. The writer may add a final comment after the conclusion.

In the paragraph entitled "River Rafting" that you just read, the first sentence is the topic sentence. It tells the reader what the paragraph is about: requirements for river rafting. The fifteen supporting sentences that follow supply the details about river rafting. The seventeenth or next to last, sentence is the concluding sentence. It makes a final statement about the topic and tells the reader that the paragraph is finished. The very last sentence is the writer's comment about the subject.

2.5 Brainstorming

According to Dorothy, E, Z & Lisa, A, R. (2005). Brainstorming is a way of gathering ideas about a topic. Think of a storm. Thousands of drops of rain, all coming down together. Now imagine thousands of ideas 'raining' down onto your paper! When you brainstorm, write down every idea that comes to you don't worry now about whether the ideas are good or silly, useful or not. You can decide that later. Right now, you are gathering as many ideas as you can.

There are three types of brainstorming:

- Making a list
- Free writing
- Mapping

2.5.0 Making a list

According to Dorothy, E, Z & Lisa, A, R. (2005). Write single words, phrases, or sentences that are connected to your topic. Look at this list a student made when brainstorming ideas to write about her topic, "what should I study at university?"

- History – learning about the past?
- What do I want later?
- English for work?
- Travel?
- Journalism –Photography

2.5.1 Free writing

The same reference, when you free writing, you write whatever comes into your head about the topic, without stopping. Most free writing exercises are short – just five or ten minutes.

Free writing helps your practice fluency writing quickly and easily. When you free writing, you do not need to worry about accuracy having correct grammar and spelling. Don't check you dictionary when you free write. Don't stop if you make a mistake. Just keep writing!

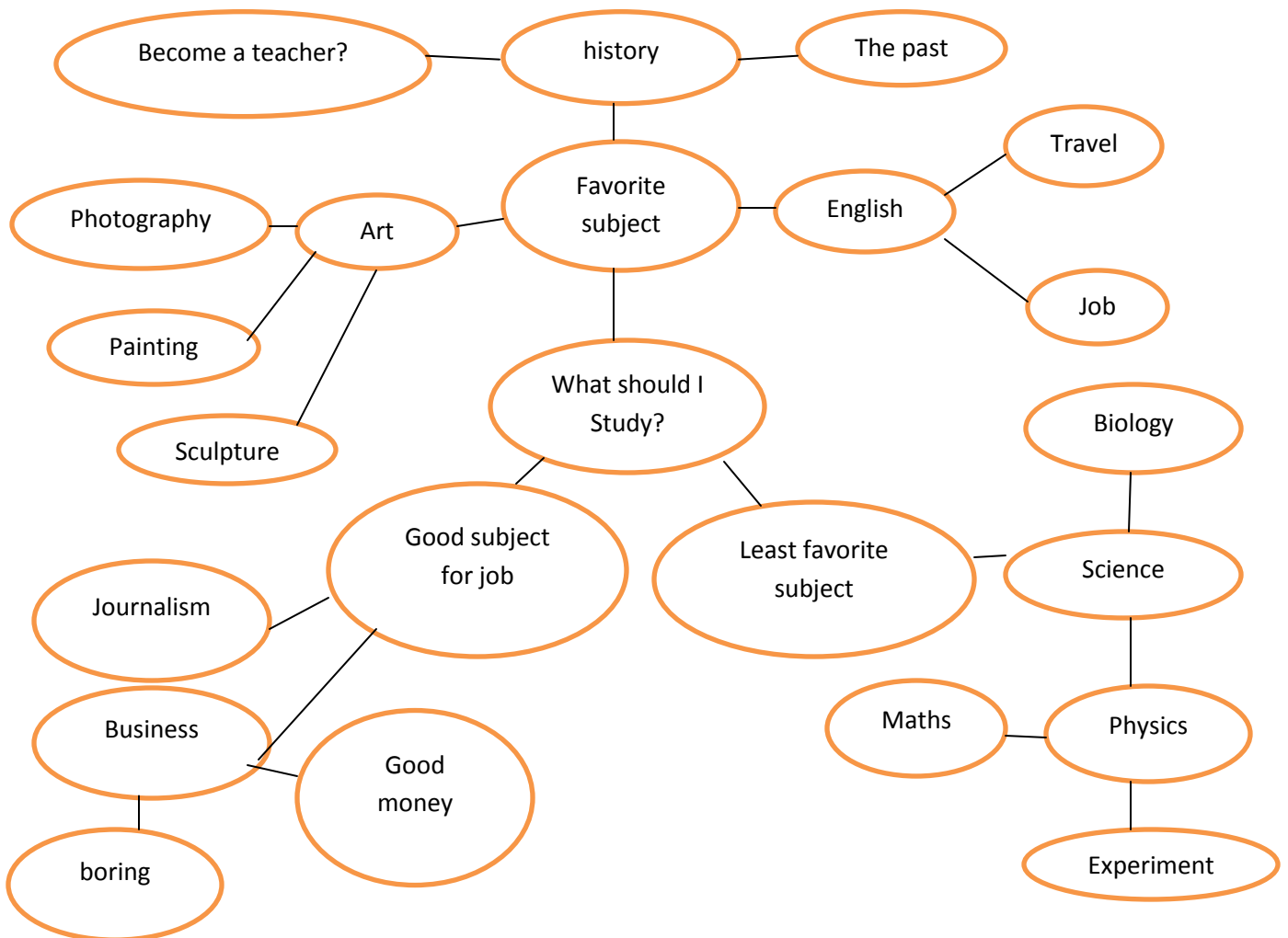
“There are ~~too~~ so many subjects to study at university; it is difficult to choose one. I've always had good marks in Maths, but I don't like it very much. I don't like ~~physical~~ physics or any science very much. Writing– I've always liked writing, would journalism be a good course to take?

