



COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**EFL STUDENTS ATTUDE, PRACTICE, AND CHALLENGES THEY
FACE IN LEARNING WRITING SKILLS: THE CASE OF TOBA
PREPARATORY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, not presented for any degree in any universities, and that all the sources used for it are duly acknowledged.

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Confirmation and Approval

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ABSTRACT

This study is carried out with the purpose of assessing the attitude, practices and challenges the students face in writing EFL: The case of Tobba grade 11 secondary school, Gumay, woreda, Jimma zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia. To attain this objective, 120 students (70 of them are male and 50 are female) were selected randomly so that qualitative method is employed. The data was collected through questionnaire and real hand writing of a student test. Then, the data gathered through these tools were organized and analyzed using qualitative method. In order to create a holistic picture of these qualitative and quantitative data, the researcher integrated and carefully discussed them all around subsequent thematic topics of the study in relation to the research questions. The study identified the major attitudes: the flow of ideas in coherence, unified and with cohesive devices by which some of them needs logical, chronological and spatial orders; the problems are again: grammar, punctuation-capitalization, full stop, comma, inverted comma, quotation mark, semi colon, colon, hyphen, interjection and exclamation marks; the challenges in: mechanics-spelling and hand writing.

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Abbreviations

EFL: English Foreign Language

ESL: English Second Language

FR: Female Rural

FU: Female Urban

MR: Male Rural

MU: Male Urban

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Writing is defined as the activity or skill of writing which this activity or occupation of composing a text. It is a medium of communication that involves the representation of language with written symbols. Writing systems are not by themselves human languages; rendering a language in to a form that can be constructed to convey messages. In other words, writing is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, punctuation, and spaces) to communicate thoughts.

In English writing style is a combination of features in an English language composition that has become characteristics of a particular writer, genre, a particular organization, or a profession more broadly.

Writing skill has now become an essential part of every student's life, starting with the simplest content to the most complex writing pieces. At this point, students are asked to craft different types of essays, research papers and other kinds of creative tasks. Writing is skill students will need for the future which is why it is crucial to develop it to the proper level. Unfortunately, the majority of students fail to develop their writing skill even after finishing school. The reason for this is: lack of vocabulary, lack of writing practice, weak argumentation, failing structure ideas effectively and peer grammar and syntax skills. The main objective of this study is to investigate these problems. It also aims at casting some light on its importance.

Writing is a significant skill in language production. Its significance increased when it comes to writing in English language which is extensively used for global mediation of knowledge (Mahboob, 2014; Mansaor, 2005; Marlina& Giri, 2014; Rahman 2002). Hyland (2003) believes that performance in language does subject to improvement in writing skills. It is also the skill that learners can develop through passing the process of writing. As Robert and Victoria (2014:188) define the term process that process is anything that takes place over time not at all at once it is not something that happens in a flash, like a shooting star. Thus, learners in the high

school should scarify themselves for developing their writing skills both for leisure and writing for a purpose.

A text of an affective EFL (writing must be cohesive, logical, clearly structured, interesting & properly organized with a wide range of vocabulary & mastery of conventions in mechanics (Jacobs & L, 1981; Hall 1988). However, writing is often considered merely a part of teaching & learning grammar & syntax, which resultantly underestimated the nature & importance of writing and affects its growth. Nunan (1989) argues that writing is an extremely difficult cognitive activity which requires the learner to have control over various factors. These factors vary from academic background & personal interest of the writer to various psychological, linguistic & cognitive phenomena (Dar & Khan, 2015; Haider, 2012.)

Another body of research critical incompetent teachers who instead of promoting creative skills urge for rote learning and exam-oriented language production (Mansoor, 2005; Rahman, 2002; Siddiqi, 2007). Students' writing ability can be improved by fostering their interest, motivation and enjoyment for writing through technology (Graham & Perin, 2007) similarly, metacognitive, cognitive and socio affective strategies could also be used for enabling the students to know and practically exercise the writing process (O'Malley and Chomog, 1990), further, the teachers can adapt pedagogic approaches and can mutually design such tasks that interest (Paneth, 2013; Quintero, 2008). It will practice and involving physical and cognitive skill which give the writer control over the expression of linguistic and domain specific knowledge (Kellogg and Rallerson, 2007). In addition, it will be convenient for language and content teachers to monitor their students from broad perspectives (Nik, Sani, Kamaruzaman, Hasbillah, et al., 2010). Most importantly, it is necessary that attitudes towards writing and dealing with its issue are changed. Teachers must employ strategies to elicit ideas from student to be penned down on a piece of paper to promote their verbal ability. Moreover, sound critical feedback need to be given on their output, so that their confidence is elevated (Haider, 2012). The writing skills of students are alarmingly weak and substandard. These issues generally arise from incompetence in syntax, coherence, idea expansion, content selection, topic selection, rhetorical conventions, mechanics, lack of vocabulary, organization, inappropriate use of vocabulary. However, further research is required to explore and examine the factors that adversely affect writing skill of the students, because issues in writing can be more efficiently addressed if the

factors that generate them are identified (Hyland, 2003) This study intends to investigate problems in students' writing, the factors that generate these problems, and finally, suggestions of the participants on how to improve learners' English language writing skills.

In the traditional approaches to language teaching and learning, writing is considered as secondary skill. Because of this, it received relatively little attention compared to speaking, reading, and listening. Silva (1997) claims that the dominant teaching method during the 1950s put an undue focus on oral rather than written proficiency. Especially, writing skills were neglected during Audio-lingual period. Raimes (1983) states that during audio-lingual period, speaking was seen as the central element of language teaching, while writing was not given similar position in language teaching-learning. However, Foley and Thompson (2003 as cited in Misrak 2007:6), emphasize the importance of writing in second language learning by arguing that second language learning is not only learning the oral languages i.e. speaking and listening but it is important to consider how to learn to communicate through writing. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the writing skills. It has achieved a great attention in the present EFL curriculum/ syllabus at both secondary and preparatory levels, as an important productive skill through which meaningful messages or ideas are transmitted. As students attain their secondary level education, they are required to generate further written materials such as paragraph, composition etc.. According to the syllabus of grade eleven (11), students need to write compositions on a wide range of topics (MOA 2001ii). These requirements must be in the target (English) language as it is the core language for communication over the world. At this level, students are required to practice paragraph writing than being engaged in writing at sentence level, phrase or word level. Accordingly, the students are expected to compose paragraph with good elements and use sentences which are correct in grammar within their paragraph to communicate.

Writing is also defined as the activity or skill of marking coherent words on paper and composing text. "Parents want schools to concentrate on reading, writing, and arithmetic"

Writing is a medium of human communication that involves the representation of a language with written symbols. Writing systems are not themselves human languages (with the debatable exception of computer languages); they are means of rendering a language into a form that can be reconstructed by other humans separated by time and/or space. While not all languages utilize

a writing system, those with systems of inscriptions can complement and extend capacities of spoken language by enabling the creation of durable forms of speech that can be transmitted across space (e.g., correspondence) and stored over time (e.g., libraries or other public records). It has also been observed that the activity of writing itself can have knowledge-transforming effects, since it allows humans to externalize their thinking in forms that are easier to reflect on, elaborate, reconsider, and revise. Writing relies on many of the same semantic structures as the speech it represents, such as lexicon and syntax, with the added dependency of a system of symbols to represent that language's phonology and morphology. The result of the activity of writing is called a text, and the interpreter or activator of this text is called a reader.

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As human societies emerged, collective motivations for the development of writing were driven by pragmatic exigencies like keeping history, maintaining culture, codifying knowledge through curricula and lists of texts deemed to contain foundational knowledge (e.g., *The Canon of Medicine*) or to be artistically exceptional (e.g., a literary canon), organizing and governing societies through the formation of legal systems, census records, contracts, deeds of ownership, taxation, trade agreements, treaties, and so on. Amateur historians, including H.G. Wells, had speculated since the early 20th century on the likely correspondence between the

emergence of systems of writing and the development of city-states into empires. As Charles Bazerman explains, the "marking of signs on stones, clay, paper, and now digital memories—each more portable and rapidly traveling than the previous—provided means for increasingly coordinated and extended action as well as memory across larger groups of people over time and space." For example, around the 4th millennium BC, the complexity of trade and administration in Mesopotamia outgrew human memory, and writing became a more dependable method of recording and presenting transactions in a permanent form. In both ancient Egypt and Mesoamerica, on the other hand, writing may have evolved through calendric and political necessities for recording historical and environmental events. Further innovations included more uniform, predictable, and widely dispersed legal systems, distribution and discussion of accessible versions of sacred texts, and the origins of modern practices of scientific inquiry and knowledge-consolidation, all largely reliant on portable and easily reproducible forms of inscribed language.

Individual, as opposed to collective, motivations for writing include improvised additional capacity for the limitations of human memory (e.g., to-do lists, recipes, reminders, log books, maps, the proper sequence for a complicated task or important ritual), dissemination of ideas (as in an essay, monograph, broadside, petition, or manifesto), imaginative narratives and other forms of storytelling, personal or business correspondence, and life writing (e.g., a diary or journal).

Writing a paragraph requires an overall sense of organization; each sentence must fit within this organizational framework. In a well-written paragraph, ideas and sentences are arranged in a clear and logical way as they are unified by the main idea of that paragraph. The more the written paragraph are coherent and cohesive the more they it conveys meaningful message to the readers. Beside, students should be able to use a connected serious of words and sentences which are grammatically correct. Unless students arrange words in at least their minimum acceptable order, they may not pass the intended message meaningfully. A good paragraph is achieved when a topic sentence is intelligently chosen; the knowledge of choosing a good topic sentence for each paragraph helps students arrange the sequence of their information in a logical order. Grammar, Punctuation and spelling are essential for communicating correct and clear meaning.

As Abbot(2007:6) states that a “clear thinking could not be written clearly without using words according to definite rules.”

In addition, sense in a piece of writing is added by correct punctuation marks (Hilton and Hyder, 1992). In general, writing a paragraph is one of the initial steps of the writing process that contains some procedures, so that the learners can follow these to produce a good piece of writing in various contexts such as at secondary school. The importance of paragraph writing for students is underlined by Grabe and Kaplan (1996)who mention that students in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts will need English writing skills ranging from a simple paragraph and summary skills to the ability to write essay. This is because Paragraph writing is a pre-requisite course for composition and essay writing. As a result, students need help from their teachers to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for them to effectively write paragraph in English specially, in secondary school learners have to pay attention to the “higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as the lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on “Richards and Renandya (2002). Also Richards and Renandya summarized that if L2 learners’ language proficiency are weak, L2 writers will encounter greater difficulty in writing. So, writing in general potentially has many benefits for EFL secondary school learners.

Though writing skill is considered extremely important, a lot of research studies conducted in the various EFL/EFL contexts strongly suggested that EFL learners, who study in institutions that use English as a medium of instruction, face severe problems in writing skills that hinder their academic progress (Tahaineh, 2010; Rababah, 2003; and Bacha, 2002). One of these difficulties is how to produce a well-connected and coherent piece of writing. Abdellah(2000), for example, found that Sudanese university students were not able to make correct use of written discourse properties, which eventually reduces the overall writing quality. He adds that the average writing of student was characterized by a variety of coherence breaks such as misleading paragraph division and irrelevance.

