

**INVESTIGATING LEARNERS' PROBLEM OF WRITING EFFECTIVE
PARAGRAPH: THE CASE OF GRADE 12 STUDENTS OF HAIK
SECONDARY AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL IN HAIK WOREDA OF
SOUTH WOLLO ZONE**

M A THESIS

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HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY, HARAMAYA

**Investigating Learners' Problem of Writing Effective Paragraph: The case
of Grade 12 Students of Haik Secondary and Preparatory School in Haik
Woreda of South Wollo Zone**

M A Thesis

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Postgraduate Program Directorate (PGPD)

We hereby certify that we have read and evaluated this Thesis entitled “Investigating Learners Problem of Writing Effective Paragraph: The case of Grade 12 Students of Haik Secondary and Preparatory School in Haik Woreda of South Wollo Zone.”

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Final approval and acceptance of the Thesis is contingent upon the submission of its final copy to the Council of Graduate Studies (CGS) through the candidate’s department or school of graduate Committee (DGC or SGC).

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my friend Nasir Ahmed (Feruz).

STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR

By my signature below, I declare and affirm that this Thesis is my own work. I have followed all the necessary principles of scholarship for the fruition of this Thesis. Any scholarly matter that is included in the Thesis has been given recognition through citation.

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an MA degree in TEFL at Haramaya University. The thesis is set down in the Haramaya University Library and is made available to borrowers under the rules of the Library. I solemnly declare that this Thesis has not been submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any academic degree (diploma).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The researcher was born in the province of Raya, specifically at Alamata in 1986 G.C. He joined grade one at Edget Fana Elementary School in 1995. He continued his junior courses up to grade eight there 2002. Then, he promoted to grade nine in 2004 and stayed Tadagiwa Ethiopia Senior secondary school from 2003 to 2004 for high school program.

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ACRONMYS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this study, the following ACRONMYS mean as they are expressed below.

ELF	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
OQ Ss	Open-ended questionnaire for student
Ss	Student respondent
T	Teacher respondent

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate learners' problem of writing an effective paragraph in the case of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school of south Wollo. To achieve this, the researcher applied descriptive research design. The participants of the study were four EFL teachers of grade 11 and 12, and forty students of grade 12 of Haik Secondary and Preparatory School of South Wollo Zone. Convenience and random sampling techniques were used in selecting the sample size the participants of the study. In analyzing the gained results from the discussion, he used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The instruments were document analysis as a major tool, and questionnaire and interview were the other tools of the study. The major findings were elements of an effective paragraph such a topic sentence, developers, unity, coherence, paragraph connectors and conclusion. Even though grade 12 students had many problems, the gained results indicate that most learners of 12 Haik preparatory faced the problem of writing the topic sentence clearly in their paragraphs more than other elements. Moreover, learners had the problems of assertion, illustration, analysis, punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Hence, punctuation was the dominant difficulty of many learners. The problems of steps and causes in writing an effective paragraph were the other findings of this study. The sample learners used different steps while they wrote their paragraphs. Regarding with the causes of the problem, poor educational background of students and the strategies teachers used were the most serious problems. Based on the obtained results, the researcher recommended that teachers should assist their students to make students familiar with all elements paragraph.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Writing is a means of putting points by using words, various structures and symbols as a means of communication among people. Different scholars define writing in different ways. For Hedge (1988), writing is the way in which a writer puts together the pieces of the text, developing ideas through sentences and paragraphs with over all structure. In addition to this, Byrne (1988) stated that writing is a process of putting ideas in words to the target reader in mind.

However, teaching writing English skill as a foreign language (EFL) in Ethiopia has undergone different changes and has faced many challenges in terms of teaching approaches, methods and techniques. For many years, it has been believed that teaching a language means making students understand the basic structures and vocabularies of that language. According to Dawit (2013), in Ethiopia, the role English language plays in education is indubitable although the language is considered largely as a foreign language. This is because of the traditional method of teaching in the schools of the country. Consequently, teachers, material writers and course designers have tried to realize this belief. According to Widdowson (1990:54), the structural approach is depended: “The belief that language learning comes about by teaching learners to know the forms of the language as medium and the meaning they incorporate; that they will learn how to do things with this knowledge on their own.” Thus, one can possibly say that the structural approach had commonly adopted in teaching English language in Ethiopia rather than writing skills. Similarly, writing skills in general and writing effective paragraph in specific were given in Ethiopia in a very traditional way. It is more of teacher dominated teaching-learning methods. This leads students to English language deficiency in the country.

Like-wise that of all Ethiopian secondary schools’ learners who encounter the problem of paragraph writing in English language, students of grade twelve of Haik Secondary and Preparatory School of South Wollo, in the regional state of Amhara also have the problem of writing skills especially, writing effective paragraph even a single complete sentence that can

support their paragraphs. They write a paragraph, which lacks the elements of good paragraph, like topic sentence, developers, coherence and unity specifically, and other writing related problems. In line with this, Tsegaye (2006) reported in his study that most grade twelve students are unable to write a single meaningful sentence let alone large texts like paragraphs or essays. Therefore, writing effective paragraph is very serious problem of grade twelve students. There are a number of sources for this problem. Learners' poor background of writing paragraph is one dominant problem. Correspondingly, writing is a time when students produce their own texts based on their previously acquired skills and knowledge (Davidson, 2007). This means that if learners do not have good background of writing effective paragraph ability, they will not be successful writers in their paragraph writing tasks. This affects their current ability. As such Dash (2008) states that students can write good paragraphs if they have good writing skills background on it. Hence, background is the basic thing for learners to be successful in the next grade level. Effective writing skills are central in both higher education and in the world of professional work place that follows it. One's ability to compose an extended text like a paragraph is the single best predictor of success in course work (Geiser and Studley, 2001).

Lack of practice of learners on the skill makes them poor writers. For learners to be good writers at writing effective paragraph, they need to make a deliberate practice in the skill. A central factor in the development of expert performance across a wide range of both physical and cognitive task domains is the use of deliberate practice (Ericsson et al., 1993). Motivation is another cause of good or bad performance in students' writing paragraph. It pressurizes learners if they are awarded some positive praises and vice versa. According to Wigfield and Eccles (2002:418), students' ability is also highly influenced by external incentives such as rewards and punishments. In addition, writing is continuously improving as a function of practice as is typical for perceptual motor and cognitive skills in general (Kellogg, 2006). Lack of teachers' assistance influences learners' writing ability. Even though the current teaching and learning appreciates student-centered approach, students need to be supported by teachers when it is necessary. Teachers should support their students to develop their skills instead of blaming them for poor writing performance (Russel, 1990). Lessons and instructions use by teachers in English writing paragraph classes causes problems for learners if they are inappropriate. The type of lesson and applying the same instruction for the tasks given to

learners affect them in writing skills like writing effective paragraph (Cosmata,2014). Absence of taking responsibility in learning is the other problem that comes from students themselves. According to Italo (1999), learners must take the responsibility for learning if meaningful learning is to take place. The methods, approaches and techniques teachers use in in English writing paragraph periods influence the ability of learners in the skill. Correspondingly, the relationship between methods and techniques are facilitating devices whereas the communication is the keynote (Breen et al., 1987). Silva (1997), the dominant teaching method during the 1950s put an undue focus on oral rather than written proficiency. The relationship between methods and techniques are facilitating devices whereas the communication is the keynote (Breen et al., 1987).

1.2. Statement of the problem

In writing, the primary thing that learners need is to have a good command of paragraph writing. When learners have a good command of writing effective paragraph, it leads them to successful and easy communication with their peers and teachers. Effective writing skills are central in both higher education and in the world of work that follows and, one's ability to compose an extended text is the single best predictor of success in course work during higher education programs (Geiser & Studley, 2001).

Furthermore, Allyn and Bacon (1909) explain that paragraph writing for learners of foreign language is one way to measure individual language competency. The ultimate goal in teaching writing especially, effective paragraph is to move students to ward independent writing process including developing strong topic sentences, and elaborating and discussing selected topics in well-structured sentence to form concise paragraphs (Cosmato, 2014). Then, students can try their own efforts as much as they can. This is when students have good awareness of qualities of effective paragraph. So, students' English language ability in writing paragraph plays a great role in both contemporary academic and future careers. It has also an important and encouraging impact on the academic achievements of students.

In contrast, students with inability of writing skill are not competent enough to produce good documents. Ineffective paragraph cannot convey a meaningful message to readers. Because if it is written poorly, it lacks the qualities of effective paragraph like main ideas, topic

sentences, supportive sentences, coherence and conclusion. Poor paragraph leads to confusion and misunderstanding. Whenever students are developing or practicing such kind of skill, they are in a position of writing ineffective paragraph. This brings the problem of unable to communicate and misunderstand with their teachers and peers as well. Paragraphs that lack elements of good paragraph cannot convey complete meaning to readers (Anonymous, 1976). Rather they lead them to confusion and misunderstanding. Readers face miscommunication, and there is no doubt that miscommunication is worse than no communication.

Investigating students' writing skills at large and writing effective paragraph in particular have been issues for many years. A number of local and foreign studies have been undertaken on writing effective paragraph at various educational levels in Ethiopia, and elsewhere beyond Ethiopia.

Writing researchers, in their attempts to search for more approaches in writing effective paragraph, they have come up with a number of approaches laid their philosophy on various theoretical foundations. In connection to this, some local researches are discussed on investigation of writing effective paragraph and related ideas. For instance, a research conducted by Tesfamichael (2014) on organization of paragraph at Haramaya University came up with those problems of grade 10 students such as punctuation marks, spelling and grammar while they write a paragraph were the problems of grade 10 students. However, he did not discuss every problem of learners in detail. This would see these problems in a very well manner. The type the problem would be explained per individual student.

Researches by Wondifraw (2009), Zaudineh (1998), Mohammedamin (2015), Solomon (2001),) were demonstrated on paragraph writing. These researchers came up with almost similar points on the problems students faced while they wrote paragraphs such as irrelevant information, lack of subjects for each sentence, punctuation, lack of organization and faulty parallelism. The current research is different from those in such a way that it discussed the key elements of an effective paragraph.

Another local researcher was Mesfin (2013) on the title the implementation of the process approach to the teaching/learning of the course basic writing skills. He stated that these days, as most of the second language classrooms are highly influenced by the communicative

approach to second language teaching, emphasizing on the process approach to composition instruction is mandatory in writing classes. Here, the researcher dealt only with the instruction of paragraph writing. There is a need of dealing with learners' difficulties in writing their paragraph tasks such as procedures, organization of their paragraphs. Zelalem(2012) was the other local researcher who discussed on importance of paragraph writing, writing approaches and the stages in paragraph writing.

The present study is informed by the above researches. Therefore, this research, in its own return, is to fulfill the gap of the previous researches. In this study, the researcher indicated the three formulae steps of writing an effective paragraph like assertion, illustration and analysis, the basic elements of effective paragraph, strategies to be used and the causes of the problem in detail that were not mentioned in the fore mentioned researches to address the research questions. The formulae to write an effective paragraph are assertion, illustration and analysis (Charissa, 2011). This made the study different from the previous ones.

Unlike the former studies, there was also a need to discuss coherence development through intra connectors of a paragraph in this study. In paragraph writing tasks, there are two basic elements of coherence that show the logical flow of idea in a paragraph which are intra and inter paragraph connectors (Pitoe, 2008). Here, we are going to look at intra connectors.

In addition, the types of contents that help learners to improve their writing skills are the other discussion of this research. According to Cosmato (2014), the contents like reports, diaries, writing letters, occasions, and using the same instruction to them affect learners' writing ability.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Regarding with the objectives of the study, they are categorized in to general objective and specific objective.

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study was to investigate grade 12 learners' paragraph writing problems at Haik Preparatory School of South Wollo.

1.3.2. Specific Objective

The specific objective of this study was to:

1. Investigate Problems of writing paragraphs in ELT classes in the case of grade 12 students.
2. Identify the steps students follow to write an effective paragraph.
3. Identify the most dominant problems learners face in writing effective paragraph.
4. Examine whether Students' paragraphs consist of all elements of the paragraph or not.

1.4. Research Questions

The study of this research asks the following research questions:

1. What are the common problems that students' encounter when writing paragraph tasks?
2. What steps students use in writing an effective paragraph?
3. Are elements of the paragraph common problems to learners?
4. What are the causes of learners' problem in writing effective paragraph?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Educational research findings must solve problems in a given discipline and contribute to the development of the teaching/learning activities at any level of learning. To this effect, this study is foreseen primarily to help grade 12 students in writing effective paragraph, This research is also essential to all learners of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school. This shows learners the ways to write effective paragraphs in their documents. For EFL teachers of grade 12 students, this is essential to inform them to see the sources of the problem, and show the possible strategies to reduce the degree of the problem. Thus, teachers can apply the right strategies in teaching writing an effective paragraph by designing the necessary lessons of teaching their students. It is also important to all responsible bodies of the Woreda by indicating learners' writing paragraph problems. As a result, they may contribute their own duties based on this source.

1.6. Scope of the Study

In spite of the fact that the problem of writing effective paragraph of learners of grade twelve may be common in all preparatory schools of the Zone, due to time and financial constraints, this research was conducted in focus of Haik Secondary and Preparatory school.

The participants of this study were both sample respondents of students of grade twelve and English Language teachers of preparatory school.

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approaches as it included words and numerical expressions in the research approaches. In addition to the above ones, this research is delimited to investigating the problems of grade 12 Learners' writing effective paragraph skill at Haik Preparatory school.

1.7. Definition of Key Operational Terms

Throughout this study, the following words and phrases their contextual meanings.