Newspapers have pictures, too, so maybe photography would be good. I'm ~~maybe~~ definitely looking forward to meeting new friends at university. And what about reading? Reading is a part of any Couse, but literature includes a lot of writing, too.”

Notice how the writer's idea jumps around when she makes a mistake, she just crosses it out and continues writing. One thought (writing) leads to another (journalism), and then to another (photography). There are some details that are not exactly about her topic (looking forward to meeting new friends), but that's ok in free writing. You want to get as many ideas on paper as you can. You can take out unnecessary words and sentences later.

2.5.2 Mapping

The same reference, To make a map, you use a whole sheet of paper, and write your topic in the middle, with a circle around it – then put the next idea in a circle about or below your topic, and connect the circles with lines. The lines show. The two ideas are related. The example below shows a map of “what should I study at university?” the writer connected favorite subjects to main idea. Art and English are connected to favorite subjects to show that they are related. (According to Dorothy, E, Z & Lisa, A, R. (2005).



2.6 Putting Things in Order

According to Kemper, D. Rathand, R. & Sebranek, D. (2016). The sentences in the body of your paragraph must be organized so that readers can follow all of your ideas.

There are three ways to organize your sentences.

2.6.0 Time Order

It is easy to follow ideas when the facts are explained in the order in which they happened. Time order works well in a narrative or an explanatory paragraph. You may use words like first, next, and finally.

2.6.1 Order of Location

When details are described in the order in which there are located, the description usually goes from left to right or from top to bottom. Order of location works well in a descriptive or an explanatory paragraph. Use words and phrases like above, around, and up.

2.6.2 Order of Importance

News stories are often organized in the order of importance. They tell the most important news first. Persuasive or explanatory paragraphs are also organized in this way, with the most important detail coming first or last.

2.7 Transitional Words

As stated by Ezemach, D, Liza A (2000), Transition are words that connect the steps in a paragraph, transition words and phrases show the relationships between the ideas in a paragraph. They are not used between every sentence, but are used

often enough to make the order clear. Here are some common transition words and phrases that show time order or the order of steps:

2.7.0 Words that can be used to show time:

About	before	later	soon	tomorrow
After	during	meanwhile	then	until
As soon as	finally	next	third	when
At	first	second	today	yesterday

2.7.1 Words that can be used to show location:

Above	around	between	inside	outside
Across	behind	by	into	over
Against	below	down	near	throughout
Along	beneath	in back of	off	to the right
Among	beside	in front of	on top of	under

2.7.2 Words that can be used to compare things (show similarities):

As	in the same way	like	similarity
Also	likewise	just as	while

2.7.3 Words that can be used to contrast things (show differences):

Although	even though	on the other hand	still
But	however	otherwise	yet

2.7.4 Words that can be used emphasize a point:

Again for this reason in fact so

2.7.5 Words that can be used to add information:

Again along with besides for instance

Also another finally next

And as well for example

2.7.6 Words than can be used to conclude or summarize:

As a result in conclusion lastly

Finally in summary therefore

2.8 Paragraph Length

As stated by Hyland, K. (2006). “How long is a good paragraph?” is a question novice writers often ask. Like a teacher’s lecture or a preacher’s sermon, paragraph should be long enough to accomplish their purpose and short enough to be interesting. In truth, there is not set length, no proscribed number of lines or sentences, for any of your paragraphs. In a body paragraph, your topic sentence presents the main point, and the rest of the paragraph must give enough supporting evidence the reader. Although too much unnecessary or repetitions detail is boring, too little discussion will leave the reader uniformed, unconvinced, or confused.