Like other EFL contexts, the situation in Ethiopia has also been reported poor. It is assumed that high school students in Ethiopia have deficiency of the English language to compose up to the expected level (Amlaku.2010). Students seriously lack in all English skills in general and writing skills in particular. One of the major weaknesses Ethiopian students exhibit at different levels is writing in English (L2) (Solomon, 2001); and the situation is worse in secondary schools in

which students fail to cope with the writing requirements. Individuals with writing problems may have difficulties in one or more aspects of writing skill.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The practices that we face while our students write a paragraph, challenges they face, and their attitude towards English writing skill.

The students' English language ability in writing paragraph plays a great role in both contemporary academic and future careers. Hence, the key role of English language ability in writing has an important and encouraging impact on the academic achievement of students. This is because the ability to write various genres of writing effectively through English is becoming increasingly important in our global community (Weigle, 2002). In addition, "writing is an essential component of thinking and learning in school context, and writing tasks are a crucial tool for intellectual and social development." (Bruning and Horn, 2000:30)

In the Ethiopian context, English is taught as foreign language. Learners have been learning to write paragraphs based on the activities and tasks which are adapted in the text books. More of the writing tasks and activities presented in the syllabus and textbook require the students to practice writing skills under process-oriented approach; yet, the students' writing

It is noticed that most EFL students at secondary level perform the writing task with difficulty and many of them are not able to write even a complete meaningful sentence. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the problems in writing skill at secondary level. Moreover, to cast some light on its importance.

Nowadays, there has been a growing awareness on the importance of writing skill, according to Mohammed, (2015:56) and syllabus at both secondary and preparatory schools as an important productive skill through which meaningful messages and ideas to transmit. According to the syllabus of grade 11 students are required to practice paragraph writing, develop a variety of writing skill and they learn to write for various purposes. The exercises aim to develop a range of which including descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative. According to the grade 11 Minimum Learning Competency (MLC) the writing competency states that, states students should be able to write paragraphs to explain, inform and argue using languages that

communicates the intended message. Furthermore, the MLC states, students should be able to elaborate/justify ideas, arguments, and opinions on a paragraph by giving examples.

Weigelas cited in Marashi and Yavarzedeh, 2014:66 stated that:

The skill of writing, which was once considered the domain of the elites and the well-educated has become an essential tool for people who all walks of life. He further asserts that many people around the world need to report analysis, write business letters, compose academic paragraphs, etc. And if all that were not enough, a huge number of individuals from different demographic cohorts are writing for personal communication through e-mails and text messages. Therefore, writing instruction not merely as an object to study but as a means of communication is of growing significance in language teaching programs.

Although the benefit of writing skill increasing from time to time, students 'of Tobba secondary school are facing challenges when writing a paragraph. Too investigate the attitude, practices, and the challenges they face in writing skills/EFL/. Writing paragraph is significant not only in writing session in English but also to learn other subjects as effective as possible. Hamid (2010:223) argued that paragraph writing is significant because facilities studied.

And, they can express what they want by using their own words. In addition, competence in paragraph writing will help students to pass all their academic courses.

While teaching English in Tobba secondary school, then the researcher could observe the students lack of words to express their ideas during any writing, grammatical mistakes, in appropriate use of tenses, subject verb agreements, parts of speeches, run-on-sentences, fragments and dangling modifiers as the main problems of the student grammatical problems, such as, punctuation marks and capitalization. On the other hand, mechanics and spelling, these problems: knowledge and understanding, less practice and educational background or proficiency of them may made them weak. Paragraphs based on the activities presented in the syllabus and textbook, which requires them more practice, due to the process-oriented approach teaching method in writing. Yet, their writing is not satisfactory because the students have problems to apply the important features paragraph writings. The other problem of students may be due to inadequate knowledge of making a good composition.

The problems, to put it in nut, are the areas of writing for the students is high and very burden for them for the fact that they haven't come out from early schooling. There are two things to be realized are: one, during elementary class teachers teach only writing skills cause it spelling and

they don't give a chance for speaking. Two, on junior level they teach only grammar and vocabulary. Thus, the researcher assesses to conduct on the attitude, problems, and challenges they face in writing EFL students: the case of Tobba secondary school grade 11 students.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDYs

1.3.1 General objective

The main objective of the study was: *assessing the attitude, practices of EFL students, and challenges they face in writing Tobba secondary school in general and grade 11 students in particular.*

1.3.2 Specific objectives

This research intends to distinguish what makes them despair by their attitude when they are ordered to do any writing task, focus on what the problems are to write in English a paragraph, an essay and what are their weakness. In addition, what the sources of these practices are. And how they can overcome it. .

1.4 Research Questions

What are the attitudes of the students towards writing skill in English at high school level?

What are the problems they encounter to write a text in English in a sensual manner, a flow of ideas sequenced harmoniously?

In what manner they can see their weakness and devote an ample time over this, and turn on the gear to their stronger one so as to overcome their challenges.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The research enlightens and put in a cornerstone as the following significance. It makes the students know the problems of writing and coincides with their current know-how and quickly tends to good EFL writing of a text. It paves the way for the teachers who carelessly jumping the content of writing and getting bored of it, and prophesizing as students dislike it. As a result, these things piled up and be an impassable ways towards their writing with confidence in a high school level. If they make a mistake, it will be

corrected. But for those who are binned up by fear, dried their brain not to sprung out an idea is an infinite task. And, to suggest the students a tangible knowledge gap so their writing will be narrow and narrow.

1.6 The Scope (Delimitation) of the Study

This study is only conducted on Oromia region, Jimma zone, Gumay, woreda, Tobba secondary school grade 11 students in 2013. This study is on the practices, attitudes, and challenges they face in writing skills in EFL so as to identify using qualitative method to conduct this research in random sampling in Tobba high school.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to Tobba high school in relation with financial and other constraints. The study is only limited to Gummay woreda, Tobba high school.

ATTITUDE, PRACTICE, AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN LEARNING WRITING SKILLS

Research questions

1. what is the attitude of the students of Tobba high school?
2. what practices hinder them while writing EFL?
3. what are the challenges they face while writing skill in Tobba high school of grade 11 students.

specific objectives

to the attitude of the students in writing skills in EFL.

To cognize how they practice while writing in EFL.

To know what were the challenges while writing in EFL.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Concept of Writing Skill

Nowadays, writing skill has become the most significant skill that learners need to develop in secondary and tertiary levels in Ethiopia. “In need years there has been a growing awareness of the importance of writing skill, it has achieved a great attention to the present Ethiopian curriculum and syllabus at both a secondary and preparatory levels as an important skill through which messages or ideas are transmitted,.” Mohammed (2015:9)

2.2 What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a short of writing that discourses, describes or analyses a topic. It can discuss the subject directly, or indirectly, seriously or hilariously. It can be personal opinions, or just report information. A paragraph can be written from any perspectives, but are most commonly written in the first person, (I), or third person (subjects that can be substituted with *he*, *she*, or *it*) pronouns.

2.3 The Four Types of Paragraph Development Patterns

Most of the students who learn in a high school, and preparatory schools, their faults who made during writing a paragraph whether they follow an appropriate way of considering the writing purpose or not. Therefore, students should identify what kind of paragraph they are going to write. Besides, they should also ask themselves questions like: Am I going to write a descriptive paragraph? Or Am I going to write a narrative one? Am I planning to do an argumentative paragraph? Or Am I preparing myself to write an expository paragraph? Thus, distinguishing between types of paragraphs is simply a matter of determining the goal. Does the writer want to talk about a personal experience, describing something, explain an issue or, convince the reader to accept a certain point of view? The four kinds of paragraphs address these purposes!

2.3.1 Narrative Paragraph: Telling The Story words and sensory details.

In a narrative paragraph, the writer tells a story about a real-life experience. While telling a story may sound easy to do. The narrative paragraph challenges the students to think and write about themselves. While writing a narrative paragraph, writers should try to involve the reader by making the reader as vivid as possible. The fact that the narrative paragraph is usually written in

the first person helps engage the reader. 'I' sentences give readers a feeling of being part of the story. A well-drafted narrative paragraph will also build towards drawing a conclusion or making a personal statement.

2.3.2 Descriptive paragraph: Painting a picture

A cousin of the narrative paragraph, a descriptive paragraph paints a picture with word. A writer might describe a person, place, object or even memory of special significance. However, this type of paragraph strives to communicate a deeper meaning through the description. In descriptive paragraph, the writer should show, not tell, through the use of colorful details. The best descriptive paragraphs appeal to the readers emotions, with a result that is highly evocative.

2.3.3 Expository paragraph: Just the Facts

The expository paragraph is an informative piece of writing that presents a balanced analysis of a topic. In an expository paragraph, the writer explains or defines a topic using facts, statistics, and examples. Expository writing encompasses a wide range of paragraph variations, such as the comparison and contrast paragraph, the cause-and-effect paragraph & process paragraph. Because expository paragraphs are based on facts and not personal feelings.

2.3.4 Persuasive paragraph: Convince Me

While like an expository paragraph in its presentation of facts, the goal of persuasive paragraph, the writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct.

2.4 Importance of writing skill

Writing skill has become an essential tool for people who are literate weight elite & a well-educated, has because an essential tool for peep (2003) further asserted that many people around the world need to report analyses, write business letters, compose academic paragraphs etc.,if that were not enough, a huge number of individuals from different demographic cohorts are writing for personal communication through e-mails and text messages.

Therefore, writing instruction not merely as an object to study but as a means of communication of growing significance in language teaching program.

2.5 Challenges of writing paragraph

Writing is one of the essential skills for communication. It is the most difficult skills for learners, Richards and Ranendiya, (as cited in Maranawi & Yavazedech 2014:5) states that the difficulties not only in &organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas in to readable texts. They argued that the skill involved in writing are highly complex, writers have to pay attention to higher writer skill of planning & organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice etc. Longan (2008:14a) argues that:

One way to wreck your chance of learning how to write competently is to believe that writing is a natural gift people with this attitude think that they are the only ones for whom writing is unbearably difficult activity. The result of this attitude is that people do not do their best when they write or even worse, they hardly ever to write. Their attitude becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, their writing fails they because they have brain washed themselves in to thinking that they do not have the natural talent to write. In addition tonegative attitude, leaners have made their writing worse so they think that the most common mistakes learners make when writing paragraph are grammatical mistakes, mechanics, punctuation and word use are the most dominant ones.

2.6 Common Errors in Writing Thesis

When writing thesis statements, people often make mistakes that underline their chance of producing an effective paragraph as Logan, (2008:16b) stated, the most common errors in writing a thesis are:

- .substituting an announcement of the subject for a true thesis idea
- .write a thesis that is too broad
- .write a thesis that is too narrow
- .write a thesis that contain more than one idea

2.7 Challenges of teaching & learning writing skill

In reviewing this section, it dealt with the writing difficulties is lack of practice by the students and less encouragement by teachers. The background knowledge of the students is built through reading experience. This helps them to have a more a more word bank in their mind so that they

can easily make use of it. Now the problems are not to use and reuse as much as possible as they can.