Effective paragraph means a paragraph that consists of the elements of a paragraph like topic sentence, unity, logical flow of ideas and developers where as ineffective means the opposite.

Intra-paragraph refers to use traditional words and phrases to move the readers along their ideas, and make lexical connections.

2. RELATED REVIEW LITRATURE

In this part, related review of literature: on assessing learners' problems in writing effective paragraph is the main idea. The points are: the definition of writing, what is effective paragraph mean, and elements of good paragraph, writing effective paragraph, features of ineffective paragraph, contents to teach writing skills, strategies to teach writing effective paragraph, paragraph development, and types of topic sentences, position, placement and function of topic sentence will be discussed.

2.1. Definition of Writing

Writing is a common means of communication among people. This is when a paragraph is written effectively by including all elements of paragraph. Writing is a common means of communication when it is written in an effective way called an effective paragraph. People convey meaningful messages when they are able to organize their ideas in a very well manner (Anonymous, 1976).

Writing is a means of expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings. Different Scholars define writing in different ways. For Hedge (1988), writing is the way in which a writer puts his or her pieces of the text together, developing ideas thorough sentences and paragraphs with over all structure. In addition to, Byrne (1988) stated that writing is a process of putting ideas in words to the target reader in mind.

2.2. Elements of Good Paragraph

A paragraph is made up of a topic sentence, the developing details, and a concluding sentence. As such, Vicenzi (2010) States that a good way to think of a paragraph and how it is structured is like a sandwich. The topic sentence is the top layer of bread, the concluding sentence is the bottom layer, and all of the developing details in-between are the meat and other goods of the sandwich. Paragraph is combinations of sentences that deal to one main idea or topic. Accordingly, effective paragraphs have three characteristics named as a topic sentence, adequate development, and concluding sentences. Thus, an effective paragraph needs to include in any written paragraphs. Each of the characteristics is discussed below.

2.2.1. Topic Sentence

Beginning with a topic sentence is one of the best ways to achieve clarity and unity in writing. The topic sentence is usually (but not always) the first sentence in a paragraph. Experienced writers sometimes put topic sentences in other locations, but the best spot is usually right at the beginning. Readers who are used to the English way of writing want to know what they will read about as soon as they begin reading (Oshima and Hogue, 2009).

The function of a topic sentence is to describe what the paragraph will be about, such that the reader has clear expectations what will follow. An effective topic sentence typically contains only one main idea. The remainder paragraphs, then, develop that idea more fully, offering supportive points and examples. The topic sentence is the most important part of the paragraph. It tells readers the general idea of paragraphs and should essentially hook them into wanting to read more, and helps to provide a general summary for one's paragraph. A reader should encounter the topic sentence and have a general idea, and of what the paragraph will continue to discuss (Npontori, 2016). A topic sentence should also show its Purposes, placement and Supporting.

In general, a topic sentence typically performs the following three tasks; to indicate its main point; to indicate whether that relate to the thesis, and provide a link to the preceding paragraphs or not. According to Philips (2012), a topic sentence functions to indicate its main point, relates the thesis statement with the rest of paragraph's sentences, and provides links with the previous paragraphs.

2.2.2. Unity

An important element of a good paragraph is unity. Unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end. For example, if your paragraph is about the advantages of owning a compact car, discuss only that (Oshima and Hogue, 2009). Hence, it refers to the extent to which all the ideas combined with in a paragraph hang together in a way that is for the reader to understand. When a writer changes to a new idea one that is not consistent with the topic sentence of the paragraph, the writer should begin a new paragraph. Unity is important because it aids the reader in following along with the writer's ideas. The

reader can expect that a given paragraph can deal only with one main topic; when a new paragraph begins, this signals that the writer is moving on to a new topic. In order for a paragraph to maintain a sense of unity, the paragraph must focus solely on a single idea, point, or argument that is being discussed. Furthermore, Sadra (2015) explained that topic sentences have two elements namely the topic and the controlling idea. This helps writers to write an effective paragraph. However, paragraphs that were written by sample respondents indicate that they lack clear topic sentence. They simply wrote combination of sentences that did not tell readers what they want to describe.

Therefore, the paragraph should be supported by each sentence to develop the ideas of the topic. If you begin to write sentence that wander that is apart from the paragraph's main idea, then, it is time for writers to think on other related ideas of their paragraphs (Npontori, 2016).

2.2.3. Adequate Development

A paragraph is adequately developed when it describes, explains and supports the topic sentence. Supporting sentences explain or prove the topic sentence. One of the biggest problems in student writing is that student writers often fail to support their ideas adequately. They need to use specific details to be thorough and convincing. There are several kinds of specific supporting details: examples, statistics, and quotations (Oshima and Hogue, 2009).

If the promise of the topic sentence is not fulfilled, or the reader left with questions after reading the paragraph, the paragraph has not been adequately developed. Generally, a paragraph, which consists of only two or three sentences, is under-developed.

A good rule of thumb to follow is to make sure that a paragraph contains at least four sentences that explain and evaluate on the topic sentence. Npontori (2016) states that good writers' paragraphs have topics, which are developed topics. Do not limit them to a set number of sentences. The paragraph should not be too short or too long, but it should be an appropriate length to flesh out the entirety of the paragraph's idea. A reader should not be left with questions after a sufficiently development paragraph. In order to achieve this, the writer can provide examples, cite work, provide necessary definitions, describe, analyze, and organize his or her ideas.

2.2.4. Coherence

Coherence refers to the extent to which flow of one sentence to the next sentences are logically linked to one another in a paragraph, and is easily understood by the reader. For this reason, coherence is related to unity. When a writer changes main ideas or topics with a paragraph, confusion often results. To achieve a coherence, then, a writer should show how all the ideas contained in a paragraph are relevant to the main topic. As to Npontori (2016), Coherence is more commonly referred to as the flow of writers' writing. When a paragraph flows, the reader will be able to understand the main idea that writers have presented well. Having presented the main idea in their topic sentence, each sentence following must build upon each other in an organized manner. After writing the paragraph, go back and read aloud what they have written to make sure their ideas are clearly presented. If they are, writers have developed a coherent paragraph! Moreover, Pitoe (2008) states that the logical development chosen for the paragraph can be made very clear to the reader by the words used to connect one sentence to the next. These words are often referred to as logical connectives because they make clear not only the order but also the meaning of the writing. Furthermore, The Latin verb *cohere* means "hold together." For coherence in writing, the sentences must hold together; that is, the movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth. There must be no sudden jumps. Each sentence should flow smoothly into the next one (Oshima and Hogue, 2009).

2.2.5. Types of Coherence

There are two types of coherence namely intra and inter paragraphs, but, here, we will discuss on the first one only as the issue of thesis is on writing an effective paragraph.

Intra-paragraph: uses transitional words and phrases to move readers along the topic of the paragraph; it makes lexical connections. This implies repeat the key words and synonyms from one sentence to the next. In addition to the above, Pitoe (2008) states that the logical development chosen for the paragraph can be made very clear to the reader by the words used to connect one sentence to the next. These words are often referred to as logical connectives because they make clear not only the order but also the meaning of the writing text.

2.2.6. Concluding sentence

A concluding sentence serves two purposes: it signals the end of the paragraph, and leaves the reader with the most important ideas to remember. It can do this in two ways: summarizing the main points of the paragraph or repeating the topic sentence in different words. A concluding sentence is helpful to the reader because it is a reminder of the important points (Oshima and Hogue, 2009).

2.3. Writing Effective Paragraph

A paragraph should be unified, cohered and well developed. A Paragraph unifies itself around the main point and all the sentences in the paragraph should clearly relate to that in the same way. The paragraph's main idea should be supported with specific information that develops or discusses in greater detailed. Accordingly, Npontori (2016) states that there are four essential elements that an effective paragraph should consistently contain such as unity, coherence, a topic sentence, and sufficient development. Furthermore, Sandra (2015) states that an effective paragraph needs to analyze the introduction Paragraph(s) and main body Paragraphs; look at the structure and organization of a paragraph; review cohesion, and discuss ways of creating a cohesive paragraph. In general, in order for a paragraph to be effective, it must have three characteristics: unity, development and coherence (Mcloud-Bondoc, 2014).

2.4. The Process of Writing Effective Paragraph

Writing process, generally, are divided in to five namely prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing and sharing, Graves (1983). Writing an effective paragraph during the on-going process of writing a paragraph specifically for how to organize a paragraph, there are several paragraph-writing techniques that the writer needs to use. She/he needs to read each sentence. Then, he/she should check the paragraphs that focus on one topic from inception to fruition. Sentences may need to be re-ordered for a better flow of logic, and transition words may be necessary. The reader needs enough information to understand the argument. Brevity is better. These techniques help her/him and, apparently, to many scientific writers. All of these points are especially important for the abstract (Sandra, 2015).

2.6. The Steps to Write an Effective Paragraph

A successful paragraph is more than just a collection of sentences related to the same topic. Writing a convincing expression in an effective paragraph needs a series of words and phrases. Each sentence should provide details supporting that single point of the writer's argument and then, show how the point in that paragraph relates to your thesis. Regarding with the steps, different authors write them somewhat differently as follows:

As such Charissa (2011) states that there are three formula for successful paragraph namely assertion, illustration and analyze. These 3-steps formulae are used to write an effective, meaningful, and convincing paragraph. These formulae are going to be seen in detail in the following sentences.

Assert:

What is the point the writer wants to prove in this paragraph? This step is the main idea step of the writer's paragraph. He /she should plainly assert the point that he/she will argue in the paragraph.

Illustrate:

What examples or quotes can he/she gives to support his/her point? This step is intended to give an example, whether from real-life or from a reference text, to illustrate the writer's main point. An illustration may contain an example from writer's own experience, a paraphrased point from a reference or even a direct quote with the correct citation.

Analyze:

How does the writer's example or quote relate to his/her main point? What is the meaning of the point in this paragraph? This step should explain how his/her illustration is relevant to his/her main point.

According to Enye (2014), the above three general steps can be divided in to the following sub steps.

Step 1: Decide the topic of the Paragraph: Before writers can begin writing, they need to know what they are writing for. First, look at the writing prompt or assignment topic. As they look at the prompt, note any key terms or repeated phrases because they will want to use those words in their response. Then, ask them-selves:

1. On what topic are they supposed to write?
2. What do they know about this topic already?
3. If they do not know how to respond to this assignment, where can they go to find some answers?
4. What does this assignment mean to them? How do they relate to it? After looking at the prompt and doing some additional reading and research, they should better understand their topics, and they need to discuss.

Step 2: Develop a topic Sentence: Before writing a paragraph, it is important to think first about the topic then, what you want to say about the topic. Most often, the topic is easy, but the question then turns to *what* you want to say about the topic. This concept sometimes is called the controlling idea.

Strong paragraphs are typically about one main idea or topic, which are often explicitly stated in a topic sentence. Good topic sentences should always contain both (1) A topic and (2) a controlling idea. The topic: The main subject matter or idea covered in the paragraph. The controlling idea focuses the topic by providing direction to the composition.

Step 3: Demonstrate the Point: After stating the topic sentence, the writer needs to provide information to prove, illustrate, clarify, and/or exemplify his/her point. The writer needs to ask him/herself the following points:

1. What examples can I use to support my point?
2. What information can I provide to help to clarify my thoughts?
3. How can I support my point with specific data, experiences, or other factual material?
4. What information does the reader need to know in order to see my point?

Still others say brain storming, planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing are the steps to write a paragraph. These are explained below in detail.

Brainstorming: when students think carefully and organize their ideas for their paragraph before they begin writing. It is collecting ideas or generating ideas a technique which mainly functions as an organizer of thinking and an idea collector as well as a developer. This is pre-writing activity. Richard (1992) pointed out that the more time students spend on pre- writing activities, the more successful their writing will be.

Planning: In this step, students outline their ideas or exchange ideas into note form. It functions as an organizer, a planner and a classifier of the ideas gathered in the brainstorming exercise, is a very useful summarizing technique that students would love to facilitate receiving the information flow in the EFL classroom be it in the form of a long paragraph, essay, article or a long paper. It also helps to establish paragraph unity (the relevance of the paragraph ideas to the main idea topic sentence), which gives the reader an introductory idea about the main topic of the paragraph.

Drafting: In this step, students write down their ideas on paper focusing on content not mechanics. Gaber (2003) pointed out that when writing their first draft, students should not expect perfection or even work towards it. The first draft should be considered as a further means of discovering ideas and what one wants to do.

Revising: when students look at organization, main points support for main ideas, examples, and connections between ideas. According to Manzo and Manzo (1995) argued that revising a written document should be viewed as a thinking process that helps students to refine ideas, discover new connections and explore them more deeply in an attempt to communicate well their ideas with audience.

Editing: when students check their paragraphs for mistakes and correct them. Once

Students have revised their writing, they move to the editing stage to come up with a good final version. Editing could be viewed as the process of correcting sentence structure, word choice, spelling, punctuation, grammar and capitalization in a piece of writing. This occurs after the revision process has been completed and just prior to the publishing phase.

Publishing: This is when students produce a final copy of their paragraphs to hand in. This is the final stage of the writing process. In this stage, the writings that are revised and edited carefully may be published. Since writing is communication, Students should read their writings aloud to the class. This is one way of publishing students' writing.

2.7. Purpose of Effective Paragraph

Effective writing skills are central in both higher education and in the world of work that follows. One's ability to compose an extended text is the single best predictor of success in course work during the higher education programs (Geiser & Studley, 2001). Gains in informative and analytical writing abilities are taken as a good indicator of the value added by higher education (Benjamin & Chun, 2003). Finally, a large share of the value added by businesses in a knowledge-based economy is codified in written documents, placing a premium on a literate workforce (Brandt, 2005).