2.9 Paragraph Unity

Every sentence in a body paragraph should relate directly to the main idea presented by the topic sentence. A paragraph must stick to its announced subject; it

must not drift away into another discussion. In another words, a good paragraph has unity.

2.10 Paragraph Coherence

As explained by Yule, G. (2014). In addition to unity, coherence is essential to a good paragraph. Coherence means that all the sentences and ideas in your paragraph flow together to make a clear logical point about your topic. Your paragraph should not be a confusing collection of ideas set down in random order. The readers should be able to follow what you have written and see easily and quickly how each sentence grows out of, or is related to the preceding sentence. To achieve coherence, you should have a smooth connection or transition between the sentences in your paragraphs.

2.11 Marking Punctuation

According to RXOHTOBa, T. B. (2013).

2.11.0 Period

A **period** is used to end a sentence. It is also used after initials, after abbreviations, and as a decimal point.

Taro won the fishing contest. (Statement)

Take his picture. (Command)

Please pass the bait. (Request)

Mr. Mrs. Dr. p.m.

2.11.1 Ellipsis

An **ellipsis** (three spaced periods) is used to show omitted words or sentences and to indicate a pause in dialogue.

To show a pause **“that’s.....incredible!” I cried.**

2.11.2 Comma:

Commas are used to keep words and ideas from running together. They tell your reader where to pause, which makes your writing easier to read.

Please, Carla, learn some new jokes.

2.11.3 Semicolon

The **semicolon** is something used in place of a period; other items, it works like a comma.

My aunt has a new motorboat; I wish I were old enough to drive it.

2.11.4 Colon

A colon is used to introduce a list or to draw attention to the information that follows. Colons are also used in business letters and between the number expressing time.

Scuba divers often see the following:

Barracuda, eels, turtle, and jellyfish.

2.11.5 Hyphen

A hyphen is used to divide a word at the end of a line. Hyphens are also used to join or create new words. (Note: Your computer may place hyphens automatically at the end of lines.)

In compound words

Well – done

blue - green sea

self – made

2.11.6 Dash:

A **dash** is used to show a break in a sentence, to emphasize certain words, or to show that a speaker has been interrupted.

The skateboard – if you didn't notice – has a wheel missing.

2.11.7 Apostrophe

An **apostrophe** is used to form plurals, or form contraction, to show that a letter or letters have been left out of a word, or to show possession.

In contraction

Couldn't (could not)

She's (she is – she has)

Haven't (have not)

2.11.8 Quotation Marks

Question marks are used to enclose the exact words of the speaker, to show that words are used in a special way, and to punctuate title.

Trey said, "Let's make tuna sandwiches."

"America the beautiful." (Song)

2.11.9. Question mark

A **question mark** is used after a direct question (an interrogative sentence) and to show doubt about the correctness of something.

Would you like to visit other galaxies?

To show doubt

The ship arrived in Boston on July 23(?), 1652.

2.11.10 Exclamation Point

An **exclamation point** is used to express strong feeling. It may be placed after a word, a phrase, or a sentence.

To express strong feeling

Surprise! (Word)

Happy birthday! (Sentence)

2.11.11 Parentheses

Parentheses are used around words included in a sentence to add information or to help make an idea clearer.

The map (figure 2) will help you understand the explorer's route.

2.12 The Previous Studies

In this section the research conductor is going to spot a light on the previous studies which that relevant to the research topic.

1/ First study

Mohammed, T. (2006). carried out an M.A study entitled “problems of paragraph writing at Basic Level School”. A study of 8th class in Khartoum North, Islamic University of Omdurman. The researcher asked if the students face any linguistic difficulties in writing a paragraph. He guessed that both students and the teachers encounter problems at the linguistic and methodological levels. The researcher found out that the students were very poor to write a single sentence and even many could not attempt to write a word. Even though they didn't know the basis of writing paragraph such as grammar, topic sentence or using cohesive devices. The researcher comments and says that all these studies tackle the same issues dealt with the ideas in this research. However, this study is an approach to provide students with a deep sense of grasping sub consciously the essential elements of writing paragraph such as memorizing vocabulary, building English sentences and correct usage of prepositions. Moreover exploiting some literary texts relate to Sudanese culture and environment is the base of this attempt and to bridge the gap between theory and practice in paragraph writing.