2.7.1 Writing problems of apprehension

Apprehension is a feeling of being worry about something. With regard to writing, it can be defined as the fear of writing process that out weights the projected gained from the ability to write Maclynre (1989). Learners could be affected with the understanding of the fact that writing anxiety clearly and negatively affects their performance Pajares&Johnson (1994). This is to mean that when students are given the activity, they become to worry about writing is a paragraph is psychological rather than assuming it as logistical. This indicates that writing anxiety is distinctive to productive language particularly of writing Horwith et.al (1986). From the above context scholars have become more sensitive to writing to writing anxiety and target language relation has recently captured more attention.

2.7.2 Lack of appropriate feedback

Students gained benefits from sufficient writing practice and revisions of their draft to produce a final piece of writing. In these processes students often rely on feedback either from the teacher, peer, or self. Feedback that students receive from a source, or combination of sources provides them with information about what is good and what needs to be approved so that they can incorporate and use their feedback in their revision and the final product of their writing. Most EFL/ESL writing teachers would strongly agree with the statement that the teacher suggestion feedback is necessary part of any writing activity. Feedback on student writing can make learning more effective as Cardelle&Crono (1981), the more students receive feedback in their performance, the better they understand what they need to do to correct in their mistakes. Accordingly, the method of feedback provision could also be other factor that affecting their achievement in writing good paragraph. Feedback presented for students is not creative because it does not inform what they are expected to improve how to formulate these improvement William, (2007). Black &William elucidate that student can make gains in their learning when a given feedback is focused on a specific problem of the students' work and demonstrate at them, the errors, with its way of correction.

2.7.3Lack of practice

The students at Tobba secondary school in particular, and in most of the regions of the country fail to write due to lack of practice. Students who have no practice in reading and writing suffer the same problem in generating ideas beginning from even sentence.

2.7.4Lack of appropriate feedback

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2.7.5Carelessness

Because of a variety of reason, EFL/ ESL learners may sometimes become careless in writing or speaking in target language (Norrish, 1983 and Edge, 1989). According to Norrish, carelessness may happen as a result of lack of motivation. This lack of motivation, on its part, may occur when the materials to be taught and the way these materials are presented do not suit the learners.

2.7.6Lack of Vocabulary

In order to write quality paragraphs (or essays), students' lexical knowledge or vocabulary is also vitally important. Words carry meanings and help students communicate with their readers effectively. Lack of words usually creates a breakdown in communication.

Researchers such as Laufer and Nation (1995) and Putra (2009) asserted that students vocabulary knowledge and writing performance correlate significantly. As many agree, vocabulary knowledge alone, however, cannot end in accurate and effective writing. Communication demands the use of words in sentences; that is, the need for grammatical knowledge is also unquestionable

2.8 Guiding students in paragraph development

Every skill need help to develop and/ or otherwise it is very difficult burden that makes him/ her unable to carry. To be able to write effectively about a subject, students need to know about a subject matter. They need the specific vocabulary and the text structure and the language features that will help them write successfully in all subject areas. They also need to be aware of the purpose of their writing. As a result, need help from their teachers to explore potentials which leads to develop a paragraph. Russell (1990) suggests that in stead of blaming students for their poor writing, lectures/ teachers should support them to develop their skills. This can be strengthened from the view of Vygotsky, (1978:44) “the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.” Then the students are encouraged to move to ZPD and then more than it to the new and higher level which again provides a new ZPD demonstrating a potential for more development at every age. Vygotsky theory explains that through scaffoldings, students are able to use the target language when there is a help from their teachers or peers in classroom to produce that they could not yet be able to their own. In these students’ advancement, EFL teachers have unlimited role especially in writing activities.

To help students to develop writing, teacher’s role and way of teaching are essential. For example, researchers strongly suggests that the most beneficial way of helping students enhance their command of grammar in writing is to employ students’ writing as the ground for discussing grammatical concepts. Chin (2000) other researchers also agree that it is more effective grammar related issues like variety and usage in the context of writing than to approach topic by teaching isolated skills (Calking;1980, Distefano and killion,1984,Harris,1962). Teachers hence are encouraged to teach grammar items based on students’ major grammar error. In other words, if students have problem in verb choice in their writing, the teacher might present mini lesson on

this concept. Chin (2000), therefore comments that teachers must prioritize and offer instruction on grammatical elements that most affect their students' ability to write effectively.

Generally writing is a means of expressing thoughts, ideas & feelings. Different scholars define writing in the following ways. For Hedge (1988:89) "writing is the way in which the writer puts together the pieces in the text, developing ideas through sentences and paragraphs within overall structure. In addition, Byrne (1988) writing as the process of putting ideas in words to the target reader in mind. He said that writing is neither easy nor spontaneous. It requires conscious mental effort. He divides the problems that make writing difficult into three categories. The first, he calls, psychological caused by lack of interaction and feedback from between the reader and writer. The second category consists of linguistic problems Byrne states that in speech, grammar mistakes can be tolerated because of the spontaneous nature of the medium which prevents us from fully monitoring what we are saying - in particular, our sentence construction and the interconnection of our sentences. In writing, on the other hand, we have to express ourselves in a clearer and more grammatical manner in order to compensate for the absence of certain features of the spoken language. By writing we may flow out our burden occupying our mind, offer our ideas and concepts to the other people.

In ESL/EFL education, writing has received great concern from ESL/EFL researchers and instructors who have contributed much to the concepts of ESL/EFL writing, both in theory, and teaching. In early ESL/EFL writing research and instruction, like those of native English speakers 'writing skills were measured with a focus mostly with a written product, and thus language proficiency was taken into a greater account. However, this view has gradually shifted towards a new perspective way (Ramies, 1985). Many researchers and instructors have realized that this focus on the product may not truly reflect a complete nature of writing, and therefore have started trying to understand the process of the act of writing in communication (Zamel, 1982). Ramies, (1985) also acknowledges that writing is not merely a language skill as an adjunct to language learning, but an effective approach to developing language from words, sentences, and thereafter to discourse language.

2.9 The importance of learning writing skill

Writing skill is more and more important nowadays. Santos(2000) explains that there are three reasons making writing increasingly essential which are 1) more international linguistics are

promoting writing as their field of specialization, 2) more articles and journals are published in English, and 3) more international students are pursuing their Degrees in English speaking countries. Besides Chin (2007) states that own to the age of globalization, the world seems to be smaller because of unlimited communication. For this reason, all members of global institutions, for their own benefit in terms of education and business cooperation, have to stay connected with one another. In order to comprehensively express thought and opinions, apart from oral interaction, writing is considered crucial.

In terms of ESL/EFL instruction, writing helps students learn. First, writing reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary that they taught to students. Second, when students write, they do have a chance for adventurous with the language to go beyond what they are learnt to say, to take risks. Third, when they write, they necessarily become involved with new language; the effort to express ideas & the constant use of eyes, hands, and brain is unique way to reinforce learning. As students struggle what to put down next or how to put down on paper, they often discover something new to write. In addition, EFL/ESL writing has been considered a prominent skill in teaching and learning. As commented by Rao (2007), EFL/ESL skill is respected for two aspects. First, it motivates the students' thinking, organizes ideas, developing to summarize, analyze and criticize. Second, it strengthened students' learning thinking and reflecting on English language.

Another important aspect of writing for the targeted language is writing for the sake of writing Harmer (2004). In other words, there are some aspects of language such as punctuation and capitalization that they are essential in writing. So through writing, learners can know more about punctuation and capitalization.

In general, writing is important for communication. It creates communication channel between the reader and writer. It is needed to convey messages, write letters, different news and notices, business advertisements. For this fact, English has been used as a medium of instruction in secondary high school and in tertiary: universities and colleges in Ethiopia. It is also the only language for foreigners and the motherland dwellers.

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In order to comprehensibly express thoughts and opinions, apart from oral interaction, writing is considered crucial. In terms of ESL or EFL instruction, writing helps students learn. First, writing reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary that they taught to students. Second, when students write, they also have a chance to be adventurous with the language, to go beyond what they have just learned to say, to take risks. Third, when they write, they necessarily become involved with the new language; the effort to express ideas and the constant use of eyes, hand, and brain is a unique way to reinforce learning.

As students struggle with what to put down next or how to put it down on paper, they often discover something new to write. In addition, EFL/ESL Writing has always been considered an important skill in teaching and learning. As commented by Rao (2007) EFL writing is useful in two respects: First, it motivates students thinking, organizing ideas, and developing their ability to summarize, analyze and criticize. Second, it strengthens students learning, thinking and reflecting on the English language. Another important aspect of writing for the targeted learners is writing for the sake of writing (Harmer, 2004). In other words, there are some other aspects of language such as punctuation and capitalization that they are essential in writing. So, through writing, learners can know more about the use of punctuation and capitalization.

In general, writing is very important for communication. It creates a communication channel between the writer and the reader. It is needed to transfer messages, letters, and knowledge, to take exams and to maintain learning. Because of the importance noted above, English writing is included in all the syllabuses of Ethiopian preparatory and secondary schools. Since English is not the mother tongue of the targeted learners, the expectations of having many challenges associated with writing paragraphs are high.

2.10. Approaches in Teaching Paragraph Writing

The chapter discusses concept of writing skill, approaches in teaching writing, importance of learning writing skills, the concept of paragraph writing characteristics of paragraph writing, features of Students' Problems in EFL Paragraph writing, causes for students' problems in EFL paragraph writing, and helping Students in developing paragraph in Tobba high school.

2.10.1. Product Approach

The product approach of writing focuses on the finished products of the writing work rather than the process. According to Getnet (1994), the product approach is an orientation whose primary focus is the end result of what students produce. Formal accuracy and correctness in grammar, spelling, use of vocabulary, convention of layout etc are given the utmost priority. According to Byrne (1988), the product approach of writing is an accuracy-oriented approach that focuses on the control of mistakes in order to eliminate them from written works. The writing teacher who uses the product approach will be concerned to see that the end product is readable, grammatically correct and obeys discourse conventions relating to main points, supporting details and so on. In addition, Incas (1982a) sees writing as being primarily about linguistic

knowledge, with attention focused on the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices.

In short, product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as mainly the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher.

2.10.2. The Process Approach

The process approach of writing focuses on the composing process of writing instead of on the written final products. Tribble (1996) suggests that process approaches stress writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through students can make gains in their learning when a given feedback is focused on the specific problems of the students work and demonstrate at them the errors with its way of correction.

Despite some approaches to the teaching of writing having been involved from varies teaching methods, tackling EFL writing is still one of the perennial challenges for students in developing English paragraph. Therefore, this ever-persisting challenge that EFL students encountered in developing good paragraph associated with varies factors such as. Inadequate Exposure to the Target Language Another factor that contributes to the contributor of the errors is the inadequate exposure to the target language. It is admitted that many students do not have good accessory conducive environment to practice their English outside the classroom, especially both in writing and speaking. Therefore, there are no opportunities for students to practice and develop English. Because of this very weak students come to the high schools, with most of them are not anywhere hear to do anything with English at all level (Alemu, 2004 and Awol, 1999). When students have limited exposure to the language learnt, there will be a big possibility for them to commit errors in their language.