Similarly, Npontori (2016) states the purpose of an effective paragraph is to present a single idea which:

- a. Begins with a topic sentence that makes this single idea evident.
- b. Contains support in form of sentences that convey this single idea.
- c. Is strategically organized to maintain flow.
- d. Maintains the writer's text objectives.
- e. Informs and entertains writer's reader about his/her paper's overall. Therefore, an effective paragraph needs to consist of topic sentence, developers, coherence and objectives.

2.8. Paragraph Development Method

Effective paragraphs include specific developers and details that support the main idea. Since the details are more specific than the main idea, they are considered as subordinate to it, and, the details themselves may be equally specific. If so, we say that they are coordinate. However, some details may be more specific than the other ones. A detail that is more specific

than another is considered subordinate to it. Similarly, Pitoe (2014) states that effective paragraphs include specific facts and details that support the main idea.

Thus, all the details in a paragraph are subordinate to the main ideas, but some details are coordinate (equal to others), and some are subordinate to others (more specific than the other ones).

2.9. Ineffective paragraph

An ineffective paragraph is a paragraph that lacks the elements of good paragraph such as clear topic sentence, unity and supportive sentences or developers and coherence. Ineffective paragraph causes problems for both the writer and the readers to exchange their ideas clearly. Paragraphs that lack topic sentence, developers or supportive sentences and coherence cannot convey complete meaning to their readers. Rather they lead the readers to confusion and misunderstanding (Anonymous, n.d).

Poor paragraph is sort of problems for the academic journey of students in their educational performance. In addition to this, it can be a bad ambassador for students' educational background. "Learners are being passive or active in their knowledge of some skills when they have good or bad educational background" (Dash, 2008).

2.10. Strategies to teach effective paragraph

These are some common strategies for teachers to teach their students in writing effective paragraph in EFL classrooms and out of classrooms. These are the strategies to teach effective paragraph such as teachers' Table of Contents on Paragraph Structure, teaching Paragraph Structure, teaching Students to Structure Paragraph, Teaching Tips and Strategies for Teaching Specific Structures, evaluating & Revising Paragraph, challenging paragraph lessons, teaching paragraphing to EFL students and learning to write well. According to Cosmato (2014), teachers need to use table of Contents on paragraph structure ; teaching paragraph structure, teaching students to structure paragraph, teaching tips and strategies for teaching specific structures; evaluating & revising paragraph; challenging paragraph lessons ;teaching paragraphing to EFL students, and learning to write well. Furthermore, the learning strategies

used by teachers while they teach their learners for pre-writing, drafting, and revision that manage the demands of composition (Fayol, 1999). Teaching strategies should indicate how students can be designed the above writing process pre-writing, drafting and revising the writing process.

2.11. Contents of writing

The appropriate contents for writing effective paragraph are both formal and informal letters, writing reports, writing one's biography and writing one's diary. Writing is an essential component of thinking and learning in school context, and writing task is a crucial tool for intellectual and social development" (Bruning and Horn, 2000).

However, the contents in the text book of English for grade 12 does not include all these contents. This makes learners to be dis interested in the contents. This affects their writing paragraph skills.

2.12. Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling

Punctuation plays a great role in giving meaning of written documents. This can be internal such as comma or end punctuation marks like question mark, period etc. The internal punctuations are such as comma, quotations, hyphen, semi-colon and colon. The end ones are like period, question mark and an exclamation mark (Aragaw, 1995). The misplacement of these punctuations highly affects the understanding of readers. They convey completely different meaning from what the author wants to mean. Capitalization is about using the right capital and small letters in the appropriate positions in a given written documents. Nouns and pronouns that are beginners of sentences should not be written in small letters, and at middle in capital letters (Aragaw, 1995). Furthermore, spelling plays a great role its own in paragraph writing activities. Mohammedamin (2015) approved these problems in his thesis in grade students at Bedena secondary school.

3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

In this chapter of the thesis, the researcher dealt with the design of the research, sample and sampling techniques, data collection tools, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis of the study.

3.1. Research Design

This study employs descriptive case study of research design. Because the researcher explained things or situations as they were. According to Walliman and Nicholas (2011), descriptive case study research design relies on observation as a means of data collecting. The type of observation can be interview, questionnaire, visual records and even sounds recorded.

Moreover, an educational case study is an empirical enquiry within a localized boundary of space and time, into interesting aspects of a case, in its natural context. According to Yin (2003), a case study is an inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. According to Young (1965) mentions that in a case study mode a researcher carries out intensive investigation of specific behaviours of a unit of study an individual, an institution, a community, or a group. A case study can be of many types depending on the objectives and the focus of the study. Stake (1994) categorized the principal types of case study under intrinsic, instrumental, and collective types. The intrinsic case study is used when the case itself is of interest; that is when an abstract construct or a general phenomenon is not the goal of study, but only an intrinsic interest. The instrumental case study, on the other hand, provides an insight into an issue of a theory. The purpose of collective case study is to see varied cases jointly. The case study focuses on supportive roles that different cases play in conducting research. This study sought to assess learners' problem of writing effective paragraph in the case of grade 12. The context of this study is the factors that affect learners' writing effective paragraph.

3.2. Population of the study

The respondents of the research were learners of grade 12 and English teachers of Haik secondary and preparatory school. The researcher used random sampling technique for

learners to give them equal chance to be included in the study. According to Beins (2009) states in probability sampling method, any person has equal chance of being included in the sample. In addition to this, Gay and Airasian (2003) state that simple random sampling gives for each unit of the population equal opportunity of being selected in the sample. On the other hand, the researcher used convenience technique of sampling for teachers. This is because they are very few in number that is only four. This means that he used the available human recourses or teachers to get genuine information.

3.3. Sampling Size and Sampling Techniques

Sampling size of the study refers to the number of respondents in the research. The total number of respondents to this study was 44. Among these, 4 of the respondents were teachers of Haik preparatory school of grade 11th and 12th English male teachers as there were no female English teachers in the preparatory school while 40 were grade 12 students. This number was recruited from total number of 250 students of grade 12 among 6 sections. From these sections, the researcher recruited 7 students from 1-4 sections, and 6 students from the last two sections. Regarding to their sex, 20 of them were male students, and the other 20 were female students. This number was taken because the researcher believed this number could represent the rest population in getting the reliable data. He took this number through inferential statistics data method, which was used to generalize and estimate, about other population based on the sample respondents in his research. According to Zewditu et al. (2003) in their compiled module, inferential statistics method is concerned with the process of drawing conclusions about specific characteristics of a population based on information from obtained samples. Hence, the researcher would draw a conclusion from this number for the ideas of the rest 210 population on assessing learners' problem writing an effective paragraph on his study.

In addition to the above, this number was taken randomly as the researcher suggested that he could get enough data from these respondents since the problem of writing effective paragraph is very common to almost all students of grade twelve at Haik Preparatory School. This number of respondents also determined the administration of the data instruments to be administered on time.

There was also a need to take 10%- 20% respondents for descriptive research design, and the research design of this study was descriptive case study. As such Gay and Airasian (2003) postulate the sampling of 10% to 20% is often used in descriptive research type. Furthermore, the researcher used document analysis as a major data instrument tool. This data instrument needs much time to gather information on the issue of factors that affect learners' writing effective paragraph by taken the written documents of the sample respondents. Hence, the nature of the major data instrument could determine the number of respondents. This is to mean that if the researcher was to take more than 40 learner respondents, it is unquestionable that he would have faced the problem of time pressure to gather the necessary data as per to his research schedule.

In addition what has been stated above, it was also believed by the researcher that 40 students out of 250 could represent to the rest 210 learners as population variability in his study of investigating learners' writing effective paragraph problems. This was because most learners have similar educational background and foreign language policy in the region. For instance, English language is given as a subject matter to all students since grade one. Furthermore, all subjects are given in English language from grade 7 to grade 12. Therefore, they have the similar educational policy of foreign language. Moreover, as the researcher has observed in his six years experiences in teaching English as foreign language, learners have faced similar problems of writing effective paragraph especially, in Haik preparatory school of grade twelve. Thus, he can get ample information from these 40 respondents of grade 12th students.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

The researcher used document analysis by identifying learners' problems in their written paragraphs as a first data collection instrument for students. Second, he used questionnaire in the both forms such as close-ended and open-ended. The third was an interview questions for teachers and learners to gather the necessary data for his study. All these research instruments were discussed in detail as follows:

3.4.1. Document Analysis

Document analysis was the major tool of the researcher to conduct the necessary data. This was applied to collect both quantitative and qualitative types of data from learners' sample paragraphs. This implies that the obtained responses were presented in numerical in tables and sentences forms. Some selected topics were prepared to sample student respondents of the study. This implies that the researcher investigated the problems of students in writing paragraph from their documents. According to Selinger and Shohamy (1989) stated that document analysis is one of the data gathering techniques in qualitative research. This was used as a primary source of information to answer the research question number one.

3.4.2. Questionnaire

The researcher dispatched questionnaires in the form of favourable items (close-ended) and open-ended questions for learners to get the necessary information from them as a second tool of data collection. The researcher prepared questionnaires for students on the problems that affect students in writing effective paragraph while students write paragraph to get both qualitative and quantitative responses of the respondents. He administered these questionnaires in free writing process and tabular forms. The open-ended questions were dispatched for students to write their opinions freely to get the qualitative data. . Sample learners of grade 12 were inquired close-ended questions to tick on the given columns provided for each to obtain quantitative data.

3.4.3. Interview

Interview can be seen as a discussion between an interviewer and respondent(s), which sets out to provide data for the former. Interview is any interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind (Kumar, 1999).The researcher used a personal structured -interview to his respondents by preparing some predetermined open-ended questions for both teachers and students. This helped him to make his data more reliable as it is first hand source of information. It was used to assess the research questions number 1 and 4 which the problems grade 12 students in writing an effective paragraph, and the causes of these problems. These were expressed in qualitative quantitative approaches.

This interview was also very vital as a means of harmonization in filling the gap among the triangulation of data collection instruments. Moreover, as it is a primary source of information, the researcher got a detailed information by preparing some inter-views which were gathered by the above tools, and this could also prove the reliability of the study.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

This part deals with the triangulation of the data collection instruments while the researcher was conducting the actual research. Therefore, the researcher used document analysis at the very beginning of his data dispatching and collection time. In this instrument, he used both quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures as the nature of the instrument is both types. Quantitative data was used to express respondents' ideas in terms of numbers while qualitative data to express their ideas in words. This will be helpful to get the initial or primary data from his respondents through checking students' exercise books, and a single separate sheet on their class works, home works and assignments. This was preferable since it was the major tool of the data collection method.

Next, he dispatched questionnaires to all respondents of his research. In this tool, he used both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments as its nature invites him. Finally, he conducted an interview with all respondents that are teachers and students to check the validity of the information by preparing different questions.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Since the approach of the research is mixed, the researcher verbalized more of the data obtained all of the tools of the study such as document analysis, questionnaires and interview questions because he applied qualitative research approach. The obtained results were explained in letters and words especially, the document analysis which the major tool of the study. This refers to more use of words in the research. In addition to this, quantitative method like number of items and favourable item expressions were used in the data analysis part of this study. Quantitative and qualitative as O' Leary (2004:99) argues that qualitative data that are represented through words, pictures, or icons are analyzed by using thematic explorations, and quantitative data that are represented through numbers and analyzed using statistics.

According to Gorard (2004) combined or mixed methods research has been identified as a key element in the improvement of social science including education research with research strengthened by the use of variety of methods for many years.

Mixed methods approach to research is one that involves gathering numeric information (on instruments) as well as text information (on interviews) so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Cress Well, 2003).

Many researchers like Cresswell and Thomas (2003), and Krathwolh (1993) now view qualitative and quantitative methods as complementary choosing the most appropriate methods for the investigation. The researcher in this study applied numbers and words in the data analysis process to make the study acceptable and meaningful.

Both quantitative and qualitative can be combined in data collection which termed as paradigm. While they are together, the researcher aligns philosophically with one of research paradigms, which proceed from different premises, leading to and seeking different outcomes (Weirsma, 2000). In addition to the above, mixed research method is essential to get complete and meaningful data. As such Somekh and Lewin (2005 pp 275) state that a mixed method approach provides more complete and portraits to our social world through use of multiple perspectives and lenses. Hence, mixed method approach is very essential to gather complete data. In short, data were presented, discussed and interpreted in the form of numerical expressions and verbalizing the data in words as well.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As stated in the preceding chapter, the main objective of this study was to investigate learners' problem of writing effective paragraph of grade 12 students of Haik Preparatory School to address the specific questions:

- a. What are the problems of learners in writing effective paragraph of grade 12 at Haik Preparatory school?
- b. Which problem of writing an effective paragraph is dominant to learners?
- c. What are the steps students use to write an effective paragraph?
- d. What are the causes of the Students problems in writing paragraph?

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the collected data through document analysis, favorable items (Close-ended questions) and open-ended questionnaires for learners. Semi-structured inter-views were also prepared for both student and teacher respondents to answer the questions of the study.