2/ Second study

Osman, S. (2012), conducted an M.A study entitled “Difficulties facing English Foreign Language Learners in Cohesive Devices in Writing”, Sudan University of Science and Technology. The writer asked if the students were able to produce a coherent text by applying cohesive devices. He claims that they were incompetent to use different types of semantic markers. The writer found that the students were

unable to apply cohesive devices in writing which made them present their ideas unclearly. In addition, they produce incorrect sentences and they could not develop topic sentence by adding new information. It is agreed to the researcher's point of in correct use of cohesion.

3/ Third study

Mohammed, D. (2012), carried out an M.A study entitled “Investigating Writing problems Sudanese Pupils (8th class Basic level Students). The writer asked if the students faced difficulties in their writing skill. He supposed that they encountered various problems in writing skill. The study showed that the students were unaware of the basic principles of writing skills and the teachers were not well-trained in teaching writing. So, the researcher's idea about teachers' ability in teaching paragraph writing related to this part.

4/ Fourth study

Hassan, A. (2010), carried out Ph.D. study entitled "Problems of Vocabulary Learning Encountered by 3rd level secondary school students ", Omdurman Islamic University. The researcher asked whether the students learn vocabulary in the proper way and the problems they encounter in that respect. He confirmed that the students were weak in learning and acquiring vocabulary due to some teaching problems. The study found that students' rate of learning vocabulary was generally low. Since teaching the receptive and productive skills was semi-absent. Moreover, teaching vocabulary through morphology, which supports lexical memorization, is neglected and word knowledge focuses on semantic domain.

5/ Fifth study

Ibrahim, Y. (2004). conducted an M.A study entitled " Composition Deficiency: A content Analysis of the Spine Series (Books 4, 5, 6), Omdurman Islamic University. The writer asked whether the content of these text books can provide sufficient material and procedures for both teachers and students to write composition. He guessed that the text books lack the sufficient instruction and material for writing composition. The study showed that the students did practice writing as a process; teachers were not acquainted with the objectives of teaching writing composition and the current methods in this concern.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods and techniques adopted the population, the sample and the procedures adapted in the study. It shed light on the validity and reliability of the study.

3.1 Method of Analysis

The researcher uses the descriptive analytical method to analyze data collected in order to answer the research questions. The researcher adopts qualitative method in its design. This study concern about Paragraph Writing Difficulties Encountered by EFL University Students.

3.2 Population

The subject of this study involves both males and females, Students' age is approximately between 24- 45 years old, second year students at Comboni College for Science and Technology, Department of Languages, they study applied linguistics in the academic year 2018-2019.

3.3 Method of Sampling

A simple random sampling is adopted to select the study subjects from the target population. This method is suitable because they study English Language as (FL) at comboni college of Science and Technology, Language Department.

3.4 Instruments

Instrument of any study are tools which are used to collect data for the study, here the test is the only instrument used to collect data.

3.5 Content of the Test

The test consists of five questions each question consists of four and five items, which are designed to check whether the students are able to identify the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence, whether also students can identify types of a paragraph and the use of cohesive devices correctly.

3.6 Validity

The first draft of the test has been given to some experts who made some modification by adding and excluding were Dr Negla Taha Bashrie, Dr.Ibrahim Ahmed Abakar, and Dr. Abbas Mokhtar. The test converted and expressed the hypotheses of the research and measures them properly.

3.7 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the test, it was tried on some students prior to produce the same or similar results, if it is conducted again under the same conditions; the test was calculated by a computer program called (SPSS) statistical package of social studies.

3.8 Procedures

The researcher has collected the data from the participants' responses then every single paper inserted into SPSS. Frequencies and percentage have been calculated for each question. The researcher has used (the Alpha-cronbach) to check the Validity of hypotheses. The charts were provided for further demonstrations and explanations.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

A group of 50 second year students was drawn from Comboni College for Science and Technology, Department of Languages were tested on the uses and understanding parts of a paragraph, cohesive devices, types of a paragraph ,and punctuation marks. They were chosen randomly, they were both males and females, the test comprised four questions each question has four and five items.

4.1 Data Analysis and Discussion of the Results

The responses to the written diagnostic test of the 50 students were tabulated and computed. The following is an analytical interpretation and discussion of the findings regarding different points related to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The test is analyzed statistically and discussed. The following table will support the discussion.