2.11 Helping Students in Developing Paragraph

It is difficult to develop a skill of something without the help of somebody. To be able to write effectively about a subject, students need to know and understand the subject matter. They need to learn the specific vocabulary and the text structure and language features that will help them write successfully in that subject area. They also need to be aware of the purpose of their writing. As a result, students need help from their teachers to explore their potential which leads to

develop paragraph. Russell (1990) suggests that instead of blaming students for their poor writing, lecturers/ teachers should support them to develop their skills. This can be strengthened in view of Vygotsky (1978: 44), "the zone of proximal development.

(ZPD) is the distance between the actual development level as determine by independent problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." Then students are encouraged to move in to the ZPD and then more than it to a new and higher level which again provides a new ZPD, demonstrating a potential for more development at every age. Vygotsky theory explain that through scaffoldings, students are able to use the target language when there is a help from their teachers or peers in the classrooms to produce that they could not yet be able to do on their own. In these students' advancement, EFL teachers have unlimited role especially in writing activities. To help students improve writing, teacher's role and way of teaching are essential. For example, research strongly suggest that the most beneficial way of helping students enhance their command of grammar in writing is to employ students' writing as the ground for discussing grammatical concepts (Chin 2000). Other researchers also agree that it is more effective to teach grammar related issues like variety and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills (Calkins, 1980; DiStefano and Killion, 1984; Harris, 1962). Teachers hence are encouraged to teach grammar items based on students 'major grammar errors. In other words, if students have problem in verb choice in their writing, the teacher might present mini lesson on this grammar concept. Chin (2000), therefore comments that teachers must prioritize and offer instruction on the grammatical elements that most affect their students' ability to write effectively.

2.12 Introduction to the Teaching Secondary Students to Write Effectively Practice Guide

Improving students' writing skills helps them succeed inside and outside the classroom. Effective writing is a vital component of students' literacy achievement, and writing is a critical communication tool for students to convey thoughts and opinions, describe ideas and events, and analyze information. Indeed, writing is a life-long skill that plays a key role in post-secondary success across academic and vocational disciplines. 1 The nature of writing and writing instruction is changing. Technology, such as word processing and other forms of electronic communication, plays an increasingly important role in how students learn and practice writing

in and out of the classroom. In addition, best practices in writing instruction have shifted to include integrated interventions that involve many complementary instructional practices. This practice guide presents three evidence-based recommendations for helping students in grades 6–12 develop effective writing skills. Each recommendation provides teachers with specific, actionable guidance for implementing practices in their classrooms. The guide also provides a description of the evidence.

This practice guide presents three evidence -based recommendations for helping students in grades 6-12 develop effective writing skills. Each recommendation provides teachers with specific, actionable guidance for implementing practices in their classrooms. The guide also provides a description of the evidence supporting each recommendation, examples to use in class, and the panel’s advice on how to overcome potential implementation obstacles. This practice guide was developed in conjunction with an expert panel, combining the panel’s expertise with the findings of existing rigorous research. Throughout the guide, statements supported by evidence are denoted with references. See the Glossary for a full list of key terms used in this guide and their definitions. These terms are bolded when first introduced in the guide. Look for this icon for ways to incorporate technology during writing instruction. Overarching themes Each recommendation provides instructional advice on a specific topic; together, the three recommendations presented in this practice guide highlight two important themes for delivering effective writing instruction.

Writing encourages critical thinking. Constructing, articulating, and analyzing their own thoughts in writing requires students to think critically about their ideas and how to convey them based on their what is effective.

This recommendation suggests teaching writing strategies in two ways: (a) through explicit or direct instruction and (b) through a Model-Practice-Reflect instructional cycle. It suggests explicitly teaching students different strategies for components of the writing process. Students learn how to select a strategy, how to execute each step of the strategy, and how to apply the strategy when writing for different audiences and purposes. Recommendation 1b discusses using a Model-Practice-Reflect instructional cycle to teach writing strategies. Students observe a strategy in use, practice the strategy on their own, and evaluate their writing and use of the strategy. Teachers should use both approaches when teaching students to use writing strategies.

Writing strategies are structured series of actions (mental, physical, or both) that writers undertake to achieve their goals. Writing strategies can be used to plan and set goals, draft, evaluate, revise, and edit. Summary of evidence: Strong Evidence Eleven studies contributed to the level of evidence for this recommendation.

To write effectively, students must implement a writing process involving several components. Because writing is an iterative process, students may implement these components in a different order and may implement some of the components simultaneously. Strategies help students direct their thinking as writers. Introduce students to different strategies for each component of the writing process so they understand there is more than one way to approach each component. Students do not need to memorize all the possible writing strategies and their steps. Instead, students should understand the purpose of writing strategies and know how to select an appropriate strategy. Teach students the steps of a strategy and how to execute each step. Teachers can identify effective strategies through professional learning communities.

2.12.1 Key features exemplars for different text types

According to Institute of Education Science (IES) (2017), there are different points for different text types. These are below mentioned here.

Argumentative

- A proposition (the major premise of the argument)
- Claims on which the proposition is built
- Supporting evidence (facts and/or opinion)
- Well supported generalization (not fallacious reasoning)
- Incorporation of anticipated objections
- Strong closure

Descriptive

- Description of the person, place, object, or event
- Use of descriptive and figurative language to help readers visualize the person, place, object, or event
- Qualities or characteristics may be listed or arranged in a particular order
- Concrete details (sight, taste, touch, smell, sound, and movement) to bring subject to life

Narrative

- A setting
- An introduction of characters
- A problem or goal
- An attempt to solve the problem—often multiple unsuccessful attempts or embedded episodes of attempts within attempts
- A solution to the problem
- A resolution, conclusion, and/or moral

Informational

- A topic or theme (may be repeated)
- Present tense to evoke a timeless or generalizing quality
- Technical vocabulary
- Descriptive attributes and characteristic events
- Definitions or explanations of terms
- Visual elements such as diagrams, tables, and charts

Technical

- Specialized topic
- Instructions about how to do something

Persuasive

- Main point or argument
- Motivation and arguments for key points (including need, significance, and benefits)
- Supporting evidence

Reflective

- A concrete occasion or anecdote in the beginning
- Reflection of the universal significance of the occasion or anecdote
- A process of discovery
- A lesson about human nature in the conclusion
- Rich concrete details and sensory description

Expressive

- First person with informal language (i.e., contractions, slang)
- Often has dialogue

- Chronological organization
- Lots of description with extensive use of adjectives
- Feelings are described in detail
- Active verbs

As students read an exemplar text, emphasize the features that align with the specific learning objective being taught (e.g., using supporting evidence to support a claim in argumentative writing). Color-coding is one way to emphasize text features. For example, provide an exemplar of argumentative writing with each claim highlighted in yellow, define claim, and then discuss each claim as the class reads the exemplar. Similarly, when using an exemplar of narrative writing to emphasize theme, discuss as a class the definition of theme and have students highlight evidence of the theme in blue while reading the exemplar aloud. Once students understand the features, ask them to practice emulating these features in their own writing.

2.12.2 Explicitly teach strategies for planning and goal setting, drafting, evaluating, revising, and editing

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Teachers can identify effective strategies through professional learning communities, like the National Writing Project and National Council of Teachers of English, or publications like *Writing Next*. Several writing strategies for each component of the writing process are presented by examples. The example describes how to execute each strategy and, when available, includes a reference to studies or other resources where that strategy was used. The example also notes whether a strategy is relevant to all types of writing or particular types or genres (e.g., persuasive or narrative). Genre-specific strategies help students focus on the basic purpose, structure, and elements of a specific type of writing, whereas general strategies can be

used more broadly. Both types of strategies can be useful to students. Modify strategy instruction based on skill level. For example, when working with struggling students or students who are new to a particular strategy, begin by presenting a basic version of a strategy (e.g., setting one goal for essay length).

When students become more comfortable with a strategy, challenge them to extend the strategy further (i.e., setting additional or more difficult goals.) Teach students how the different components of the writing process work together so that they can flexibly move between components of the process, returning to earlier components as needed to improve their writing. For example, students may change their goals after evaluating their first draft, or they may go back to drafting after revising their writing. Or, after a peer revising activity, students may discover they need to plan for and draft additional text.

2.13 The role of writing in academics

Writing is considered the most important language skill that students require for their personal development and academic success (Mukulu et al. 2006). Similarly, Rao (2007) points out that writing strengthens students' learning, thinking and reflecting on the English language in their academics. In addition, Ahmed (2010) notes that competence in writing helps students perform well in their academic programs. Moreover, being proficient in writing in English will enable students to be professionals and action researchers in the future. However, it has been noted that learning to master writing skills is a problem students face at all levels of the education system. Ong'ondo (2001) notes that writing skills are of major importance to students at all levels of the education system. This is because most examinations and assignments learners do at schools are mainly assessed through writing. It is probably because of this crucial role in assessment that writing has been considered the most important skill that students require for their academic advancement.

This implies that learners should be helped to acquire skills that will enable them to express their ideas clearly and effectively in writing. Kroll (2003) notes that improving the writing abilities of students have both academic and social implications. He observes that helping students to write clearly, logically and coherently about ideas, knowledge and views will expand their access to higher education and give them an opportunity for advancement in the work force. He further observes that the current trends of globalization and internet revolution have come to require

proficiency in English language that goes beyond the spoken language embracing a variety of uses of the written language. Among such uses include; writing of business letters, memos and telephone messages. This further underscores the importance of learning writing skills.

However, there has been a considerable concern that majority of the students do not develop the competence in writing they need to be successful in school, workplace, or their personal lives (Graham and Perin, 2007). It is against this observation that the study investigated challenges students face in learning L2 essay writing skills at secondary school level and it is hoped that the recommendations from the study will serve as a basis of improving the learning of writing skills among students.

2.14 Writing integrated with other language skills

There are four basic language skills namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Ouma (2005) observes that the development of the four language skills is very important in every language classroom and that any inquiry into writing endeavors among students presupposes effective understanding of the other three skills. Similarly, Cope and Kalantzis (2000) point out that for learners to become proficient L2 writers they require explicit mastery of the other language skills of listening, speaking and reading. Ikeguchi (1997) presented a lesson plan combining the teaching of writing with reading, speaking and listening. The lesson was presented in three phases.

In the first phase students were allowed to choose any one topic that they were most interested in, and something that they wanted to know more about. Then, they were asked to look for a short passage from a magazine or a newspaper article, and read thoroughly until they understood the content, and make a copy to bring to class. The second phase was the interactive phase in which students who had chosen the same topic were called to sit together and form a group.

They were then asked to take turns in reading each of their articles to the group members, while everybody else listened and then asked questions to clarify points that were unclear. The third phase was the writing stage. Students were asked to get back to their seats and write about the topic they had chosen to read. The findings indicated that students were able to write freely and expressed themselves meaningfully in L2 writing.