4.1. Analysis of Learners' Problem in Writing Effective Paragraph

Paragraphs written by 40 sample student respondents were analyzed to identify the problems that students faced during paragraph writing tasks. The purpose of this instrument was to observe the common problems of learners in their written documents as first hand source of information. In addition, primarily, it was essential to answer question number 1 that discusses on learners' problems in writing an effective paragraph. All the categories of paragraph writing problems were observed, analyzed and discussed in accordance their actual happenings in the learners' written documents respectively. See the table below:

Table 1: Learners’ problems in writing an effective paragraph regarding with elements of paragraph:

No	Category of problems	Total paragraph in this problem
1	Lack of clearly stated topic sentence that shows function and placement	34
2	Inadequate developers	28
3	Lack of unity of ideas	25
4	Lack of coherence especially, intra paragraph connectors	30
5	Absence of clinchers (concluding expressions)	26

•Key: OQ Ss: open-ended questionnaire for student

Ss = Student respondent

T= Teacher respondent

As can be seen from Table above, the results gained from sample students’ written documents show many learners’ problems in writing an effective paragraph such as lack of clear stated topic sentence, inadequate developers, absence of unity among sentences, lack of intra paragraph connectors and nonappearance of conclusion have been seen from their written documents. Most of the written paragraphs by 40 sample respondents have the fore mentioned problems. It is better to see the original document written by Ss-1 on the topic “Describe your best friend’s physical appearance” as a typical example.

MY BEST FRIND LOOK LIKE (APPEARANCE)

her name is Ekram she was 18 years old. her appearance is stricking and medium in length she has a bright and lovely face and also she long and black hair. she wear mostly black, white and red dress. on her face she has beautiful eyes, very white teeth, erected nose. her walk is not very fast but not also slow it is medium. she has light fair skin and nice smile. her arms are

athletic. Ekram is my best friend b'c I like her personality she is fun likes to laugh but she can also be serious. she is kind creative and hard working (Ss-1).

The exertions made by this student were highly appreciable to produce her own written paragraph by using the possible elements of an effective paragraph. However, there were many problems in the document. Let alone other problems, the paragraph was not stated with its topic sentence, adequate developers, unity, coherence (intra paragraph connectors) and conclusion. Here under, they are expressed consecutively.

4.1.1. Analysis of how Lack of Clearly Stated Topic Sentence affect Learners' Paragraphs

Topic sentence plays a great role in describing the main idea of a paragraph. In order for a paragraph to be effective, it must begin with a topic sentence, have sentences that support the main idea of that paragraph, and maintain a consistent flow (Npontori, 2013). If learners know the main idea of a paragraph, they know what to write starting from introduction to conclusion. It would be easy to develop their ideas by supportive sentences and the other elements of paragraph.

However, a paragraph that has not clearly stated topic sentence fails to convey a meaningful and purposeful message to readers. It is very difficult to develop the idea of the given topic unless it is written clearly. Hence, learners' documents were the basic source of information for this study since the documents were written with the above problems. About 34 out of 40 paragraphs were written with lack of clearly stated topic sentence. This problem in its turn affected the developers too to develop its main points.

In relation to this question, close and open-ended questions, and semi-structured interviews were also asked to the sample student respondents. The responses for the close-ended question on "I use a topic sentence and its developers to strengthen the idea of the paragraph" indicated that about 19 number of (47.5%) of the respondents disagreed and 12 in number (30%) strongly disagreed correspondingly. While 5 (12.5%) and 4 (10%) of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This gave the way to prove that most paragraphs written by the sample student respondents were with the problem of topic sentence. Furthermore, 72.5% of the respondents for the open-ended question responded that they faced the problem of

stating the topic sentence clearly. Similarly, majority of the interviewees of students responded that they faced more challenges in writing their paragraphs' topic sentence. Let see Ss-5 obtained interview response:

Although I face different problems while I write my paragraph, I face more difficulty on how to write my topic sentence of my paragraph. It is the beginner of all my ideas in by topic sentence in writing her paragraph more than other problems of writing paragraph tasks. As topic sentence is the key that opens the other points of the writer's text, it should be stated clearly (Ss-5).

The results from EFL teachers' interview also indicated that most of grade 12 students could not state their topic sentence clearly. Let us pay a visit to the expression by one participant as follows:

To be frank, most learners of grade 12 are unable to write their paragraphs when teachers give them topics. They cannot state the topic sentence as per their grade levels instruct them to write their documents independently. They do not know where to begin their ideas of the given topics (T-1).

Consequently, one can easily understand that most of grade 12 students encounter the difficulty of writing their topic sentence in a way that their paragraphs tell readers the main points of their documents.

4.1.2. Analysis of how Inadequate Developers affect Paragraph Quality

A paragraph is adequately developed when it describes and supports to the topic sentence. Supporting sentences explain or prove the topic sentence. One of the biggest problems in student writing is that student writers often fail to support their ideas adequately. They need to use specific details to be thorough and convincing. There are several kinds of specific supporting details: examples, statistics, and quotations (Oshima and Hogue, 2009). In line to this, adequate development is important to fully develop and discuss the topic of your paragraph. If your paragraph is only 2-3 sentences, there is a good chance that you have not

developed it enough. Here are some ways you can develop and support your topic by using use examples, tell a story, illustrating the idea, compare and contrast (Vicenzi, 2010).

Even though adequate developers have such advantages, the documents written by sample respondents of learners of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school about 28 sample paragraphs had the problems of development. The developers are different from that of they should support in the paragraph. Responses of learners through close and open-ended questions showed that their written paragraphs lack detailed information to support the idea of the topic sentence. Let us observe the written paragraph by one student respondent below:

For self confidence is essential in presentation time. Self confidence is the key for presentation. It is the basic term to describe the confidence of one person self confidence is used for many place. From this one is for presentation time. If there is no self confidence, the person not thought anything independently. Because it is the ability to describe one thing by confidence. If there self confidence the people become dependency and dependency leads to the person to be poverty (Ss-39).

As can be seen from this sample written paragraph, it is all about self-confidence and its advantages. The student writer wanted to tell us why self-confidence is important and how it is useful. But, the sentences which were in a position of strengthening the topic were written poorly. For example, let us observe these lines.

For self confidence is essential in presentation time. Self confidence is the key for presentation. It is basic term to describe the confidence of one person. self confidence is used for many place (Ss-39).

These sentences lack inter-related expressions how self-confidence is essential for learners when they present their demonstration activities. Reasons and exemplifications were not written in detail to convey meaningful message on self-confidence. They meant fragmented idea about the essentiality of self-confidence. The first sentence is repeated by the second and then, by the third with no meaningful message to readers. This implies that they could not write their documents with examples, reasons and illustrations. Correspondingly, Vicenzi

(2010) stated that here are some ways you can develop and support your topic by using examples, tell a story, illustrating the reasons of the ideas.

Similarly, responses from the interviews of teachers and learners indicated students were not well trained to organize their paragraphs' topic sentences to convey their messages to readers as per to the expected grade 12 standard requirements.

4.1.3. Lack of unity of idea

An important element of a good paragraph is unity. Unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end. For example, if your paragraph is about the advantages of owning a compact car, discuss only that (Oshima and Hogue, 2009). That means a paragraph is effective when its sentences mean similar points. Each sentence in a paragraph needs to discuss on a single issue. As (Npontori, 2016) states unity refers to the extent to which all the ideas combined with in a paragraph hang together in a way that is for the reader to understand. However, 30 (75% written documents of students of grade 12 at Haik preparatory school out of showed that they did not put sentences together which dealt about a single idea one after the other to fulfill the fore mentioned qualities. Let us see a typical example by one student respondent's written paragraph as below:

Ss-31

Write a short paragraph on;

2. Self-confidence is very essential in presentation time (For or against)

~~Self Confidence is a belief in one self and abilities
it describe an internal state made up of what we think
and feel about our selves~~

~~Self Confidence is very essential in present
ation time such as~~

~~Create good pleasure for private happy
and it's used to express our idea effectively
to participate in social interaction~~

~~or used to translate our ideology with
out any interference and
to describe own opinion without
any confusing~~

~~→ to formulate good relation with
teachers, friend~~

~~→ you need to summarize your
writing with very few effective
words.~~

(Ss-31).

As can be seen from the above written paragraph, the student writer tried to tell us about the advantage of self-confidence. It was wonderful to describe what self-confidence mean. But, it lacks unity of Sentences to convey meaningful message to the readers. Sentences 1, 2 and 3 did not much with the rest sentences that dealt with some exemplifications on self-confidence.

One can possibly deduce that students of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school have the problem of writing paragraph tasks. They could not write sentences that are related one another to mean exactly similar points in their paragraphs.

4.1.4 Absence of Intra-Paragraph Connectors

Intra-paragraph connectors refer to the connectors in the paragraph like conjunctions and prepositions. A good paragraph has unity when all the sentences have a relationship to one another and to the main idea.

The connection among sentences in a paragraph can be shown in several ways, but principally by the use of transitional words and phrases. Transitional words and phrases may be conjunctions, such as and, but, and however, or explanatory expressions, such as for instance, on the other hand, and so on (Pitoe, 2008).

This implies that transitional words and phrases act as signals. They give directions, and tell where the paragraph is going. In this sense, transitional words and phrases also act to hold sentences together, in achieving unity. However, most of the paragraphs of the respondents indicated they lack connectors to join sentences one another. Responses from students' close and open-ended questions stated that they used connectors rarely while they write a paragraph writing tasks. For example, the paragraph written by Ss-1 seems like this:

her name is Ekram she was 18 years old. her appearance is stricking and medium length. she has a bright and lovely face and also she long and black hair---(Ss-1).

In this paragraph, let alone other problems like capitalization and tense parallelism, it needs to be joined by using the conjunctions in between the words Ekram and she to make these sentences meaningful as the main issue is on connectors of paragraph. The absence of intra paragraph connectors in writing an effective paragraph causes confusion and misunderstanding for readers. The documents cannot meaningful messages to their readers. The logical development chosen for the paragraph can be made very clear to the reader by the words used to connect one sentence to the next. These words are often referred to as logical connectives because they make clear not only the order but also the meaning of the writing text (Pitito, 2008).

Responses gained from the interviewees of both teachers and learners showed that even though few students used some intra connectors when they write a paragraph, majority of the learners did not use those connectors in their paragraphs.

Additionally, the written paragraphs by 40 sample student respondents indicated that about 32 out of the 40 paragraphs were written with the fore mentioned problem. This implies that many students of grade 12 of Haik preparatory had the problem using connectors in their paragraph writing tasks.

4.1.5. Lack of Concluding/Clincher Expressions

A concluding sentence serves two purposes: it signals the end of the paragraph, and leaves the reader with the most important ideas to remember. It can do this in two ways: summarizing the main points of the paragraph or repeating the topic sentence in different words. A concluding sentence is helpful to the reader because it is a reminder of the important points (Oshima and Hogue, 2009). Concluding expressions are used to represent some texts with a few sentences precisely. Moreover, the concluding sentence is the ending line of the paragraph. It should restate the main idea of the paragraph (Vicenzi, 2011). However, more than half (65%) of the sample Students' written paragraphs were not concluded by such sentences to remind readers the main ideas of their paragraphs. Rather they were left as if they would be continued. Your goal in your final sentences is to leave your ideas resounding in your reader's mind (Philips, 2012). Hence, conclusion expressions allow readers to stay in connection with what they read throughout the text. Let us have a look at the sample written by one learner participant:

Ss-1

Write a short paragraph on:

7. Describe your best friend's physical appearance

MY BEST FRIEND LOOK LIKE (APPEARANCE)
her name is Ekram. She was 18 years old.
her appearance is striking and medium in length.
She has bright and lovely face and also
she has long black hair.
she wear mostly black, white & red dress.
on her face she has beautiful eyes, very
white teeth, erected nose.
her walk is not very fast but not also slow it's
medium, she has light fair skin and nice smile.
Her arms are athletic.
Ekram is my best friend b.c I like her personality. She
is fun, likes to laugh but she can also be serious.
she is kind, creative and hard working.

(Ss-1).

From this learner respondent's written paragraph, we can see that there is no any concluding expression to sum up her paragraph's main idea with a few expressions. It seems to be continued by other sentences that can support the idea. In line with this, Vicenzi, (2010) the

concluding sentence is the ending line of the paragraph. It should restate the main idea of the paragraph.

In relation to this question, students were asked close-ended question that states: “I use precise words and phrases to conclude my idea of my paragraph.” 6 (15%) agreed and 3 (7.5%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, 14 (35%) disagreed, and the rest 17 (42.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. This gave the way to prove that most students written paragraphs’ were not written with concluding sentences. In addition, open-ended question on this issue was asked to students. They responded that they had lack concluding sentences as well when they wrote their paragraphs. In general, concluding sentences were the problem to nearly all learners of grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school.

Table-2: Observed students’ problems related in the steps used named as the three formulae of paragraph writing and others:

No	Category of problems	Total problems in this paragraph
1	Assertion	31
2	Illustration	37
3	Analysis	33
4	Punctuation	40
5	Capitalization	39
6	Spelling	28

4.1.6. Assertion

Assertion is the point the writer wants to prove in his/her paragraph. This step is stating the main idea of the writer's paragraph like topic sentence. He /she should plainly state the point that he/she will argue in the paragraph (MCloud-Bondoc, 2008).

However, 31 sample students written documents indicated that their paragraphs lack the main point that proves their first instance in the written paragraphs. They simply wrote what things came to their minds. Let us see the written paragraph o respondent as below:

The happiest day of my life

The day in holiday fasica in this year When we selebrate the holiday with my family. To surrprized by coming of my grand father am very happy Because I saw my grand after 3 years ago. I need saw him Very much. Really I was confussed by coming of him So I happiest day of my life is that day (Ss-33).