4.2 Statistical Reliability and Validity for Student's Test

The reliability coefficient was calculated for the measurement, which was used in the test using Alpha - Cronbach coefficient Equation as the following:

For calculating the validity and the reliability of the test from the above equation, the researcher distributed the test to respondents to calculate the reliability coefficient using the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient the results have been showed in the following table

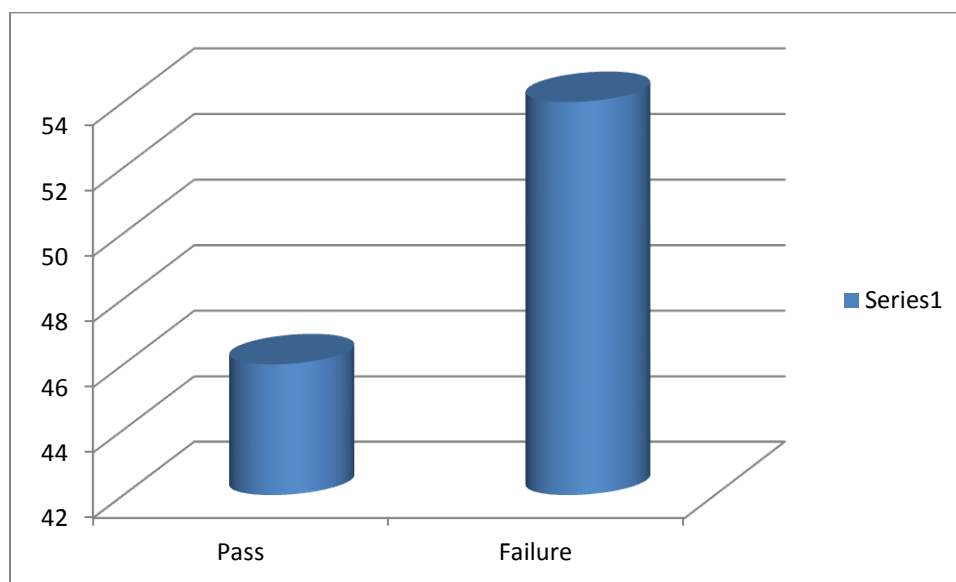
	<u>Reliability</u>	<u>Validity</u>	<u>N</u>
ALPH – CRONBACH	0.89	0.93	5

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability}} .$$

From the above table it's shown that the validity of the test is very high (0.93). This indicate that if we repeat the test we are sure with 93% that it's going to give us the same results

Table (4.1): the frequency and percentage distribution for the respondent's answers for the question No (1)

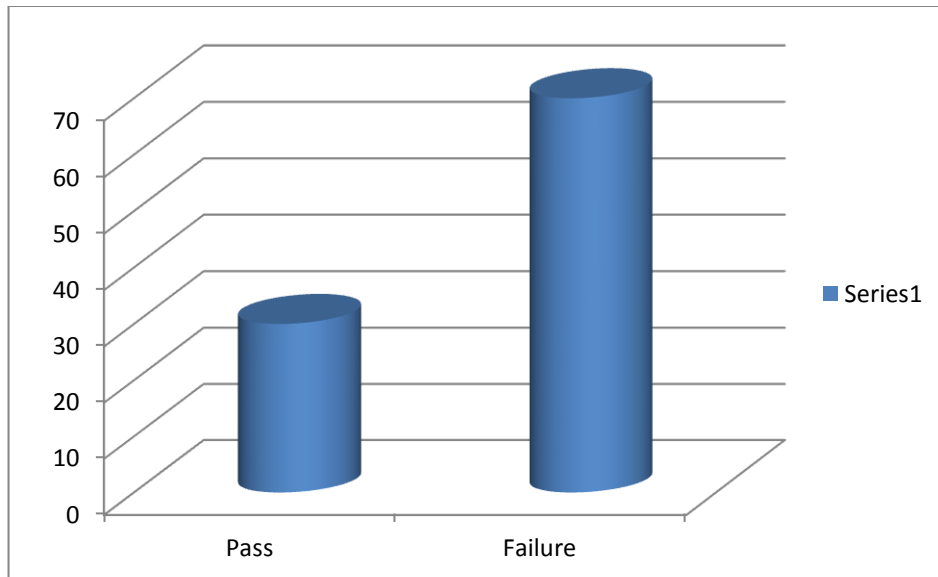
Result	Frequency	Percentage
Pass	23	46%
Failure	27	54%
Total	50	100%



From the above table (4.1) and figure (4.1) it's clear that the number of students who pass the question (1) was **(23)** with percentage **(46%)**. And the number of students who failed to pass was **(27)** with percentage **(54%)**.