In Kenya, the MoEST English language syllabus by KIE (2002) adopts an integrated approach to the teaching of English language. The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated in such a way that they complement each other. For instance, the English language syllabus recommends the use of class readers and literature set books as sources of writing tasks. Through reading, the learner is exposed to new vocabulary, new sentence structures, different registers and good models of language use. Thus, what learners read could form the basis of their oral presentations or essay writing.

It is further noted in the syllabus that the concept of teaching English using the integrated approach focuses on the development of learners' communicative competence. A study by Ogalo (2011) examined teaching techniques that enhance integration in the development of English language skills in secondary school.

According to Niyang'au Benard (2009) write about the findings of the study showed that teachers did not integrate the four language skills. Respondents attributed the absence of integration of the four language skills to the large class size and time. Listening and speaking were rarely given attention. English language teachers used very few activities in their teaching and lecture technique was the most commonly used in teaching. It was recommended that for the integration in the development of English language skills to be realized, teachers should use techniques such as: group work, discussion, dialogue, debate, questions and answer techniques.

Teachers need also to use a variety of activities which involve the students to participate such as games, role-play, debate, and discussions. It is with this perspective that the study sought to find out whether teachers adopted the integrated approach to the teaching and learning of essay writing skills.

2.15 Challenges in second language writing

Writing in a second language seems to be the most difficult skill for language learners to acquire in the academic context (Negari, 2012). Myles (2002) argues that various social and cognitive factors help in assessing the underlying reasons why L2 learners exhibit particular writing errors. According to Myles (2002), social factors that influence second language writing include motivation and attitudes.

Similarly, Ellis (2003) argues that social factors explain why learners differ in the rate of L2 learning and in proficiency type, for instance, conversational versus writing ability. Research based on motivation and attitudes shows that, learners with positive attitudes and motivation towards writing for academic purposes experience success unlike those with negative attitudes (McGroarty 1996).

Myles (2002) suggests that for teachers to motivate students in writing for academic purposes, they should encourage students to read academic texts and work with other students who are more acquainted with the discourse. However, if they do not engage in the text or actively contribute during the study sessions, these activities will have little effect on students' progress.

Thus, if students are motivated to write in L2, they will develop a higher level of proficiency and positive attitudes, which can have a positive effect on their writing. In addition, Jarvis (2005) argues that in order to motivate students in L2 writing, teachers should write positive comments on learners' exercise books and verbally reinforce good language responses as part of their instructions. Sometimes, they can display exemplary students' work on school notice boards. The aim is to help build learners' self-esteem and morale towards L2 writing.

Further, to improve motivation teachers can provide rewards for achievement to learners. According to Myles (2002), cognitive processes involved in second language writing are learning strategies and language transfer. Due to the complex process of writing in a second language, learners often find it difficult to develop all aspects of the writing stages simultaneously. As a result, they select to use only those aspects that are automatic or have already been put in place (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Therefore, students need to develop particular learning strategies that isolate component mental processes.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have further differentiated the strategies into three categories: meta cognitive, such as planning the organization of the written discourse or monitoring, that is, being aware of what one is doing and responding appropriately to the demands of the writing task; cognitive such as transferring or using known linguistic information to facilitate the new learning task or using imagery for recalling, and using social strategies, for instance, group discussions. Thus, learner strategies can be effective, but they need to be internalized so that they may be utilized in advance writing situation.

Language transfer is another cognitive factor that influences L2 writing. Ellis (2003) notes that when writing or speaking in a second language situation, L2 learners tend to rely on their (L1) structures to provide responses. If the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus, indicating an interference of L1 on L2 writing.

Similarly, Cook (2001) points out that L1 interference has important implications in the learning of a second language expression. This is because L1 learning is different from that of L2. First language (L1) helps learners when it has common elements with L2, but hinders the learning process when both language systems differ. In addition, Nunan (1999) considers it an enormous challenge to produce a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing in one's L2. He points out that this is magnified by the fact that rhetorical conventions of English language, that is, structure, style and organization often differ from those in other languages. For students to write appropriately in L2, Darus and Subramaniam (2009), suggest that the students need to understand the differences between L1 and L2, if the structures of the two languages are distinctly different.

They note that it is important for teachers to make the students aware of the differences in the structure of these languages in addition to this they further suggest that teachers should highlight certain rules in L1 that are not appropriate to be used when students write in L2.

They also argue that this is to ensure that the students apply correct strategies while writing in L2 and hence, decrease the occurrence of errors. Davidson (2005) points out that student face difficulties in L2 writing due to a number of factors involved in the learning process.

The English language itself has a lot of irregularities and idiosyncrasies which create a myriad of difficulties in writing especially for second language learners. An example is the English spellings in which a word that is incorrectly spelled is not only a deviation from the standard but adversely affects the intended meaning. Spelling and the decoding skills are closely linked and students who commit spelling errors need to memorize the spellings of commonly used irregular words such as “right” and “government.” In addition, students usually commit mistakes in using comas, full stops, semi colons and colons which affect their written competence.

Capitalization problems are part of the punctuation difficulties which may be the result of inadequate learning or inefficient teaching. Farooq (2012) notes that grammar is the most difficult area for L2 writers. Students face challenges in the use of correct sentence structure and paragraph development, and in creating coherent text. Grammar skills include run-on sentences, use of different types of sentences, subject verb agreement, placement of modifiers, tense agreement and parallel construction.

Grammar is more than just a set of rules; it is an ever-evolving structure of language. For instance, the students may know how to build sentences, but when applying them in written expression they face difficulties. The basis of these problems is the traditional style of teaching grammar on the part of teachers and lack of practice on the part of learners (Kleisar, 2005). Another problem students face in L2 writing is that of organization of ideas. The information which is well organized is easier to remember and understand (Grab and Kaplan, 1996).

Coherence is an implicit feature of a text which describes the logical relationship between the ideas and information embodied in discourse and that coherence is helped by cohesion which is the process of connecting one sentence to the next (Bex, 1996). In addition, producing a coherent and well- organized piece of writing is a challenging task. This is magnified by the fact that the rhetorical conventions of English texts such as the structure, organization, lexis and grammar differ from those of other languages (Ahmed, 2010). Lack of adequate vocabulary which leads to strained expression in L2 writing is also a challenge that students face in learning L2 writing skills (Ouma, 2005).

In addition, Rabab'ah (2003), points out that students often lack adequate vocabulary when engaged in L2 writing. As a result, they find it a challenging task to express their ideas freely and accurately in L2 writing. These difficulties can be solved by encouraging wide reading among students in order to improve their vocabulary level. In investigating the low achievement in creative composition writing, Abaya (2006) carried out a study on the analysis of lexical errors in the written English compositions of standard eight pupils in Rigoma division, Nyamira district, Kenya.

The findings revealed that the lexical errors learners made in their written compositions included: confusion of synonyms, inappropriate collocation, incomplete sentence structures, first language interference and coinage. From the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers need to expose learners to a variety of reading texts as sources of exposing them to new vocabulary items and sentence structures. From the forgoing, it is evident that second language learners often face various difficulties in learning L2 writing skills. The difficulties are partly attributed to teaching methods used, learning strategies, L1 interference, limited vocabulary and inadequate mastery of grammatical structures of L2. It is on the light of this observation that this study investigated whether the same challenges face students in learning essay writing skills in secondary schools in GumayworedaTobba town and suggest intervention measures to mitigate the problem

2.16 Improving students' writing skills

According to Kroll (2003) two major components that are most essential for improving students' writing skills in any writing task include: provision of feedback on students' written assignments and assessment. In addition, Omulando (2009) asserts that teaching and learning resources enhance teaching and learning process in English language classrooms.

2.17 Provision of feedback on students' written essays

Kroll (2003) points out that feedback on ESL students' written assignments is an essential aspect of improving learner's ability in any L2 writing course. Thus, the goal of feedback is to teach skills that will help students to improve their writing proficiency to the point where they recognize what is expected of them as writers. He further observes that learners should be encouraged to analyze and evaluate feedback themselves in order for it to be more effective. Similarly, Myles (2002) notes that feedback is of utmost importance to the writing process without which individual attention and sufficient feedback on errors, improvement will not take place.

In addition, it is the teacher's responsibility to help students to develop strategies for self-correction and regulation. Williams (2005) identifies two common categories of feedback that teachers give on students' written essays namely: feedback on form and content. He observes that the most common methods of feedback on form include outright teacher correction of surface errors, teacher markings that indicates the place and type of error but without correction,

and underlining to indicate the presence of errors. On the other hand, feedback on content consists mainly of comments written by teachers on drafts that usually point out problems and offer suggestions for correction. Therefore, students are expected to incorporate information from the comments when doing their corrections. Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) point out that it is important for teachers to provide regular and quick feedback to the learners. The feedback which may be either formative or summative is very important for further learning as well as contributing to written fluency.

They further suggest that in order to pre-occupy the learner in doing self-correction, teachers can use a certain correction code with symbols for the different types of mistakes such as poor sentence and paragraph organization, omitting needed information, misuse of sentence linkers and idea connectors, tense and ambiguity. However, teachers need to train the students on how to effectively use the feedback in order to make gains in their proficiency and competence as L2 writers. Some of commonly used corrections code to which students include:

sp.....spelling

gm.....grammar

hw.....handwriting

p.....punctuation

rp.....repetition

?m.....meaning

wv.....wrong vocabulary

wo.....wrong word order

wm..... word missing

ww.....wrong words

ill.....illogical ideas

t.....wrong tense

pr.....wrong preposition

cn.....wrong conjunction

^.....minor omission

^^.....major omissions

Nthiga (2010) carried out research on second language writing pedagogy: teachers' feedback practices in Kenya secondary school classrooms. The findings indicated that error feedback plus teacher written comments were the most commonly used feedback provision methods. In addition, the teachers' feedback was largely in form of directives generally highlighting weaknesses in the students' written compositions which is likely to affect students' confidence in L2 writing. It was recommended that there is need for better preparation of teachers with regard to provision of feedback on students' written compositions. From the foregoing, it is noted that feedback on students' written essays plays a key role in energizing the learning process among students. It is also evident that methods of teacher feedback on students' written assignments influence the developing of their writing skills. In view of this, it was imperative to establish whether teachers provide feedback on students' written essays and its influence on effective learning of L2 essay writing skills among students.

Assessing students' writing skills

Assessment is a crucial part of the instructional process in determining student's progress. It provides guidance for revision, feedback to both the students and teachers.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents design of the study, description of the study area, Sample and sampling techniques, data gathering instruments, data collection procedure, and methods of data analysis.

3.1. Design of the Study

A **qualitative study research method** was employed in this study to assess grade eleven students paragraph writing practices using document analysis, open-ended questionnaire, and class observation.

3.2. Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Tobba Scondary School (grade 11), which is found in Oromia Region, Jimma zone, Gumay Woreda. The school was intentionally chosen for this study because the researcher works as an English teacher of the target school and the existing situation would enable **in 2013** to conduct research on the topic and come up with reliable inquiry.

3.3. **Sample** and Sampling Techniques

The subjects of the study were grade eleven students. There were 190 male and 165 female totally 355 grade eleven students in the school. Of these, the researcher intended to take 120 students as sample populations of the study. As a result, he selected 120 students from three sections through random sampling. This means the total number of grade eleven sections were six. Among them three sections were selected through simple random sampling technique. In each section there were 60, 65, 50 and 50, 70, 60 students. Then the researcher selected 20, 20, 20, and 25, 28, 17 students from each section respectively.