As can be seen from this respondent's written document, he was confused to his gist point in his paragraph clearly. He wanted to tell us about the happiest day of his life on holy day fasica, and how he celebrated it with his parents. However, he could not rather he came up with fragmented sentences. See the first sentence in his paragraph above. The obtained results through open-ended questionnaires and interview questions also show learners of grade 12 had the difficulty of follow the steps to write their paragraph tasks that was assertion. The common problem while I write my paragraph task is assertion (Ss-3). Correspondingly, teachers' replied learners faced this problem whenever they were engaged in paragraph writing activities (T-2).

4.1.7. Illustration

This pattern uses examples (One longer, extended example) to support the topic of sentence and is useful when your most convincing support is a number of pertinent examples (MCloud-Bondoc, 2008). In addition, the responses from questionnaires and interview show that grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school were challenged in giving examples for what they had written in their paragraph writing tasks. Let us see the original expression as below:

Even though giving examples is difficult for learners, they did not have the concept how to support their written paragraphs with examples (T-1).

4.1.8 **Analysis**

This is to mean the writer's example or quote relate to his/her main point, and the meaning of the point in this paragraph. This step should explain how his/her illustration is relevant to his/her main point. There are three formula for successful paragraph namely assertion, illustration and analyze. These 3-steps formulae are used to write an effective, meaningful, and convincing paragraph (Charissa, 20110). Additionally, a concluding sentence is helpful to the reader because it is a reminder of the important points (Oshima and Hogue, 2009).

The written paragraphs by the sample participants were with such the problem of giving related examples to their paragraphs. Even, these who gave examples were unrelated to the points they discussed in their documents. This problem was approved through students' open-ended questionnaires and interview questions of teachers and learners. The replies indicate that students did not summarize their paragraphs in precise sentences. Rather they left them only with the introduction and body of the paragraphs.

4.1.9. Punctuation problems

Punctuation plays a great role in giving meaning of written documents. This can be internal such as comma or end punctuation marks like question mark, period etc. The internal punctuations are such as comma, quotations, hyphen, semi-colon and colon. The end ones are like period, question mark and an exclamation mark (Aragaw, 1995). The misplacement of these punctuations highly affects the understanding of readers. They convey completely different meaning from what the author wants to mean.

But, most written paragraphs by the sample student respondents showed that punctuation marks were obvious problems to many grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school.

For example, let us see the paragraph written by Ss-39 on the topic self-confidence:

For self confidence is essential in presentation time. Self confidence is the key for presentation. It is basic term to describe the confidence of one person---(Ss-39).

In this written paragraph by Ss-39, the efforts made to write her paragraph was very admirable to write it. But, the problems lied between self and confidence. Because of the words self and confidence should be joined each other by hyphen to be understood by readers easily. The other problem was the first expression was considered as a sentence since it ended up with a period. However, it was wrong position of period in the place comma. The reason is the expression this respondent was began by preposition. It is obvious that when expressions begin by preposition are followed by commas.

Furthermore, open-ended questionnaires and interview questions were asked to these respondents similar question. They responded punctuation marks were very common problems when write paragraph tasks. Responses of teachers' interview also showed that learners did not use properly punctuation marks in their appropriate positions in the written paragraphs. Students used commas instead of periods and periods in the place of commas and other related punctuation problems in their paragraph writing tasks. This causes misunderstanding between readers and writers.

Table 3. Observed punctuation problems in learners written paragraphs:

ndents' code	Paragraphs in number	Categories of problems		
		Omission of comma	Omission of hyphen	Wrong use of period
Ss-1	1	4	0	4
Ss-2	1	7	0	2
Ss-3	1	3	0	0
Ss-4	1	2	3	0
Ss-5	1	7	0	2

Ss-6	1	8	0	6
Ss-7	1	5	0	5
Ss-8	1	10	0	7
Ss-9	1	3	0	4
Ss-10	1	6	0	3
Ss-11	1	5	0	1
Ss-12	1	3	0	4
Ss-13	1	5	0	3
Ss-14	1	8	0	5
Ss-15	1	2	0	1
Ss-16	1	6	0	9
Ss-17	1	2	0	6
Ss-18	1	9	0	6
Ss-19	1	1	0	3
Ss-20	1	3	0	8
Ss-21	1	2	0	3
Ss-22	1	2	0	3
Ss-23	1	5	5	0
Ss-24	1	9	0	6
Ss-25	1	4	0	3
Ss-26	1	8	0	5
Ss-27	1	8	0	4
Ss-28	1	10	0	3
Ss-29	1	6	2	2

Ss-30	1	11	8	7
Ss-31	1	3	2	3
Ss-32	1	7	0	0
Ss-33	1	6	0	7
Ss-34	1	5	0	4
Ss-35	1	4	0	5
Ss-36	1	10	0	8
Ss-37	1	6	0	4
Ss-38	1	9	0	6
Ss-39	1	4	8	0
Ss-40	1	10	0	6
Sub-total	40	228	28	158
Total mistakes=414				

As it is noticed in the table above, grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school had the difficulty of identifying the appropriate punctuation marks such as comma, hyphen and period in their paragraphs. From the document analysis of 40 written sample paragraphs on different topics, it was observed that there were 228 commas, 28 hyphens and 158 period mistakes. Most students have the problem of using comma in its right position in their paragraphs. Period was the second ranked problem of learners in writing paragraph tasks. Hyphen was the other difficulty of grade 12 students of Haik Preparatory School. One possible implication of this is that learners were in serious problems of commas more than hyphen and period as they had been observed in almost all written paragraphs. The second was the problem of using period, and the third was the difficulty of identifying the hyphenated words. In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that punctuation marks are problematic areas of grade 12 learners at Haik preparatory school when they write their paragraph tasks. The gained responses from learners' open-ended questionnaire show that 30% of the respondents faced

the problem of punctuation while they write their paragraph tasks. Similarly, the conducted interview questions with both teachers and students indicate that the problem of punctuation was most students' serious difficulty in paragraph writing activities.

4.1.10. Capitalization problem

40 student respondents were given writing paragraph tasks on different topics. Almost all written paragraphs were with different capitalization problems. These problems affected learners' communication with their readers. As the written paragraphs sample learners showed, some nouns and pronouns were used as beginners their sentences were written in small letters. But, they should not have written that way. Nouns and pronouns that are beginners of sentences should not be written in small letters, and at middle in capital letters (Aragaw, 1995). The paragraph written by Ss-40 seems like:

anyone who have a worriest day in his life and so I am I have no more word to explain my grand FATher he always love Thinks about me Rather than Himself---(Ss-40).

As can be seen from the above paragraph, it has many problems. However, let us only the capitalization. In this paragraph, the writer began his starting sentence in small letter in the word anyone. The pronoun anyone should be written in capital letter A. Misused of the small letter may cause misunderstanding and misinterpretation to readers of that paragraph. It looks like as if there were other expressions before it. In addition, the words FATher, Thinks and Rather were written in capital and small letters. According to grammarians, use capital letters in the middle of sentences is not acceptable.

Results from students' open-ended questionnaires and interview questions revealed that capitalization was many students problem while they wrote a paragraph tasks. For example, Ss-7 in her interview regarding the problems of learners in writing effective paragraph, she stated:

I face lots of problems when I write my paragraph tasks. Capitalization is one of the most dominant problems in my Paragraph writing activities. I forget to capital and small letters at their right places in my paragraph. It is difficult to me even after to write them in the right place in the paragraph by my teacher (Ss-7).

This respondent's expression reveals that capitalization was one of her common problems of in writing an effective paragraph. She stated that she made mistakes of capitalization at every writing paragraph tasks more frequency than like punctuation marks, spelling etc.

In line with the above responses, responses obtained from teachers' interview questions also showed that learners' paragraphs were highly affected by the problem of using the wrong position of small and capital letters in their paragraphs. The actual expressions of T-4 are given below:

Surprisingly, learners use small letters for the first letter of their names and end up in capital letter. It is very hard for learners to use the correct form of capital or small letters to write their names let alone paragraph writing tasks (T-4).

Another teacher respondent was asked similar question through an interview, and he responded that:

Sometimes, I get a chance to mark learners' exercise books. Even though students have other related problems in writing paragraph tasks, capitalization problem is very serious. Every word which is written by students has more than one capitalization problems in their sentences. It can be either capital letter or small letter (T-2).

According to the information gained from the fore mentioned teacher respondents through an interview, capitalization challenges students' writing an effective paragraph. Almost all recruited sample respondents of students' paragraphs were with this difficulty.

Table: 1.3. Capitalization problems observed from students' written paragraphs

Codes given to students	Number paragraphs	Categories of the problem	
		Using small letter instead of capital letter	Using capital letter instead of small letter
Ss-1	1	10	5
Ss-2	1	2	2

Ss-3	1	0	0
Ss-4	1	3	1
Ss-5	1	1	5
Ss-6	1	4	6
Ss-7	1	3	1
Ss-8	1	5	3
Ss-9	1	2	0
Ss-10	1	5	8
Ss-11	1	6	5
Ss-12	1	4	1
Ss-13	1	5	3
Ss-14	1	2	2
Ss-15	1	1	3
Ss-16	1	6	3
Ss-17	1	2	2
Ss-18	1	7	5
Ss-19	1	8	2
Ss-20	1	12	2
Ss-21	1	8	3
Ss-22	1	3	2
Ss-23	1	6	2
Ss-24	1	8	4
Ss-25	1	3	5
Ss-26	1	6	3

Ss-27	1	4	2
Ss-28	1	3	2
Ss-29	1	2	3
Ss-30	1	6	3
Ss-31	1	4	2
Ss-32	1	4	1
Ss-33	1	2	2
Ss-34	1	4	3
Ss-35	1	6	2
Ss-36	1	4	4
Ss-37	1	5	4
Ss-38	1	8	5
Ss-39	1	2	0
Ss-40	1	5	3
Sub-total	40	181	112
Total mistakes=293			

As the above table reveals, learners of grade 12 have a serious misunderstanding on how to use capitalization forms in the their writing of paragraph tasks. It was observed from the sample respondents' written paragraphs through the major instrument of this study document analysis nearly all learners have problem of capitalization forms. Most these paragraphs showed that among 40 paragraphs, 181 words were written in small letters rather than capital letters. In contrast, about 112 words were written in capital letters instead of small letters. Taken together, these results suggest that the usage of small and capital letters was a severe problem to a number of students of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school. All the sample student respondents written documents were with the drawback of small letters or capital letters. No paragraph was free from this problem. In accordance with the present results,

previous studies have demonstrated that capitalization problem was common to most learners. Additionally, Mohammedamin (2004) on his Thesis mentioned that grade 10 students at Bedeno secondary school had similar problems while they are engaged paragraph writing tasks.

4.1.11. Spelling Error

The problems of spelling of words in the three forms namely missing, adding and wrong spelling were observed from the sample student respondents' written documents. Some words were written by adding unnecessary letters in their paragraphs. Still others wrote their paragraphs with words that lack the whole spelling of the each word.

Table-5: Observed spelling problems from sample students' written paragraphs

Category of the problem		Total mistakes
1	Missing letter/s	7
2	Adding unnecessary letter/s	7
3	Wrong spelled words	14
Sub-total		28

As it is shown in the above table, 28 spelling problems were observed from learners' written paragraphs. This causes a serious problem for both writers and readers. Wrong spelled words (35%) got first rank among the fore mentioned problems. Words were not in their right spellings to convey meaningful messages to readers. While 17.5% and 17.5% were the second ranked problems of learners in their writing paragraph tasks. These refer to the problem of missing letters and adding unnecessary letters to some words. Additionally, the obtained responses through learners' questionnaire and interview questions as well as teachers' interview indicate similar on the problem of spelling in writing paragraph tasks. Learners of grade 12 had spelling problems in their paragraph writing tasks. Let us observe the response gained from one teacher's interview: Learners have the problem of writing the correct spelling of the word they want to write accurately. They write words and phrases by missing or adding

in their paragraphs (T-3). From these responses, one can say that grade 12 students of Haik preparatory of South Wollo had the difficulty of spelling while they write paragraph tasks.

Table-6: Incorrect words written by sample student respondents

Incorrect word	Correct word	Incorrect word	Correct word
Alphabat	alphabet	ancle	Uncle
Apprance	appearance	autet	Aunt
Befor	before	Clube	Club
Confused	confused	considrd	Considered
Creat	create	crearzy	Crazy
Unexceptable	an acceptable	extyting	Exciting
Fantastic	fantastic	Fore example	For example
Frind	friend	fubrary	February
Happiest	happiest	languge	Language
May	my	necessery	Necessary
Sack	sake	selebrated	Celebrated
Selfe	self	surrprized	Surprized
Were	where	where	Were
Worest	worst		

A paragraph written by Ss-38 was one of the sample paragraphs that showed how spelling problem was common problem as a sample from document analysis of student participants on the following topic:

The happiest day in my life

Ss-38

I have seen many exciting days in my life but, when I remember of them there is one day which comes first that day was when Football club BARCELONA beat PSG 6-1 I love watching football I have watched football for 7 years OR since the 2010 world cup I am in love with football. I am the supporter of Arsenal and football club BARCELONA.

When I return to my ~~life~~ story before that game football club Barcelona were beaten by PSG in the first ~~chance~~ game 4-0 so to progress to the next round football club Barcelona need to win 5-0 and Barcelona did the unexpected and beat PSG 6-1 And I was very very happy. I can't believe ~~seen~~

What they did & I spent the whole night shouting and doing crazy things. therefore this day is my happiest day in my life

— the end —

From this sample paragraph, we can observe that the words extying, clube, befor and unexceptable were written with wrong spelling, adding unnecessary letter, missing letter and wrong spelling.

However, the above presented words and phrases should have been written as exciting, club, before and unacceptable respectively.