Table (4.2): the frequency and percentage distribution for the respondent's answers for the question No (2)

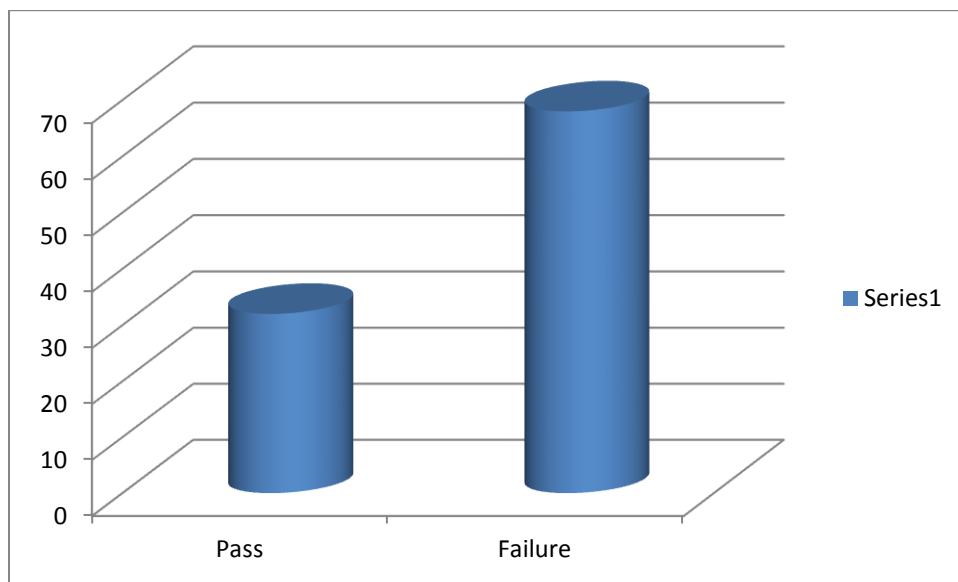
Result	Frequency	Percentage
Pass	15	30%
Failure	35	70%
Total	50	100%



From the above table (4.2) and figure (4.2) it's clear that the number of students who pass the question (2) was **(15)** with percentage **(30%)**. And the number of students who failed to pass was **(35)** with percentage **(70%)**.

Table (4.3): the frequency and percentage distribution for the respondent's answers for the question No (3)

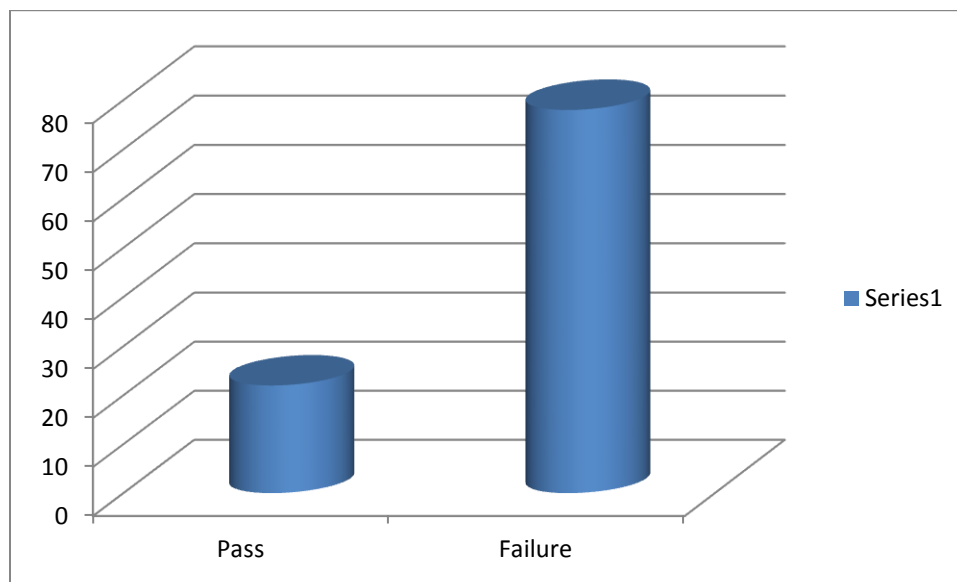
Result	Frequency	Percentage
Pass	16	32%
Failure	34	68%
Total	50	100%



From the above table (4.3) and figure (4.3) it's clear that the number of students who pass the question (3) was **(16)** with percentage (32%). And the number of students who failed to pass was **(34)** with percentage **(78%)**.