The researcher used **qualitative data analysis** sampling technique to find out and analyze the research conduct in order to conclude the problems, attitudes of writing EFL in grade 11, and challenges they face –the case of Tobba town high school.

The researcher made and found out that students who were in the sampling technique of population of 35 female students of rural and 15 students of urban female students that consists

50 of them; and 15 of the rural students of male and 55 urban male students of totally 70 of them were selected. The total taken sampling students that were randomly for them are 120. This students from six classes that were taken are participated as respondents.

3.4 Data Gathering Instruments

This study employed different data gathering instruments such as document analysis, open-ended questionnaire and class observation. Document analysis was the major instrument, while questionnaire and class observation as a supportive data gathering instrument.

3.4.1. Document Analysis

The major data gathering instrument for this study was document analysis. Document analysis is a technique which can generate both valid and reliable data from documents (Stemler and Bebell 1998). Besides, as Selinger and Shohamy (1989) state document analysis is one of the data gathering techniques in qualitative research. 50 students were selected to write a paragraph. Thus, in order to write a paragraph, the researcher listed down three topics for writing on. Then students chose a topic of their interest. This topic was chosen among the various writing activities were deemed to be similar to the topics studied in the assigned class, particularly, Unit All students were given as much time as possible to complete their task. In addition, to encourage the students to produce well written paragraph, the researcher and sample teachers told them that their paragraphs would be assessed and given sufficient advice not to copy from another individual and they were expected to write their own paragraph. However, 8 students did not write when the researcher looked into their exercise books. The rest 42 students wrote their paragraphs. Later, the problems were analyzed and identified in considering some common and essential features of good paragraph such as organization, unity, paragraph development, grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation. During document evaluation, material analysis checklists were used. This checklist were adopted from Carroll (1990) and modified based on objectives of the study .

3.4.2. Questionnaire

In order to obtain rich information regarding students problem in achieving features of good paragraph writing from students and experience of teachers about the problem under investigation, the researcher selected-open ended questionnaire. Gillham (2000) views that open-

ended question is best used when the answer is open. The open-ended questions were designed with the purpose of yielding qualitative data through the text responses written in the respondents' own words (Jackson & Trochim, 2002). Moreover, these open-ended items can offer graphic examples, illustrative quotes, and can also lead to the identification of some issues not previously expected (Dornyei, 2003). The open-ended questions used in the questionnaire of the current study included items where no response options were offered, but rather a blank space to be filled in by the respondents (Dornyei, 2007).

Open-ended questionnaire was designed for both 4 EFL teachers and 120 sample students to assess major problems students had in writing paragraph, to investigate causes of students' problems in paragraph writing and to find out what English language teachers are doing to help students write effective paragraph. This provided the target respondents time to think about students' problems in paragraph writing. The items in the questionnaire were mainly open ended. The content of the teachers' questionnaire was almost similar with the content of the students' questionnaire.

However, the students' questionnaire was translated in to **their** mother tongue **language** (Afan Oromo), and administered to the students in the presence of the researcher in order to explain points which were not clear to the students. For example, participant was asked problems that the students have in writing English paragraph; the major causes of students' problems in writing paragraph; the support students get from English language teachers and strategies both teachers and students apply to improve students writing skills. This was to compare with the data would be collected through document analysis.

3.4.3xClass Observation

The other data gathering tool used in the study **was** class observation. Morrison (2000, p.33) says that "observations are useful tools for providing direct information about language and language learning, and it is the best data collecting technique for gaining insight into the subject in a natural environment." This is why a non-participant, semi-structured classroom observation was chosen to collect data because as Concel (2000) states in non-participant observation, the observer dose not interact to a great degree with those he/she is observing; the researcher primarily observes and records and has no specific role as a participant. Before the observation was conducted, teachers who were going to be observed were asked about their willingness and

have been informed in advance. The researcher observed 5 (five) writing lessons using the checklist which was adapted from Kebede (2013). This was to observe the way English teachers encouraged their students when they teach paragraph writing lessons or how students were helped while they were practicing paragraph writing so as to overcome paragraph writing problems. In addition, what were the teachers focus areas in teaching paragraph writing and giving feedback to their writing task. During the classroom observations the researcher used qualitative data in the form of observation check list made by the researcher himself.

3.5. Data collection Procedures

In this study, data **was** collected through document analysis, open ended questionnaire and classroom observation. All sample subjects of Grade 11 EFL teachers and students were identified. The researcher did not administer all data gathering tools at the same time. Therefore, to start the study, the researcher first collected the written paragraphs **from** the sample students and analyzed and problems were identified. Having collected the paragraphs, the researcher carefully read again and again line by line to find what problems students have in writing paragraph and in order to help him in modifying the questionnaire. Administering questionnaire as the second phase took place right after gathering data through document analysis has ended. The researcher distributed open ended questionnaires to both sample English language teachers and students. Having collected the materials, the researcher very carefully read again and again each respondent's response for each item in order to help him when to observe the students and teachers during class observation. Finally, class observation was made. English language teachers and students were observed during paragraph writing lessons. Moreover, the problems which were presented using these tools were identified and results were collected.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

After collecting the data through different instruments, the researcher used the following methods to analyze the collected data. The data which was gathered through document analysis, questionnaire and observation were analyzed using qualitative data analyzing method. This was done by identifying the relevant data using thematically and classify in to different categories to generate topics. This means the use of thematic codes in which the codes (problems) were presented on the basis of data received. These were categorized for analysis (Sapsford and Jupp,

2006). As Onwuegbuzie (2010) states crossover analysis would give the researcher to go back and forth many times and present analysis of data gathered through different tools thematically. While analyzing the data, the researcher integrated points that were generated through the given tools and the data induced interpretation to reach on the relevant conclusions. Such process of organizing and analyzing the data will help the researcher to develop and understand how each point is connected to each other. Besides, interpretation will also be given after each analyzed item.

Finally, based on the analysis of the data, the researcher tried to summarize the research findings, draw conclusions from the findings and suggest a few recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the attitude of writing skill of EFL in Tobba high school & the results of data gathered through document analysis, open-ended questionnaire and classroom observation from teachers and students. Paragraph written by students and discusses them thematically to answer the research questions raised in chapter one. The analysis of the data from all instruments has been carried out in an integrative way based on the major themes and sub themes of the study. The presentation falls into three main sections. The first section deals with students paragraph writing problems (problem of paragraph unity, problem of paragraph organization, problem of paragraph development, grammar problem, punctuation problem, capitalization problem and spelling problem).

The second section discusses attitudes of EFL paragraph writing problems and the third the challenges section focuses on EFL teachers attempt to help students in overcoming the problems.

The researcher has found out that almost all of the students in the sampling population who are both 50 & 70 females & males.

4.1 General problems of their writing skill

Most of the students write their names, when they are ordered in a mixed and strewn way of capital & small in the way out of the rule of writing names. For instance,

hAFiz

RahMa

shitaYee

BoNaa

CaltuU

abDulexiif

KeTema

Table 1: Mixing Spelling

FR	FU	MR	MU
Rural (35)	Urban(15)	Rural(15)	Urban(55)
33 mix spelling	14 mix spelling	15 correct	50 mix spelling
2 are correct	1 correct		5 correct

From the above data, 33 rural female students write their names in a mixed manner misplace letters of capital and small.

Their reason for this is, of course they have no reason for justification or they simply not aware of why they write this way but they are familiar on such type of writing. But they want to capture their teacher's attention while they take test; anyway, it needs more investigation to generalize. Only two students write their names correctly they are from government worker.

In case of urban female students, 14 wrote their names in misplacing letters. They are influenced by their mother tongue for the fact that they add more unnecessary vowels, too. Only one student writes her name correctly that she was corrected by her teacher in early schooling.

On the other side a hundred percent rural male students' write their names correctly that they were already familiar with it due to they were corrected by their teachers.

On the same way,50 male students of urban write their names in mixed spelling of capital & small letters. And only 5 of them write correctly. Their reasons for those students they are not conscious when they write it.

In sum 80.83% students or in figure 97 write their names in misplaced and misspelt manner. And 19.16% both male and female students or in number 23 write their names correctly. In other words, students are not corrected by their teachers' while giving test or quiz, and he/she might focuses on correcting the given answer.

2. While writing small letter words such as *boy* you write '*boY*' for example. Why? Because

Table 2 writing small letter

	Female	male
The way I've learnt in grade one is as such	27	26
No one could recorrect me	10	18
Our teacher in grade 1-4 writes like this	9	13
all	4	13

From the above 53 students of both male & female it was the way they have learnt in early class in their teenage.

4.2. Error Analysis

Error analysis is one of the most influential theories of second language acquisition. It is concerned with the analysis of the errors committed by L2 learners by comparing the learners' norms with the target language norms and explaining the identified errors (Hassan & Sawalmeh, 2013). For Iamsu (2014), error analysis in language teaching and learning is the study of the

unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language. According to a Scholar, EA refers to “the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance” (Hourani, 2008, p. 39). Definition of error analysis is given by Ridha (as cited in Hassan & Sawalmeh, 2013, p. 3), defined “Error analysis is the process to observe, analyze and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by learner”. As Iamsi explained, the importance of error analysis:

The investigation of errors made by second language well-known and contemporary. Error analysis is the study and analysis of the errors produced by second/foreign language learners, and both at the beginning and during the various stages of a foreign/second language teaching program can be useful. It can reveal both the success and the failure of the program, and benefits for teachers to design proper materials and appropriate teaching plans (2014, p. 12)

According to Hamza (2012), error analysis is different from error correction, and error analysis makes a scientific study of error made a group of people who share the same mother tongue when they study a second or a foreign language. Error analysis indicates all necessary role to demonstrate L2 learners' learning problems and indicate the level of learners' L2 proficiency.

4.3. Causes and Sources of Errors

A lot of causes and sources of errors have been introduced by some theorists. In the following section the primary causes of errors will be reviewed: interlingual errors and intralingua errors. “Interlingual errors are those which are related to the native language” (Hongyi, Jia & Fengjie, 2016, p. 28).

There are interlingua errors when the learners' native language habits interfere or them to some degree acquiring the patterns and rules of second language (Hourani, 2008, p.11). He asserts that interference (negative transfer) is the negative influence of the mother tongue language (MTL) on the performance of the target language learner. According to Richard (as cited in Hourani, 2008), intralingua errors are those due to the language being learned, independent of the native language, they are items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalization based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner tries to “derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may developed

hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language” (Kamran, Majoka&Jamil, 2016, p. 53). According to Hourani (2008), there are five sources of errors:

1. Language transfer.
 2. Transfer of training.
 3. Strategies of second language learning.
 4. Strategies of second language communication.
 5. Overgeneralization of TL linguistic material.
3. is your writing legible?

From the above question,

Table: Writing legible

	Female	male
Yes	40	23
No	12	18
I doubt	8	19

From the above data 63 students of both male and female replied that they can write legibly. While 30 students they couldn't write. Others 27 of them they doubt in writing what they thought.