Based on the findings, one can deduce that majority of written paragraphs of learners had the problem of writing wrong spelling of words (35%) out of 70% of students' difficulties of spelling.

A paragraph written by another respondent is as follows:

In my life the worest day was in December 1997. My grand father is ill and in february in 1997 died. Then, that time is the worest day in my life (Ss-12).

Even though the above paragraph is with many problems, here, spelling problem was the core focus of the researcher. Therefore, the words worest and february are written wrongly. Rather they should have been written as worst and February respectively.

4.2. Problems with steps Learners followed when writing their paragraphs

How learners organize their ideas before the actual writing of paragraph tasks was the second question for student respondents. They were asked close-ended, open-ended and an interview questions to indicate how they organize their ideas before they write their actual paragraphs. The majority of those who responded to this question felt that they used brainstorm and think time and again, and time and again on the given topic what things should be included in the topic they are going to write. The more time students spend on pre- writing activities, the more successful their writing will be (Richards, 1992).

Responses gained from close-ended on "I use brainstorm before I start to write my paragraph" indicate that 26 (65%) respondents and 7 (17.5%) respondents agreed and disagreed respectively. Surprisingly, 1 (2.5%) participant was remained with no respond or undecided to the fore mentioned question. This participant responded that he had no any idea on this item.

While the rest 5 (12.5%) participants and 1 (2.5%) respondent disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on this item.

Other responses to this question included that they used draft papers to develop their ideas on a separate sheet before they start their actual writing process for the given paragraph tasks. Let us see the response which was given by Ss-5 through an interview as a typical example:

When I write a paragraph tasks, I write some notes or main points on other separate sheet. Then, I transfer this developed idea to then I submit as a final edited paper (Ss-5).

Similarly, Ss-33 response from the interview seems like as follows:

When I am to write a paragraph, I think on the topic sentence, organize in idea in my mind and write them on other paper. Then, I write the last paragraph (Ss-33).

Overall, those results show that more number of learners use brainstorm their points before they write their paragraphs that are to be sub-mitted to their teachers.

Open-ended and an interview questions were also asked to student participants to mention the first thing they do to write an effective paragraph. However, almost half of the 40 learner sample respondents responded this question to some extent. 13.5% of the participants responded that most of the time they first identify the topic sentence of their paragraphs to write their paragraphs with good qualities of paragraphs. The topic sentence expresses the main point of the paragraph. The topic sentence is typically the first sentence of the paragraph. It helps your reader to understand what the topic of your paragraph is going to be. The purpose of the topic sentence is to state the main point of the paragraph and to give the paragraph a sense of direction (Vicenzi, 2010).

Others, 7.5% of the respondents replied that first they brainstorm before they start their actual writing process of an effective paragraph. Correspondingly, when students think carefully and organize their ideas for their paragraph before they begin writing, they collect ideas or generating ideas that mainly function as an organizer of thinking and an idea collector as well as a developer. This is so in pre-writing activities. The more time students spend on pre-writing activities, the more successful their writing will be (Richard, 1992). The interview

responses of teachers show that learners rarely follow some steps in writing their paragraph tasks. Most of the steps of paragraph, they wrote their paragraphs in disorganized way. This indicates that they lack the knowledge of steps for paragraph writing.

From the responses gained from open-ended questions and interview questions, we can say that majority of grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school identified their topic sentences before they write their paragraph tasks. However, somewhat, this result is contradictory to the information obtained from document analysis of learners' written paragraphs.

Students were inquired why they use some steps in writing a paragraph through both close-ended and open-ended questions to answer this question. The gained responses showed that learners used some steps in writing effective paragraph differently. Just over half of the respondents used some steps when they write their paragraphs to communicate with their readers such as teachers and peers easily. Let us observe the expression of one respondent in his open-ended questionnaire. Using some steps in writing paragraph guides writers where to go and stop. It is also helpful to be understood by readers easily (OQ Ss-29).

To get the possible responses from the sample respondents on the steps they use to write their paragraphs, the researcher used close-ended questionnaire. The aim of this tool was to identify the possible steps learners used to write an effective paragraph especially, to answer the research question number 2. The options were presented through tabular and statistical forms as follows:

Table7: The steps learners of grade 12 used in writing a paragraph:

Item No.	Statement		Responses for Favourable items (statements)				
			1	2	3	4	5
1	I use study guides to write a paragraph.		2	0	0	13	25
		%	5%	0	0	32.5 %	62.5 %
2	I first plan about what I want to write.		8	13	0	11	8
		%	20	32.5	0	27.5	20%

			%	%		%	
3	I brainstorm many ideas first before I start writing a paragraph.				1	5	1
			26	7			
			65 %	17.5 %	2.5%	12.5 %	2.5%
		%					
4	I use the three formulae steps like assertion, illustration and analysis of effective paragraph while I write a paragraph.		7	2	3	24	4
		%	17.5 %	5%	7.5%	60%	10%
5	Sharing and discussing with other students or teacher help me in writing effective paragraph.		20	10	2	6	2
		%	50 %	25%	5%	15%	5%
6	I refer to my personal experience to write an effective paragraph.		18	8	0	12	2
		%	45 %	20%	0	30%	5%
7	I use a topic sentence and its developers to strengthen the idea of the topic.		5	4	5	19	7
		%	12.5 %	10%	12.5 %	47.5 %	17.5 %
8	I always write a draft and then, revise it.		12	5	0	18	5
		%	30 %	12.5 %	0	45%	12.5 %
9	I use intra paragraph connectors to have a logical flow of ideas in my paragraph.		9	4	0	16	11
		%	22.5 %	10%	0	40%	27.5 %

10	I use precise words and phrases to conclude my ideas of the paragraph.		6	3	0	17	14
		%	15 %	7.5%	0	42.5 %	35%
11	I check if the purpose and placement of topic sentences are in their right position.		3	1	0	23	13
		%	7.5 %	2.5%	0	57.5 %	32.5 %

The student respondents were asked to give their agreements on the given options regarding with the steps they use when they write their paragraph tasks by ticking on the boxes as they apply to write an effective paragraph as noted by Grabe and Kaplan (1996), Hedge (2000), Johnson (1996) and former research findings of Hayes and Flower (1980). While students were filling in those items, all necessary feedbacks obtained through the close-ended questions indicated in the above table, 95% learners did not use guidelines when they write their paragraphs. The rest 5% indicates that they used other sample guidelines to write their paragraphs. This implies that they do not refer some references before they write their paragraphs. As can be seen from item number 2, 52.5 % of the respondents reported that they do plan while 47.5% said that they do not plan when they write paragraph tasks respectively. The responses for this item indicated that more than half of the students plan to write their paragraph tasks. Less than half learners did not plan to write their paragraphs.

For item 3 above, 82.5% of the students reported that they brainstorm many ideas in their minds before they start writing paragraph. Surprisingly, one respondent (2.5%) remained undecided to this item. While the rest 5% disagreed with this idea. It is possible to say most students use brainstorm before they write their paragraph. 9 (22.5%) respondents said they use the three steps formulae where as 70% of them do not use the fore mentioned steps. Unexpectedly, 7.5% respondents endured that they decide on it. These results suggest that a large number of learners are not in a position of using the three steps of paragraph writing. For item 5 in the above, 30 (75%) respondents agreed on it, and 8 (20%) of them disagreed on this item. The rest 2 (5%) remained voiceless to this item. For item 6, 65% of the participants agreed on it while 35% of them were not share it. One can say, just over half students help one another or are helped by their teacher to write their paragraphs. 22.5% and 65% of the

participants agreed and disagreed for item 7. Surprisingly, 12.5% of them did not give any response to this item. This indicates that majority learners of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school have the problem of referring to their personal experiences while they paragraph tasks. 42.5% and 47.5% of the respondents agreed and disagreed to item 8 respectively. This implies that some use topic and its developers to strengthen their idea of the topic. On the other hand, do not use.

However, this result contradicts to their actual paragraph writing as the results from their documents indicate. In the document analysis, most written paragraphs were with the absence of clearly stated topic sentence and its developers which is completely inverse to the responses from close-ended statements in table -3. The responses for item 9 indicate that most respondents (67.5%) disagreed with it while the rest 32.5% agreed on it. For items 10 and 11, 75.5% and 90% of the participants disagreed while the rest 22.5% and 10% agreed with those items on them respectively. This shows majority learners do not use precise expressions to conclude their ideas. At the same time, they do not check the placement of their topic sentence to indicate its function.

Similarly, open-ended and interview questions were asked to triangulate the correctness of this question. Most learner respondents responded to item 3 that was brainstorm. They brainstormed before they wrote their paragraphs. Gaber (2003) pointed out that when writing their first draft, students should not expect perfection or even work towards it. The first draft should be considered as a further means of discovering ideas and what one wants to do. Let us pay a visit to the expression given by one participant in the interview questioning the above raised question.

The first thing what I do in writing my paragraph tasks is

I brainstorm what to write simply by thinking in my mind.

Then, I write the on any paper. Finally, I transfer it to actual

Paper (Ss-26).

The other respondent in her open-ended question also stated that she selected the topic and its details before she writes her paragraph (Ss-30). This response is in line with item 8 in table-3 in the overhead that deals with topic sentence and its developers.

Students were inquired which element/step challenges them more than others in writing their paragraph. Open-ended and an interview questions were inquired to learner respondents to indicate the more challenging step while they write their paragraph tasks. Most of them responded that write the topic sentence in their paragraphs was the more challenging step. Responses gained from open-ended questions on this item, 73% of the participants indicated that the more challenging step was how to write their topic sentences in their paragraphs to show the main ideas. Additionally, one respondent in his open-ended question stated that topic sentence is the more difficult step to me. It confuses me in putting it as an inclusive phrase that show to the main idea of my paragraph (Ss-40). A reader should encounter the topic sentence and have a general idea, and of what the paragraph will continue to discuss (Npontori, 2016). The rest 15%, 8% and 7% respondents replied the more challenging step is adequate developers, unity and coherence respectively. The response from one participant in the open-ended question indicates that listing the supportive ideas are very challenging step in writing my paragraph tasks (Ss-9). Another respondent also replied as coherence is the more difficult when I write my paragraph activities (Ss-15).

Those results showed that majority of respondents' the more challenging step is how to produce the topic sentence in their paragraphs. A minority respondents' problem is the other steps like adequate developers, unity and coherence.

Likewise, results from learners' interview show that many students face more challenging in writing the topic sentence in their paragraph tasks. However, one respondent replied that it was impossible to him to mention any specific step whenever he has written a paragraph. All steps challenged him equally all the time (Ss-31). This participant has the difficulty of using some steps to write his paragraph. Surprisingly, other respondent reported any step did not challenge him when he has written his paragraph. However, this response was absolutely,

contradictory with the actually writing ability of this respondent as observed in the document analysis part.

4.3. Lack of Elements of an effective paragraph

Whether learners' paragraphs include all the elements of an effective paragraph or not was asked to gain the necessary responses from teacher and student respondents to answer the research question 3. Student respondents of grade 12 were inquired both open-ended and interview questions to mention the elements of an effective paragraph in their written paragraphs. However, the gained results indicate that about 70% of learners replied that as their paragraphs do not include all the elements of an effective paragraph. They stated that even though some elements may be included, it does not mean all written paragraphs have all elements. They could consist of at most three elements like topic sentence, developers and coherence. The other elements can be out of the written paragraphs. Let us see the response given by Ss-5 as sample.

To be frank, my paragraph may consist of its topic sentence and coherence. But this does not mean it includes all elements of an effective paragraph. It does have all the unmentioned elements (Ss-5).

Equally, most respondents reported that not all of elements but few of them are used in our paragraphs. One respondent coded 15 replied that it is unfair to say my paragraph includes all elements of an effective paragraph. Rather it may have some the common ones such as topic sentence and concluding sentence (Ss-15). For about 14.5% of the participants replied that their paragraphs include all the elements of an effective paragraph. But, these responses are to some extent in opposite of what was received from the document analysis of the researcher's own observation. He observed from the sample student participants that all most all sample written paragraphs were with the problem of elements of an effective paragraph.

Astonishingly, 15.5% of the sample respondents did not give any response to this question. They simply submitted it in blank space.

Correspondingly, teachers were interviewed the same question. Majority of them reported that learners written documents do not include all elements of an effective paragraph. They said that even very few elements of paragraph are not included in their paragraphs. Let us observe the expression by teacher coded as T-1 below:

I get some chances to mark learners' written document. Most of written paragraphs of students do not consist of the elements of an effective paragraph. Few of written documents have some elements of paragraph. The rest paragraphs are written with elements of paragraph (T-1).

The overall responses for this question show that most written paragraphs by grade 12 students do not include all the elements of an effective paragraph in their written paragraphs. The researcher's own observation from learners' documents proves this problem.

Students were asked which element of an effective paragraph dominantly affects their paragraph writings tasks. Open-ended and interview questions were asked to sample learner participants of this study to explain the most frequently problem of students while they write their paragraph tasks. According to the results obtained from these respondents, 73% of the participants replied that writing the topic sentence was the most frequent problem in writing their paragraph tasks. Before writers can begin writing, they need to know what they are writing for. First, look at the writing prompt or assignment topic. As they look at the prompt, note any key terms or repeated phrases because they will want to use those words in their response. Then after, develop a topic Sentence. Before writing a paragraph, it is important to think first about the topic then, what you want to say about the topic. Most often, the topic is easy, but the question then turns to *what* you want to say about the topic. This concept sometimes is called the controlling idea (Enye, 2014). One respondent stated that the problem of writing the topic sentence clearly in my paragraph is the most repeatedly step. It challenges me every time in writing paragraph tasks (OQ: Ss-3). About 13.5% of the participants replied that coherence as their dominant problem of writing paragraph steps to keep their paragraphs logical flow and meaningful to their concerned readers. Coherence refers to the extent to which flow of one sentence to the next sentences are logically linked to one another in a paragraph, and is easily

understood by the reader (Npontori, 2016). Even though the steps of writing an effective paragraph are difficult to me, coherence is the dominant problem when I imply write paragraph tasks (OQ: Ss-23). Whereas 10% of the respondents stated the dominant problem among the steps of writing an effective paragraph was adequate developers. Astonishingly, 3.5% of the respondents said nothing to this question. They simply submitted it with blank space. Similarly, the responses gained from the interview also indicate similar problem of students as far as the dominant problem of step of learners face in writing an effective paragraph.