Table (4.4): the frequency and percentage distribution for the respondent's answers for the question No (4)

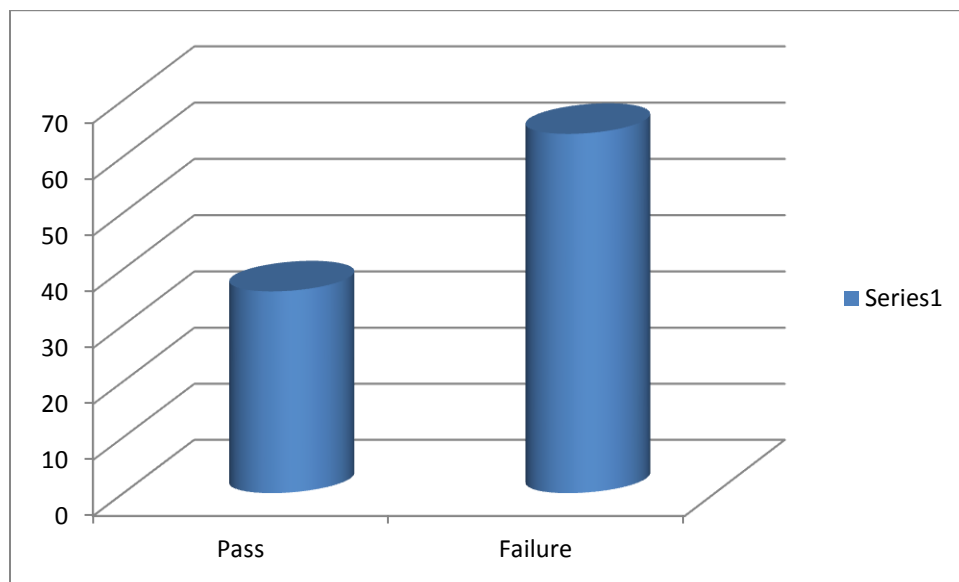
Result	Frequency	Percentage
Pass	11	22%
Failure	39	78%
Total	50	100%



From the above table (4.4) and figure (4.4) it's clear that the number of students who pass the question (4) was **(11)** with percentage **(22%)**. And the number of students who failed to pass was **(39)** with percentage **(78%)**.

Table (4.5): the frequency and percentage distribution for the respondent's answers for the question No (1)

Result	Frequency	Percentage
Pass	18	36%
Failure	32	64%
Total	50	100%



From the above table (4.5) and figure (4.5) it's clear that the number of students who pass the question (2) was **(18)** with percentage (36%). And the number of students who failed to pass was **(32)** with percentage **(64%)**.

Hypotheses testing using t- test

Table (4.6) one sample T-TEST for the questions of the study

Question s	N	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
1	50	7.5	19	49	0.00
2	50	5.4	15	49	0.00
3	50	2.2	14	49	0.00
4	50	1.3	16	49	0.00
5	50	3.2	11	49	0.00

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the question No (1) was (19) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (49) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (5.10). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. this mean that our first hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the question No (2) was (14) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (49) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (5.10). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. this mean that our first hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the question No (3) was (16) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (49) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (5.10). This indicates that, there are no statistically

significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. this mean that our second hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (4) was (11) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (49) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (5.10). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. this mean that our third hypothesis is accepted.

4.3 Discussion of the Results

The current study aims at exploring the difficulties encountered by EFL students in writing English paragraph. The results reflected that the students of second year at Comboni College for Science and Technology College of Languages encounter many types of difficulties when writing (organizing) English paragraph. According to their performance, tables and graphs displayed earlier have proved that students are not aware to identify parts of a paragraph, types of paragraph, using of cohesive devices, and punctuation marks. Moreover they do not know how to brainstorm, making a list, free writing, and mapping. Also they do not know how to put things in order such as time order, order of location, and order of importance.

4.4 Summary

The researcher designed test according to hypotheses. The test consists of four questions each question has five items, the researcher comes up with the results that second year students encounter difficulties in identifying parts of a paragraph, types of a paragraph and how to use cohesive devices correctly and punctuation marks.

CHAPTER FIVE
MAIN FINDINGS ,CONCLUSIONS ,
RECOMMENDATIONS
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0 Introduction

This study dealt with difficulties encountered by EFL students in writing an English paragraph by second year students of at Comboni College of science and technology, Department of languages with analysis and the evaluation these difficulties encountered by EFL students in writing English paragraph. Below there are main findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Main Findings

- 1/ second year students are not aware of writing an English paragraph.
- 2/ second year students are not able to use cohesive devices correctly.
- 3/ second year students are not able to identify different types of a paragraph.
- 4/ second year students are not able to differentiate between parts of an English paragraph.