4.6 Grammatical Errors

According to Brown as cited in (Hsu, 2013), mistakes are categorized as non-systematic errors out of in second language learning. Mistakes as a failure which learners neglect on correctly utilizing a known system and learners can self-correct once concentrating, errors can reveal learners' insufficient competence in producing sentences with correct grammar (Zawareh, 2012, p. 280). Learners non-systematically make mistakes due to deficient attention on utilizing a known system and can self-correct. By contrast, error performance, generated out of learners' systematical understanding of the target language, can indicate a learner's linguistic competence. Error studies, therefore, play a necessary role to demonstrate L2learners' learning problems.

By asking why do you say NO?

Table 4

	Female	male
Not conscious or don't remember	6	14
Less practice or no practice	6	4

From the above 20 students they replied that they are not conscious of how they layout the words. So, they only focus on the sounds of the words.

The rest of the students' they replied that they (10 of them) haven't exercised or practiced at home and their free time to re-correct themselves.

In general, most of the students are unconscious & have less practice for self-teaching. They also give no place for the error they made.

3. Do you write a complete sentence without any fragment error? Fragment means something is a small piece different from the main idea.

Table 5 fragment case

	Female	Male
No	40	53

93 students or 77.5% of them replied they are not confident enough to write a complete sentence without unnecessary words.

4. Do you know enough English words to write and use?

Table 6 words of English they know

NO	FR	FU	MR	MU
	30	10	3	42

40 female students & 45 male students or female rural (FR) 30, female urban (FU) 10, male-rural (MR) 3 and male urban (MU) 42, that is totally 85 students answered that they have no adequate that they can able to rehearse.

5. Why don't you know enough English words?

Table 2: Vocabulary

	FR	FU	MR	MU	Total
I haven't read more	10	3	3	20	36
I don't use dictionary.	10	1	3	10	24
I only encounter with familiar words	7	1	-	5	13
I don't use synonyms and antonyms, prefixes & suffixes, phrasal verbs, idioms	5	5	-	2	12

These 85 students replied that in question of what made them for not knowing sufficient English words they hadn't read much of their time. 36 students of both rural & urban replied that they haven't read much. Don't use dictionary. This shows that they do have less reading habit as the researcher's finding.

I think they are exactly opposite actions to each other.

- Reading is about learning whereas writing is about expressing.
- Reading is about knowing someone else's opinion or information provided by someone else and writing is about what you think, what you have seen or experienced.
- Reading is about accepting and writing is about sharing.
- Reading is consuming and writing is contributing.
- Reading is about what someone else's way of looking at things and writing is your perspective.
- Finally, most important common thing between reading and writing is that both make you a better person.

When you read, you take knowledge in to you from other sources and when you write you bring your knowledge out of you.

So, in a sense, reading means learning and writing means teaching.

To compare these two fields, you should know their similarities first. They are both means of communication. Both use language and symbols. In the English language, one uses the alphabet

and Arabic numbers. Each requires different skills to do. According to AdelinaZamarippa: artist, pianist, teacher and writer (2019) the differences are as stated below.

Reading requires decoding words, using phonics to read the sounds of words. You have to know skills for comprehension, as critical thinking skills. Developing a good vocabulary is important for understanding as well.

Writing requires knowledge of grammar, spelling, and punctuation, as well as reading skills. One should understand the structure of the sentence, the paragraph, the format, and the presentation.

Problem of Paragraph development

Any successful and effective paragraph should go beyond organizing and unified whole. It should be fully developed without cracks, inconsistency, and irrelevant support so that the writer can address his/her assumptions, evidences, and reasoning he/she uses in his/her paragraph. However, constructing successfully developed paragraph is one of the difficulties FL learners have encountered.

Accordingly, their difficulties in writing adequately developed paragraph was analyzed based on the criteria formulated by Engines, (1994) which emphasizes that adequately developed paragraph comprises appropriate, accurate, and clear language, specific purpose, but various elements of development. Besides, the paragraph analysis was made based on the back ground information given for the students and the type of genre to be followed by the students to adequately develop their paragraph. To this effect, the students were expected to develop their paragraph adequately.

24 students don't use dictionary the researcher found out because they did not read. And those who had not read didn't encounter with new words. Besides, 13 students encounter with the words they have already know. And 12 students replied that they either do not use synonyms and antonyms, prefixes and suffixes, phrasal verbs, idioms. This is also related with reading experience.

Critical reading skills **enhance your way of thinking and writing skills**. The more you read, the better is your knowledge and vocabulary. It is important to use the precise words to express your meaning. You can learn new words and improve your writing by reading as many texts as you can.

Basically put: **reading affects writing** and **writing affects reading**. According to recommendations from the major English/Language Arts professional organizations, reading instruction is most effective when intertwined with writing instruction and vice versa. Research has found that when children read extensively they become better writers.

Basically put: **reading affects writing** and **writing affects reading**. According to recommendations from the major English/Language Arts professional organizations, reading instruction is most effective when intertwined with writing instruction and vice versa. Research has found that when children read extensively they become better writers.

In general, most of the students have less reading habit, so as not to learn new words and to use these new words in their writing activities. It is also a source for the lack of generating ideas. This results in difficulties in selecting a topic to write, made a confusion and took much of their time without not doing the activity.

Students who don't read have no chance to know a new word/new words and will not shift their mind to use a dictionary so that able to learn its meaning/their meanings. As a result, they only know familiar words and they are not willing to increase their word bank by using synonyms and antonyms, suffixes and prefixes, phrasal verbs, and idioms in learning world through reading.

The researcher analyzed that they haven't learnt and cultivated in their previous schooling when they commence formal learning. In contrary there are not equivalent books to be read at their stage while the researcher observed the library. There are books like encyclopedia, world book and old fiction books are sufficiently available. Besides it is cheap shot due to they spent much of their time on Facebook and watched TV dramas or films.

6. Which type of writing you like most?

Table 3: Writing Types

Type	FR	FU	MR	MU	Total
Controlled writing	30	10	3	30	73
Guided writing	5	5	2	24	36
Free writing	-	-	10	1	11

This shows that 73 students or 60.83% students liked controlled writing. This is because it is easy for them to fill words or a pair of words and phrases. so they did not drag out i.e., to make it longer than necessary.

36 of the students or 30%: female rural 5, female urban 5, totally 10; male rural 2 & male urban 24 totally 26 students liked guided writing. These 36 students replied that it is easy for them to fill phrases and clauses or simple sentence. This shows that they are unable to write a unified and coherent paragraph/s.

No female students both in rural and urban dwellers didn't like free writing. in contrary they are not speaking in the class. They are not confident enough due to their shyness. Only one (1) student of urban, but most of the rural ten of them (10) liked free writing.

Thus, the researcher put hypothesis that these rural students may not have a cell phone and they spent most of their free by helping their families like cattle keeping and so on. These students might take their exercises in the field to study and read. These 9.16% or 11 students generally liked free writing.

7. Which type of writing you like if you answer free writing?

Table 4: free writing

Type	MR	MU
Descriptive	7	1
Narrative	2	
Expository	1	
Argumentative	-	

From this seven of the male rural students and one totally eight (8) liked descriptive writing, two rural students liked narrative writing & one student liked expository writing.

Here none of the students liked argumentative writing! The researcher new finding is that since argumentative writing needs facts and evidences that are scientific and universally accepted truth to falsify or argue with is very difficult and challenging for them.

4.7 Challenges They Face In Writing Skill

8. What is your attitude towards writing English if you are given a topic?

Table 10

Degree	FR	FU	MR	MU
High	-	-	1	-
Medium	5	3	14	10
low	30	12	-	45

9.1 If your answer is “medium”, why?

Table 11

Item	FR	FU	MR	MU
Difficulty in thinking what I want to include	1	1	12	-
I write without outlining	2	-	-	-
I face shortage of words	1	-	-	1
All	1	2	2	9

From the above fact, 14 students of both male and female have it is very difficult for them what to include. This is a content problem. 2 students didn't outline first and this is language use problem. The other students face shortage of words which is directly linked with vocabulary problem. And most of the students 14 students replied they face all are the factors for them to write on a topic these are: the content, the vocabulary and language use.

9.2 If you answered “low”. What is your problem?

Table 5: Low attitude

Factors	FR	FU	MU
Difficult to remember & think	Yes	yes	Yes
Difficulty in sequencing orderly	Yes	Yes	Yes
I don't satisfy in what I write and can't be able to modify	Yes	Yes	Yes

All	30	12	45
-----	----	----	----

There are many factors affecting undergraduates writing performance in ESL, like content, vocabulary, organization, language use and mechanics.

They are weak in writing a meaningfully an interesting paragraph, text or composition. Some of the reasons are they are not guided by their family, their teachers don't follow or inspect the students while doing the activity, the students have no inspiration & motivation because the teacher couldn't have time to reach and correct for each & every individual, in a group there is no equal participation and only active students write their own ideas, after the task is over the teacher corrects only a few students work especially clever ones, and others have no background.

10. re-write the following paragraph

But suddenly a new mood replaced suspicion. In front of us stood a girl, white-skinned, refined, European face, hair and eyes of a Native. And those eyes, those shining eyes! ("Like a pair of morning stars, "I called them in my notes.) If this was the girl Surhoff meant, he was right: Not only could she rival the queen, she triumphed over her. And she was alive, flesh and blood, not just a picture.

"You! Why have you only come now?" His voice now emerged more clearly from his throat, which was suffering the end of a bout of influenza.

In the reply, all of the students have at least one mistake of the punctuation marks.

Correctly used punctuation marks in number.

Table 6: punctuation

Correctly used	FR	FU	MR	MU
capitalization	28	10	15	40
full stop	34	12	15	34
Comma	33	15	15	44
Inverted comma	30	14	14	50
Colon	35	15	15	55
hyphen	33	14	15	50
Question mark	35	15	15	55
Exclamation mark	30	13	15	48

Mechanics/spelling	25	12	15	38
handwriting	poor	Fair	Good	Poor & fair

From this just copying a paragraph 93 students or 77.5% use and copy correctly the capitalization, 95 students or 79.16% uses the full stop correctly, 107 students or 89.16% students uses comma, 108 students or 90% students uses inverted comma, all the students used colon correctly, 112 students or 93.33% students uses hyphen, all the students use question mark, 106 or 88.33% students used exclamation mark correctly, 90 students or 75% of them used spelling correctly. Regarding a hand writing most of their hand writing is poor, some are fair, but most of the students of rural male is good.

As you can see, students that come from rural areas especially the male ones learn better than the other students. The researcher has found out in his new finding is that, the rural students learn best because they spend no places like hotels, film houses etc. The female rural might be engaged at serving in the home.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher concludes that the following recommendations to be emphasized and given.

1) there is less participation of writing and less writing arousal the students have. These problems comes out by the following reasons.

Less attitude of writing

The students do not read more. They have less reading habit that results in a few words they can rehearse. Thus, most of the students have an anxiety of writing. So they are not comfortable when they are ordered to write. For this reason, the students should be motivated to read a lot.

Problems of writing

The students lack while writing the following

Content is one of the factors

Vocabulary is the second factor

Organization

Language use, and

Mechanics.