From the gained information, some one can say that topic sentence was the most common problem of majority of grade 12 students' regarding with the steps of writing an effective paragraph in Haik Preparatory school of South Wollo.

Learners were inquired about the impact of lack of the components of a good paragraph in written documents. Open-ended and interview questions were asked to students to explain the drawbacks of the absence of the components an effective paragraph. Of 40 respondents who responded to this question, 45% of the participants replied paragraphs with this problem are meaningless and they cause miscommunication between the writers and readers. One of the respondents expressed:

If my paragraph lacks the components an effective paragraph

It will not be meaningful and people will not understand it.

As a result, it causes confusion and miscommunication (Ss-24).

This respondent's expression showed that absence of elements of paragraph causes a serious problem to readers and they are sources of misunderstanding between writers and readers.

In addition, another participant replied that a paragraph that lacks its major components I think it cannot convey any meaningful message to the readers (Ss-3).

About 23.5% of the respondents reported that a paragraph that lacks the components of an effective paragraph is not unified and it cannot be clear to readers. 28 % of the participants replied this problem is more likely a paragraph that is not logically arranged. The rest 4.5%

did not reported anything. Learners' written documents and the responses from teachers' interview also show as paragraphs were with such problem that could not convey meaningful message to readers because they did not know the elements of an effective paragraph.

Taken over these responses, one can understand that the absence of the components of an effective paragraph causes misunderstanding and confusion between writers and readers.

4.4. Inappropriate use of connectors in paragraph

Whether students use intra paragraph connectors to have a good flow of idea in their paragraph or not was the other question. This was prepared to answer the research question of number1. To learner respondents, open-ended and an interview questions were inquired in addition to document analysis if students use intra connectors in their paragraph writing tasks. As it was observed from the sample paragraphs, many students did not apply the necessary connectors in their documents. The responses obtained from students' questionnaire implied only small number of them used intra connectors in their paragraph writing tasks. 51% of the respondents reported as they use these connectors such as conjunctions, preposition etc. in different positions of their paragraphs. One participant replied that he used those connectors as introductory, to join words with words, phrases with phrases and sentences with sentences in the middle position (Ss-40). Another student respondent also stated, "I use connectors to relate sentence to sentence, and words to words in my paragraph writing activities" (Ss-8).

According to these respondents, intra connectors are used to join one idea to the other in different parts of their paragraphs. However, this result is a little bit different from the results gained in the document analysis part. There were not that much intra connectors in their written paragraphs as they were observed by the researcher. The responses from the interview part also show similar results. One participant answered, "When I write my paragraph activities, I try to use all the necessary intra connectors in my paragraph (Ss-16). 34.5% of them replied that they did not use any connectors in writing paragraph tasks due to different reasons. Let us see the response given:

No, I do not use any connectors in writing my paragraph activities. Because I am not which connector needs to the sentences I have written in my paragraph. They are not clear to me to apply them in writing paragraph tasks (Ss-35).

From the response of this respondent, we can deduce that some learners are not familiar with the functions of intra connectors in their paragraphs. Others for about 8% respondents gave unrelated ideas to this question. From those, one participant stated that he used connectors when he wanted a progressive (Ss-39). This expression is completely beyond the scope of the question. This question does not deal with the progress of students. Hence, few students are not able to understand the instruction of their writing tasks. The obtained results from teachers' interview also indicate that students did not have the ability to apply connectors in their paragraphs. Let us see the original expression of one teacher participant as below:

Students of grade 12 at Haik preparatory school had the problem of using the appropriate Paragraph connectors in their paragraph writing tasks. They apply inappropriate connectors in their paragraphs. Instead of using conjunctions of similarity, they used conjunctions of contrast in the wrong position and context (T-3).

All in all, the problem of applying the right paragraph connectors in paragraph writing tasks was the common difficulties of grade 12 learners at Haik preparatory school.

4.5. Causes of learners' problem in writing effective paragraph

To answer research question-4, learners were inquired to give their opinions on causes of the problems they encounter when they write their paragraph tasks. Student respondents were asked open-ended and interview questions to mention the causes of their problems in writing an effective paragraph. 55.5% of the 40 learner respondents indicate that the causes of being poor in writing paragraph were lack of good background knowledge in the skill of writing an effective paragraph. Writing is a time when students produce their own texts based on their previously acquired skills and knowledge (Davidson, 2007). This implies learners' writing ability of experiences in the past grade levels plays great role in the present time whether positive or negative. In this case, it affected learners negatively. One respondent expressed:

I think the problem writing an effective paragraph is caused by many things. But, the major one is lack of having good background knowledge from the former grade levels we have crossed. We were not taught very well about writing paragraph (Ss-35).

From this response, one can understand that learners do not have a good basis of writing of paragraph in their former grade levels. This is the reason why the sample written paragraphs observed by the researcher were with many paragraph problems in the previous pages.

24.5% of the respondents reported that lack of practice was the cause of this problem. Writing is continuously improving as a function of practice as is typical for perceptual motor and cognitive skills in general (Kellogg, 2006). This implies that learners were not practising this skill repeatedly. Let us see this respondent's expression:

The problem of writing an effective paragraph is caused by lack of practice in writing paragraph exercises. Even though some tasks are in each unit of grade 12 English text -book, we do not have enough time to practise them in classrooms and at our homes. Additionally, we are not responsible to write paragraphs outside of the classroom (Ss-27).

The reply denotes that learners did not practise the skill with some given exercises due to time pressure in both classrooms and at their residents properly. In addition, learners were not responsible to write their paragraph writing activities. Absence of taking responsibility in learning writing ability is another problem that comes from students themselves. In line with this reply, Italo (1999) stated that learners must take the responsibility for learning if meaningful learning is to take place.

Similarly, gained replies from interviews of both students and teachers reveal that lack of practice in the skill was the major cause of the mentioned problem. One student respondent in her interview replied as follows:

To be honest, we do not practise writing paragraph tasks in classrooms as well as outside classrooms. We simply learn the theory of writing paragraph orally. Teachers teach like-wise other skills (Ss-5).

Correspondingly, one teacher participant also stated in his interview as follows:

It is obvious that every skill of English is included in all chapters of the text -book of grade 12. However, teachers knowingly or unknowingly give the skill to learners rarely. Learners do not get as many as needed to practise the skill in classrooms or at their homes. This may be because of time pressure to practise this skill in classrooms as the time allotment is 42 minutes per a period (T-1).

According to the gained responses, more than half of learners' problems in writing an effective paragraph were caused by the absence of deliberate practice. The rest 20% of the participants replied differently on this question as below: 5% of them said that it was caused by lack of interest from learners and teachers in the skill. Let us look at one learner respondent:

I do not want to write a paragraph tasks. Since, I am not interested in it. Additional, I do not have the understanding of writing paragraph. It may be easy, but I do not like to attend it properly in my classes (Ss-33 OQ).

As this respondent's reply indicates, some students do not have an appetite to attend English writing skill lessons regularly. Another teacher respondent response in his interview also showed:

Among many causes of this problem, lack of interest is the major cause of learners' poor writing ability of paragraph. They are not interested in writing paragraph tasks. This habit indirectly affects teachers' interest in teaching writing paragraph lessons. As a result, learners are highly affected in the skill (T-3).

Overall, these results indicate that lack of motivation of learners play a great contribution to learners to be poor in writing an effective paragraph. Initiation of learners in the skill in its own turn affects teachers' motivation in the teaching-learning process. Motivation is one cause of good or bad performance in students' writing paragraph. Correspondingly, Wigfield and Eccles (2002:418) stated that students' ability is also highly influenced by external incentives such as awards and punishments. This implies that students need some physical praises such as pens, exercise books and remarks in their documents to write paragraphs very well.

A minority of the respondents (12.5%) of learner participants reported that teachers' teaching strategies, contents and lack of appropriate assistance were the causes of their today's

problems in writing an effective paragraph. These are some common strategies for teachers to teach their students in writing effective paragraph in EFL classrooms and out of classrooms (Cosmato, 2014). Furthermore, the teaching-learning strategies that are used by teachers in classrooms for learners' abilities in pre-writing, drafting, and revision that manages the demands of composition writing (Fayol, 1999). Therefore, teaching strategy plays a great role to improve students' writing paragraph ability.

Lack of teachers' assistance influences learners' writing ability. Learners' problems of writing an effective paragraph was caused by the absence teachers' help. Even though the current teaching and learning appreciates student-centered approach, students need to be supported by teachers when it is necessary. Teachers should support their students to develop their skills instead of blaming them for poor writing performance, Russel (1990).

Similarly, responses from both participants show strategies of teaching and learning were causes of this problem. One teacher respondent wrote as follows:

The teaching strategies teachers use affect learners' abilities of writing paragraph. We teachers teach this skill simply by restate the theoretical concept of the text -book but not practical written paragraphs to students. We teach them in the way were trained traditionally (T-1).

Likewise this teacher respondent's reply, Dawit (2013), in Ethiopia, the role English language plays in education is indubitable although the language is considered largely as a foreign language. This is because of the traditional method of teaching in the schools of the country. Consequently, teachers, material writers and course designers have tried to realize this belief. According to Widdowson (1990:54), the structural approach was depended: "The belief that language learning comes about by teaching learners to know the forms of the language as medium and the meaning they incorporate; that they will learn how to do things with this knowledge on their own." Thus, one can possibly say that the structural approach had commonly adopted in teaching English language in Ethiopia rather than writing skills. Similarly, writing skills in general and writing effective paragraph in particular were given in Ethiopia in a very traditional way. It is more of teacher dominated teaching-learning methods. This leads students to English language deficiency in the country.

Surprisingly, 2.5% of student respondents remained with no ideas. One of them said that he had no idea on this question. He could not mention some causes of the problem (Ss-31).

The evidence from this respondent suggests that some students have not any information about the causes of their problems of being poor in writing effective paragraph. If they do not know the causes, they would not improve their problem of paragraph writing.

Harmoniously, the results obtained from teachers' interview questions display that this problem was the combination of many causes. For instance, lack of teachers' good background in teaching paragraph writing tasks was typical cause of this problem. Teachers have not taught learners as per the objectives of the text –book in the specified grade level. The strategies teachers used gave way for the appearance of this problem. Learners' background on this skill was also the other cause of the problem. Let us observe one teacher respondent's expression below:

The difficulty of learners in writing effective paragraph was caused by both teachers' lack of good teaching paragraph experience on strategies and subject matter. Additional, learners' background and interest on the skill of paragraph writing tasks (T-3).

The overall obtained responses reveal that learners' problem in writing effective paragraph was caused by teachers' way of teaching, strategies they applied and students' experience on the skill.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

The main purpose of this study was to investigate learners' problem of writing an effective paragraph in the case of grade 12 of Haik preparatory school of south Wollo. To achieve this, the researcher applied descriptive case study design. In analyzing the gained results from the discussion, he used both quantitative and qualitative research tool methods. The major instrument was document analysis. The investigation of learners' problem in writing an effective paragraph through document analysis has shown all the elements of an effective paragraph such as topic sentence, developer, unity, coherence, paragraph connectors and conclusion. Correspondingly, open-ended and interview questions show similar results. The second major finding was the three formulae steps viz. assertion, illustration and analysis as well as punctuation, capitalization and spelling problems.

The steps learners used to write paragraph tasks were replied differently through close-ended and open-ended questions. The gained responses indicate that large number of students used brainstorm in writing their paragraphs.

Open-ended and an interview questions were inquired to learner respondents to indicate the more challenging step while they write their paragraph tasks. One major finding on this indicates that topic sentence was the more challenging step for learners. Open-ended and interview questions were asked to students to explain the drawbacks of the absence of the components an effective paragraph. About 45% of the participants replied paragraphs with this problem are meaningless and they cause miscommunication between the writers and readers. The rest 23.5% and 25% stated this brings lack of unity and coherence respectively.

The investigation on the causes of learners' in writing an effective paragraph has shown that lack of good background knowledge, practice, learners' irresponsibility to learn, teachers' teaching strategies, absence of teachers' assistance, contents and lack motivation for students were the common causes of the problem.

5.2. Conclusions

The main objective to conduct this study is to investigate learners' problem of writing an effective paragraph in the case of grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school. Now, the significant questions got some possible solutions. On the bases of the major findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

Findings from the document analysis, questionnaires and interviews indicate that even though learners of grade 12 had written their own paragraphs, there were very common problems on the elements and steps of effective paragraph. There was no paragraph free from the problem of effective paragraph. Among these elements, topic was seen repeatedly and likely to be the more difficult for learners of grade 12 at Haik preparatory school. Additionally, the most pertinent finding of the study indicates that there is a huge gap in grade 12 students of Haik preparatory school on how to write an effective paragraph. The written paragraphs are disorganized, and punctuated inappropriately. An implication of this is the possibility that grade12 students have the problem of writing effective paragraph as per the requirements of the grade level.