5.2 The conclusions

This study aimed to explore the difficulties encountered by EFL students in writing English paragraph at Comboni College of Science and Technology, Department of languages, second year students; it also aims to examine students' awareness of paragraph writing techniques.

The researcher comes out with the following findings second year students encounter problems in writing English paragraphs, second year students are poor in identifying parts of a paragraph, different types of paragraphs.

Second year students are not able to use cohesive devices correctly. Also there are some recommendations such as identifying making a list, free writing, and mapping. teachers should to apply new techniques to teach English paragraph, teachers should give intensive exercises to solve these problems, and second year students should put into consideration the need of cohesive devices, putting things in order, and punctuation marks.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the main findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1/ teachers should apply new teaching strategies and modern techniques for teaching how to write English paragraph.

2/ teachers should introduce students to different parts of a paragraph through giving them more class work exercises.

3/ teachers should give intensive practice to develop students' ability on using cohesive devices correctly.

4/ second year students should focus on the punctuation marks through an English paragraph.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

The researcher suggests the following topics to be studied:

1/Investigating the effective methods of teaching English paragraphs.

2/Exploring the difficulties encountered by EFL students in understanding text structures.

3/ Investigating the difficulties in writing Explanatory Essays.

4/ Exploring the difficulties that face EFL students in writing narrative writing.

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Appendices



Sudan University of Science & Technology

College of Graduate Studies

College of Languages

Test



CANDIDATE NAME:

SEMESTER: ()

Time: 60 minutes

Hypothesis one: EFL students are not able to identify the parts of an English paragraph.

Question one:

Underline number of the parts of a paragraph

“Canada: the place to live”

Canada is one of the best countries in the world. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada’s cities are clean and efficiently managed, and they have many parks and lots of space for people to live. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.

Question Two:

Use words or phrases in the box below to complete the parts of a paragraph.

Concluding sentence – indented – main idea – paragraph – supporting sentence – topic – topic sentence.

- a. Theis usually the first sentence in a
It gives theand the
- b. The first sentence of a paragraph can be
- c. The.....come after the topic sentence, and they explain the
Topic sentence.
- d. Thecomes at the end of a paragraph.

Question Three:

Write these jumbled sentences in a correct order to give a meaningful paragraph.

- I am also interested in learning about the way children’s minds develop.
- My favorite subject is psychology.
- I enjoy learning about the ways people think and behave.
- Lastly, I love psychology.
- Because psychology is interesting.

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Hypothesis two: Students are not able to use cohesive devices correctly in a paragraph.

Question four:

Draw a circle around the cohesive devices from English paragraph below.

- His job involves a number of things. First, he is responsible for general administration in the office. Secondly, he has to look after the financial side of the business ... finally, he has been asked to build up outside contacts.
- He lifts the country the same day. In that case, he must have had his passport with him.
- You must get some more petrol. Otherwise, we will not have enough to get us to the next town.

Hypothesis three: EFL students are not able to identify different types of English paragraphs.

Question five:

Identify each different types of a paragraph in the following box.

**Explanatory paragraph – narrative paragraph – persuasive paragraph
descriptive paragraph**

1-.....

A new House

My family moved to a new house last year. I was very sad to leave my old house. On the day we moved, I ran right up to my new bedroom. Then, I looked out the back window. The back yard was beautiful! A giant oak tree and a pond were in my yard! I was so surprised, and definitely not sad any move!

2-

Effects of smoking

The harmful effects of smoking are many, as it is proven that smoking various substances that damage the body, including the tar destroys thousands who have lung alveoli and serves to exact oxygen from the air is inhaled.

3-

The park

I live next to a park. The park is large and has trees and grass. There is a lake in the park where you can see people enjoying many activities. There are a lot of places to sit and relax. There are a lot of paths that you can walk on, and everywhere you walk you can see flowers. I really enjoy spending time in this park.

4-

The Apollo 11 space mission

On July 16, 1969, the Apollo 11 spacecraft launched from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Its mission was to go where no human being had gone before—the moon! The crew consisted of Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Buzz Aldrin. The spacecraft landed on the moon in the Sea of Tranquility, a basaltic flood plain, on July 20, 1969. The moonwalk took place the following day. On July 21, 1969, at precisely 10:56 EDT, Commander Neil Armstrong emerged from the Lunar Module and took his famous first step onto the moon’s surface. He declared, “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” It was a monumental moment in human history!

Good luck