Therefore, the students read more to gain knowledge and to use of it when they begin writing. This will help them to be familiar with a unified, coherent and uses cohesive devices for a meaningful writing sensibly.

They should also learn to use, while they read, a chronological, a logical, and a spatial order when they begin writing.

Challenges of writing they face

The students have grammatical challenges like dangling modifiers, run-on-sentences, dictions, and so on. On the other hand, students do not use punctuation marks to use and the meanings the punctuation marks have. Thus, special emphasis is given to teach the students the structural approach at their free time, even though the country implements a communicative approach.

3. students should practice peer learning and teaching

4. students should learn for a purpose and should have a clear objective to answer “why I learn?”

5. teachers should be aware of correcting their names while they give a test.
6. teachers should be upgrade their education.
7. teachers should be a model to encourage the students the habit of reading and writing.
8. families should look after their students on what they have learnt.
9. schools should give emphasis to give a tutorial class on writing skills.
10. students from the beginning should be kept by their teachers and their families to have a desire of writing, and we should support them whenever they asked us

Here are some tips to improve your English writing.

1. Practice Writing in English Every Day

You should try to write in English every day. Repetition (doing the same thing over and over again) will really help you learn the skill of writing. Writing in English will be difficult at first, but if you write a little every day, it will start to get easier.

To make sure you never skip a day, use a system to track your progress. This could be writing it on your calendar, or using a site or app like [Chains](#). It also helps to choose a specific time of day to sit down and write, which is our next tip.

You can also make use of techniques such as watching videos to keep you writing. For example, you can watch the following video from [FluentU's English YouTube channel](#) and learn 50 common English verbs you can later use to write sample sentences:

2. Find the Best Time and Place to Write

Everyone has a best time of day to write. Maybe your head is the clearest in the morning. Maybe you're a "night owl," (someone who likes to stay up late) and you are most creative at midnight. Try writing at different times of the day to find out what time works best for you.

After you know when to write, you will also want to know *where*. Maybe you have trouble writing where there is a lot of noise. In that case, try writing in a quiet place like a library. Maybe you need a little background noise, and so you write best in a busy coffee shop. Experiment and see what works best for you.

If you need some background noise to write, you can use websites like [Rainy Mood](#) and [Calm](#) for relaxing background noise.

3. Have a Specific Place You Keep Your Writing

Find a notebook to keep all of your writing in. By keeping it all in one place, you will be able to look back on your writing and see how much progress you've made. You will also be able to go through all of your writing at once to see if you keep making the same mistakes.

If you like typing on a computer instead, you might consider using [Evernote](#) to keep your writing together. Evernote is a website (and smartphone app) that helps organize your life. You can keep all of your writing in Evernote. You can also keep track of your writing schedule with the website's calendar.

Another fun place to keep your writing is on a blog. You can easily start a blog on [Blogger](#) or [WordPress](#), and you can either make the blog private (so only you can see it) or public (others can read and comment).

4. Pick a Topic and Write

When you're ready to start, choose a topic and then just start writing about it. If your topic is "fishing," for example, it doesn't matter if you write facts about fishing or a story about when you went fishing. Just start writing anything at all! Let your mind wander on the topic. Set a timer for 5 minutes and write the entire time. Once you get used to this, write for 10 minutes at a time.

The point of this writing exercise isn't to write a perfect story. The purpose is to get your brain thinking in English, and to see how much you are able to say about your topic. If you can't think of a topic, just start **free writing**. Free writing is when you put your pen on the paper and write everything that comes to your mind. It doesn't matter if the ideas connect or not.

5. Keep a Journal in English

By keeping a personal journal (diary) in English, you will make sure you write every day. It is a great way to practice writing multiple tenses. You will write in the past tense about all of the things you did during the day, and you will write in the future tense about the things you are planning to do tomorrow, for example.

When you know that you will write in your journal every day, you will probably start to think in English more often during the day. That's because as you do things, you might think about how to write about them in English.

6. Write More Than One Draft

The first draft (copy) that you write is not going to be perfect. Write one draft, and then go back and review it for mistakes. Remember the notebook where you're keeping all your writing?

When you look for mistakes, you should make a list of your common mistakes in that notebook. Then, when you edit your first draft, check for your most common mistakes.

You can also use sites like [Hemingway Editor](#), [Read-Able](#), [Grammar Check](#) or [Reverso](#) to check spelling and grammar—but remember, these programs cannot find all mistakes.

Once you have reviewed your writing, go back and write the entire thing again. When you rewrite it with the correct grammar, spellings and tenses, you will learn the corrections.

7. Have a Friend Edit Your Writing

Since you most likely won't find all of your mistakes, have a friend who is fluent in English edit your writing. Having someone else look at your work will improve your writing and give you new, creative ideas for how to express ideas in English. They can edit the whole document or just a part that you're having trouble with.

It's good to get a second opinion on your writing. If you don't know anyone who can edit your writing, use [Lang-8](#). Lang-8 is a community of native speakers who will edit your writing for free.

If you want a more reliable way to have your writing corrected and are willing to pay for it, [Editorr](#) is a service that will edit a piece of writing within minutes. You can then compare the edited piece to your original one, and learn from it for the next time you write. Editorr has real, qualified editors working for them, so you can feel assured that the corrections you receive are accurate.

8. Keep an English Dictionary with You

When you hear or see a new word, look it up in your dictionary. Say the word a few times and write it down. Say it until it sounds familiar to your ear. The next time you write, try to write at least one sentence with each new word. When you find words that you really like or that seem important, highlight them in the dictionary (it's okay—it's your dictionary).

If you don't want to keep a physical dictionary with you all the time, you can use online dictionaries like [Merriam Webster](#) or [Dictionary.com](#). You can also use [one of these dictionary apps for your smartphone](#).

9. Learn Synonyms and Antonyms

Whenever you look up a new vocabulary word in English, try to learn at least one word with the same meaning (this is a **synonym**), and one that has the opposite meaning (this is an **antonym**). For example, take the word “great.” Synonyms include “excellent” and “fantastic,” while antonyms are “plain,” “ordinary” and “bad.”

By learning more than one word for each concept, you will be able to communicate better with native speakers when you write. Here is a **thesaurus**, which is a dictionary full of synonyms and antonyms. Type in a word and the thesaurus will give you a list of synonyms in orange, and antonyms in grey. If you click the checkbox “Common,” it will only show synonyms and antonyms that are commonly used.

Visual Thesaurus is another great resource you can use. It’s a little different from a regular thesaurus, because it shows you the links between words in a visual format, with lines between related words. This allows you to explore new words in an easy, fun way, while still getting access to definitions and examples for context.

10. Make Flashcards

When you look up new words, their synonyms and their antonyms, make flashcards for them. On one side of the flashcard, write the word. On the other side, write the meaning, part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) and a sentence using that word. Review these flashcards often, and try to use the words in your own writing as often as possible.

But if you want to have the best flashcards in the world already done for you, you need to check **FluentU** out.

Each word you see on FluentU has its own **interactive flashcard**. FluentU’s flashcards include grammar info, pronunciation, a translation of the word, sample sentences and even a list of other videos where the word is being used. Give FluentU a free try and you’ll never want to use any other type of flashcard!

11. Read English Books Out Loud

As I said earlier, reading and writing are connected, so reading more often in English will help you become a better writer. Start out with simple books. Write down any words that are new to you, and practice saying them. Work your way up to books like “Harry Potter” or “The Hunger Games.” These books are written for young adults and older adults, but the language is still quite simple.

Get a library card to access thousands of free books from your local library. You can also join websites like Audible and listen to any book you’d like. Your first book is free with Audible. After that, you will have to pay a small price for each book.

12. Translate Songs and Poems

Choose your favorite song, and translate the lyrics into English. Then, try singing it in English. You could even try to rewrite some of the lines in English to make them rhyme. You can do the same thing with poems you love. The words used in songs and poems will likely be very different from the words you see in books, newspapers and even your journal.

By practicing songs, you’ll be able to practice writing, and you will also learn new ways to talk about concepts like love, faith, fear, rejection (being told “no”) and other topics usually addressed in music. Lyrics Translate is a really fun website that lets you choose an artist or song title and get translated lyrics from a huge selection of languages. Or, you can select the language and the website will give you a list of songs.

The most important part of all these tips is to write in English regularly. Learning to write in English is a learning process. You need to build your vocabulary, learn proper grammar and learn how to spell correctly.

The more often you practice your skills, the easier it will become. Have fun writing!

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE

DEAR STUDENTS,

I AM DOING A RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC ASSESSING THE PROBLEMS, ATTITUDES AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN WRITING: THE CASE OF TOBBA HIGH SCHOOL GRADE 11 STUDENTS.

STUDENTS I WILL NOT USE ANY OF YOUR REPLY FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSES. AND YOUR ANSWERS ARE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

Age_____

Sex_____

Urban_____ rural_____

1. why do you write your name for example, like this

A. I'm not conscious

B. I'm emotional during test

C.I've learnt this way

D. specify_____

2.While writing small letter words such as *boy* you write '*boY*' for example.why? Because

A.it's the way I learnt in grade one.

B.noone could re-corrected me

C. our teacher in grade one writes like this

D.all

3. is your writing legible?

A .yes B.no C. I doubt

If your answer is “no” ,why?

A. I am not conscious. B. I have less practice C. specify_____

4.Do you write a complete sentence without no fragment error? Fragment means something is a small piece different from the main idea.

5.Do you know enough English words to write and use?

A. yes B. no

6. why don't you know enough English words?

A. I don't use dictionary B. I only encounter with familiar words.

C. I don't use:

synonyms and antonyms,

prefixes and suffixes,

phrasal verbs ,

idioms

D. specify_____

7. which type of writing you like most?

A. controlled writing B. guided writing C. free writing

8. which type of writing you like if you answer free writing?

A. Descriptive B. Narrative C. Expository D. Argumentative

9.what is your attitude towards writing English if you are given a topic?

A. high B. medium C. low

9.1 if your reply is “B” give reasons.

A. difficult in thinking what I want to include. B. I write without lining C. I face shortage of words D. all

9.2 if your answer is “low” what is your problem?

A. difficult to think and remember. B. difficulty in sequencing orderly
C. I don’t satisfy in what I write & I am unable to satisfy it. D. all

10.re-write the following paragraph!

But suddenly a new mood replaced suspicion. In front of us stood a girl, white-skinned, refined, European face, hair and eyes of a Native. And those eyes, those shining eyes! (“Like a pair of morning stars, “I called them in my notes.) If this was the girl Surhoff meant, he was right: Not only could she rival the queen, she triumphed over her. And she was alive, flesh and blood, not just a picture.

“You! Why have you only come now?” His voice now emerged more clearly from his throat, which was suffering the end of a bout of influenza.

11.The following sentences are in incorrect punctuation marks. correct them as much as you can.

“Father_” I cried

In the blank space, A. .full stop B.(?) question mark C.(‘) single quotation mark D. (!) exclamation mark

“A thousand pardons_ my father_ no.”

A. . & ? B. ,&: C. ! & ,D. ! & ?

Thank you for your priceless response!

Aschalew Kibret