Last of all, one can say that despite the fact that teachers have the knowledge on writing effective paragraph, they do not teach their students by applying different methods effectively to infer the skill. At the same time, learners are responsible to attend their English classes regularly. As a result, the problem is getting worse and worse from time to time. They also select contents for students that can allow them to write their paragraphs for they would say a lot on it.

5.3. Recommendation

- Based on the above summaries and conclusions, the following recommendation is suggested on the problem of writing effective paragraph. In light of the findings of the study, and conclusions drawn, the further recommends, teachers should give special attention for learners to understand ways of writing paragraph tasks. They also need to use different strategies and various contents to improve their students' ability of writing paragraph.

- Writing an effective paragraph is a skill that needs unceasing practice. Having this ideology in mind, EFL teachers should let their students practice the skill the students should practice in both in the classroom and at home in the forms of class work, homework and assignments respectively.
- Learners ought to know about the elements an effective paragraph before they are engaged in writing paragraph tasks. Then, this should be followed by practicing the skill frequently. Students should develop their writing paragraph tasks by referring different written sample paragraph.
- In addition to the fore mentioned suggestions, learners' problem in writing effective paragraph should be examined in detail by other researchers by taking a large of respondents. In order to reduce the degree of this problem, the concerned bodies should open an opportunities of training for EFL teachers in off seasons.
- Paragraph writing tasks should be given equal attention like other skills.

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix A

Haramaya University

College of Social Sciences and Humanities

School of Foreign Language and Journalism

M.A in TEFL Program

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

The document analysis is carried out by analyzing students' paragraph. The paragraph is written by the sample students making them to choose one from some alternative topics presented. Then the problems in the paragraphs are analyzed. Some of the following questions are focused for the analysis.

1. Does the paragraph have a clearly stated topic sentence?
2. How sample paragraphs are written in learners' documents in including elements of an effective paragraph.
3. Do the sample paragraphs have unity among sentences of the paragraphs?
4. Do learners use intra paragraph connectors in their writing of effective paragraphs?
5. Do written paragraphs include concluding sentences?
6. How punctuation marks, capitalizations and spelling are used in their paragraphs?

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire consists of two types of questionnaires: favourable item (Close-ended) and open-ended.

QUESTIONNAIRE OF FAVOURABLE ITEMS FOR GRADE 12 LEARNERS

Dear learner,

First, I would like to thank you for your willingness to fill this questionnaire. For each statement, please put tick mark (✓) in one of the boxes below which best suits your idea.

The options are:

- 1- Agree
- 2- Strongly-agree
- 3- Undecided
- 4- Dis-agree
- 5- Strongly dis-agree

Item no.	Statement	Favourable items (statements)				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I use study guides to write paragraph.					
2	I plan first what I want to write.					
3	I brainstorm many ideas first before I start writing a paragraph.					
4	I use the three formulae steps like assertion, illustration and analysis of effective paragraph when I write a paragraph.					

5	I use a topic sentence and its developers to strengthen the idea of the topic.					
6	I always write a draft and then, revise it.					
7	I use intra and inter paragraph connectors to have a logical flow of ideas in my paragraph.					
8	I check if the purpose and placement of topic sentences are in their right position.					
9	I use intra paragraph connectors to have a logical flow of ideas in my paragraph.					
10	I use precise words and phrases to conclude my ideas of the paragraph.					
11	I check if the purpose and placement of topic sentences are in their right position.					

Appendix C

LEARNERS' OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

An open-ended questionnaire to be filled by grade 12 students of Haik Preparatory School of South Wollo Zone. This questionnaire aims to investigate your writing skill on effective paragraph. Your participation in this research will remain confidential and it is only for academic purposes at Haramaya University.

Dear learner,

First, thank you so much for your willingness to fill this questionnaire. This is to get genuine information on problems of writing effective paragraph in focus of grade 12 students. Here, you are, kindly requested to give your honest responses for question.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Background information:

Do not write your name

Sex: Male

☐

Female

☐

1. What are the problems you face when you write a paragraph? Can you mention some _____ of them? _____

2. When you are given writing paragraph tasks, how do you organize ideas before you begin _____ the _____ actual writing? _____

3. What is the first thing that you do in writing an effective paragraph? _____

4. Do you use some steps when you write a paragraph? Explain why or why not you use them? _____

5. What are the steps you use in writing an effective paragraph? _____

6. Which step challenges you more than others in writing your document (Paragraph)? _____

7. Does your paragraph include all the elements of an effective paragraph? Mention them. _____

8. Which element of a paragraph is difficult to you in most of your writings? _____

9. What do you think if your document or paragraph lacks the components of a good paragraph? _____

10. Do you use intra and inter paragraphs (connectors like words and sentences) to have a good flow of idea in your paragraph? How do you apply these connectors? _____

11. What do you think the causes of the problems you encounter when you write a paragraph? _____

Appendix D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LEARNERS

The purpose of this interview is for academic study at Haramaya University. It also intends to get genuine information on the problems of learners in writing an effective paragraph at Haik preparatory school of south Wollo Zone.

Dear learner, first I would like to take this opportunity thank you for your willingness to be my interviewee for my research study at Haramaya University. Your reflection will determine for the success or failure of my study. So, you are kindly requested to give your honest opinions.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

1. What are the problems you face when you write a paragraph? Can you mention some of them?
2. What is the first thing that you do in writing an effective paragraph?
3. Do you use some steps when you write a paragraph?
4. What are the steps you use in writing an effective paragraph?
5. Which step challenges you more than others in writing your document (Paragraph)?
6. Does your paragraph include all the elements of an effective paragraph?
7. Which element of paragraph is difficult to you?
8. Do you use intra and inter paragraphs to have a good flow of idea in your paragraph?
9. What do you think the causes of the problems you encounter when you write a paragraph?

Appendix E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EFL TEACHERS

The purpose of this interview is for academic study at Haramaya University. It is also intended to get genuine information on the problems of learners when they write an effective paragraph.

Dear teacher,

Before everything else, I would like thank you for your willingness to be my respondent. Your reflection will provide an insight for the success or failure of my study. You are expected an honest citizen to your personal ideas.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration!

1. What are the major problems of your students face in writing effective paragraph? Can you mention some of them?
2. Do they write a good paragraph? If your answer is yes, can you explain it how they can write it? If it is no, why they cannot?
3. What types of problems learners encounter when they write a paragraph?
4. Can the learners identify their topic sentence before they develop it in to a paragraph by supportive sentences? How they write it or why they cannot?
5. Can students show the right position and purpose of topic sentence in their paragraphs?
6. What are the dominant problems of learners regarding with the steps of an effective paragraph?
7. Are learners familiar with elements of an effective paragraph in their writing tasks or not?
8. Do learners use these components of paragraph practically in the tasks given to them? If they do not use them, what do you think the reasons behind it?

9. How the elements of an effective paragraph are used? Can they write one after the other orderly?
10. Do learners use intra and inter paragraph connectors in their paragraph to have a good flow idea?
11. What do you think the causes of the problems learners face in their writing of paragraph?

Appendix F

SAMPLE WRITTEN PARAGRAPHS OF LEARNERS

SS-31

Write a short paragraph on;

2. Self-confidence is very essential in presentation time (For or against)

It lacks clearly stated topic sentence

~~Self Confidence is a belief in one self and abilities
it describe an internal state made up of what we think
and feel about ourselves~~

Self Confidence is very essential in present
ation time such as
Create good pleasure for private happy
and it's used to express our idea effectively
to participate in social interaction
or used to translate our ideology with
out any interference and
to describe own opinion without
any confusing

→ to formulate good relation with
teachers, friend

→ you need to summarize your
writing with very few expe
ssions.

25/07/09

Source: A paragraph written by student 31

Ss-10

Write a short paragraph on:

3. The importance of learning English language

- 1) English is the most commonly spoken language in the world.
- 2) One out of five people can speak or at least understand English! *unrelated topic sentence*
- 3) English is the official language of 53 countries. There is a lot of people to meet and speak to.
- 4) English is the language of the media industry. *seen*
- 5) English is also the language of the Internet. Many websites are written in English. You will be able to understand them and to take part in forums and discussions.
- 6) English is only useful - it gives you a lot of satisfaction.
- 7) Learning English feels great.
- 8) Nice stuff! By learning English, we not only learn about other countries, new experiences will make you grow as a person more than learning the names, habits and ways of life in a culture that is not from yours.

Source: A paragraph written by student 10

Write a short paragraph on:

7. Describe your best friend's physical appearance

My best friend's physical appearance is very good. She is very happy, have a good relationship with her friends & me. She does not disturb in the class when we are learning. Some of her physical appearance (body structures) are, she is a medium height, long hairs, tall eyes, thin size, she has a dark brown color face. Some times she tussle with some people and has some irritation trait from her appearance but she quickly retrieve from her irritation trait.

Seen
3/5/2020

Source: A paragraph written by student 25

SS-19

Write a short paragraph on:

7. Describe your best friend's physical appearance

my friend name is mohammed Ali
he is handsome and tall.
his appearance is amazing when you see him.
he has long nose, wide chest with strong
muscle that he experienced for a long
period of time by joining gymnasium.
also his physical structure looks like
Robot because of his body strength and
endurance. His hair looks like silver
that flows from high mountains
and his eye looks like a pure water.
Totally he is full of tremendous physical
appearances.

ex 19
21/07/09

Source: A paragraph written by student 19

SS-15

Write a short paragraph on:

3. The importance of learning English language

one of the important of learning
English language is that very wide b/c it
is the key. In order to understand biology
civilic, chemistr and other subject in addition to
this learning English language is used to for
read information by sending 'F.B' and TV. &
When one people migrate to other
country you can communicate in
other people. So English language
very important. See

2/10/19

A paragraph written by student 15

SS-1

Write a short paragraph on:

7. Describe your best friend's physical appearance

my BEST FRIEND LOOK LIKE (APPEARANCE)

her name is Ekram. She was 18 years old.

her appearance is striking and medium in length.

She has bright and lovely face and also

she has long black hair.

she wear mostly black, white & red dress.

on her face she has beautiful eyes, very white teeth, erected nose.

her walk is not very fast but not also slow it is medium. she has light fair skin and nice smile.

Her arms are athletic.

Ekram is my best friend b/c I like her personality. She is fun, likes to laugh but she can also be serious. She is kind, creative and hard working.

Source: A paragraph written by student 1

SS-7

Write a short paragraph on:

3. The importance of learning English language

It is the most spoken official language in the world. It is the primary language used in international affairs. English language is indisputably the primary language of global trade and commerce in many countries. Most tourism authorities and other officials in contact with the public speak English to interact and engage with tourists & immigrants. Knowing English opens job & employment opportunities in many countries and markets. Learning English really can change your life. One of English's best features is its flexibility. You can often find many different ways to explain the same thing, thanks to its wide range of vocabulary. English is also hugely important as an international language and plays an important role. So, knowing English will allow you access to an incredible amount of information. English language is the most commonly spoken language in the world. So, English language is very important.

Source: A paragraph written by student 7

SS-20

Write a short paragraph on:

6. The happiest or the worst day of my life

The happiest day of my life is that I was Grade 10th student. There was holiday by that time my mother & me prepare food. Special food & we clean our home & cloth. We bought new cloth. Generally we prepare for the holiday beautifully. My uncle & his son came from Addis Ababa for the celebration. They give us expensive & beautiful gifts. They bring sheep & some foods. The day soon of the night began we connect & sit outside home around the compound. We talk & joke we laugh after 2 or 3 hours we eat our dinner & sleep to wake early. As we plan we wake early on that holiday we wash & wear our new cloth. We go to mosque & pray after we return my mother & me prepare food & clean our home. We call our neighbors on the afternoon. Our neighbors came & eat some bread, kebo drink berry etc. We visit each other by that time. We spend that holiday happily & beautifully. That day was the happiest day in my life.

Source: A paragraph written by student 20

SS-12 *expression* ENGLISH ASSIGNMENT

unnecessary The happiest or the worst day in my life

In this condition the writing title is

the worst day of my life

First my name is Prin Shervan the title

is Explain in the top in my life the

worst day was in december 1997

my Grand father is 911 and in

february 1997, my Grand father is die.

then, that time is the very bad or

worst day in my life. 5 21/07/09

Prin Shervan

Source: A paragraph written by student 12

SS-11

Write a short paragraph on:

6. ~~Your high school life history.~~

The Importance of Learning ENGLISH

- ✓ English is based on a simple & alphabet and it is fairly quick and easy to learn compared to other language.
- ✓ Since English is spoken in many different countries there are thousand of school around the world that offer programs in English if you speak English there are a lot of opportunities for you to find an appropriate school and course to suit your Academic needs.
- ✓ English is the language of the media industry. if you speak English you would not need to rely on translation and subtitle any more to enjoy your favourite books, songs, films, and TVs, radios and other news paper.

[Signature] 21/07/09

Source: A written paragraph by student 11

The happiest day in my life

S3-38

I have seen many exciting days in my life but, when I remember of them there is one day which comes first that day was when Football club BARCELONA beat PSG 6-1 I love watching football I have watched football for 7 years or since the 2010 world cup I am in love with football. I am the supporter of Arsenal and football club BARCELONA.

When I return to my life story before that game football club Barcelona were beaten by PSG in the first ~~game~~ game 4-0 so to progress to the next round football club Barcelona need to win 5-0 and Barcelona did the unexpected and beat PSG 6-1 And I was very very happy. I can't believe ~~seen~~

What they did & I spent the whole night shouting and doing crazy things. therefore this day is my happiest day in my life.

— the end —

