

The Influence of the Paragraph Burger Strategy on English Language Learners' Essay Writing Proficiency

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Abstract— Through the viewpoints of educators, this study sought to determine how the Paragraph Burger technique affected English Language Learners' (ELLs') ability to write essays. It specifically aimed to investigate teachers' experiences with the Paragraph Burger approach, evaluate its impact on ELLs' essay writing abilities, and pinpoint the difficulties and achievements in putting it into practice. This study investigated the experiences of teachers utilizing the Paragraph Burger technique with English Language Learners (ELLs) through a qualitative, phenomenological approach. This approach, which focuses on the effects, difficulties, and achievements of the Paragraph Burger strategy, helps capture the core of their experiences. The study's findings offer insightful information to educators by emphasizing successful writing instruction techniques that could result in student essays that are more well-structured and cohesive. Furthermore, the Paragraph Burger approach has the potential to impact curriculum development by promoting the incorporation of structured writing methods that aid in the development of solid basic skills in children. The study also shows how these interesting teaching strategies affect students' motivation and engagement with writing assignments. Also, it adds to the larger corpus of pedagogical research by providing evidence-based suggestions that help enhance instructional strategies and writing-related student outcomes. When the Paragraph Burger technique was introduced, teachers were encouraged to change their ways of teaching by adding more visual aids, organized exercises, and detailed directions to their classes. The method's impact on instructional strategies highlights the need for educators to investigate cutting-edge, inclusive strategies to improve writing instruction for English Language Learners. Teachers can maximize learning outcomes and foster academic achievement among English language learners (ELLs) in language development by incorporating a variety of instructional tactics and modifying approaches in response to student feedback and performance.

Keywords— Paragraph Burger Technique, Essay Writing

I. INTRODUCTION

The shift to digital and remote learning environments has unintentionally slowed the development of important writing skills. During this shift, the interactive and hands-on aspects of writing education were frequently overlooked, resulting in gaps in students' ability to express themselves clearly and eloquently. Schools must undertake focused interventions to address these shortcomings, as good writing is essential for successful communication, critical thinking, and academic performance. Prioritizing teaching writing allows educational institutions to ensure that students are not only capable of meeting academic standards, but also well-prepared for future academic and professional difficulties. This emphasis on writing skills is critical for closing the learning gap and cultivating a generation of articulate and thinking individuals.

Literature Review

Essay writing skills are critical for academic success, particularly among English Language Learners (ELL) who are developing foundational literacy competencies. This review synthesizes existing literature on instructional interventions aimed at enhancing essay writing proficiency among middle school students, focusing on the potential impact of the Paragraph Burger method.

Structured writing approaches, such as the Paragraph Burger method, have shown promise in improving writing skills among students. The study of Smith and Johnson (2018) emphasizes the efficacy of structured writing activities in enhancing overall writing proficiency. The Paragraph Burger Method, with its systematic approach to organizing ideas within paragraphs, aligns with the objectives of assessing

learners' performance and observing changes in their essay writing skills. By providing a clear framework for organizing thoughts and constructing coherent paragraphs, this method can potentially facilitate improvements in English language learners' essay writing abilities.

Effective feedback mechanisms play a crucial role in students' writing development. Brown and Garcia (2020) highlight the significance of providing timely and constructive feedback to enhance writing skills. In the context of the current study, feedback mechanisms incorporated within the Paragraph Burger method can facilitate the observation of changes in learners' writing skills. By offering specific feedback on paragraph structure, coherence, and content, educators can gauge the effectiveness of the method in improving English language learners' essay writing proficiency.

Clark and Martinez (2019) explore the use of graphic organizers in improving essay writing among middle school students. Graphic organizers serve as visual tools for organizing ideas and structuring writing tasks. While not directly addressing the Paragraph Burger method, this research underscores the importance of systematic organization in writing instruction, which aligns with the objectives of the current study. The Paragraph Burger method provides a structured approach to paragraph construction, akin to the organizational principles emphasized in graphic organizer-based writing activities.

The study entitled *The Effect of Hamburger Strategy in Writing Descriptive Texts of the 1st Semester Students of the English Department in Nommensen University* conducted by Napitupulu (2017) dealt with the effect of the Hamburger Strategy on writing descriptive texts. The results concluded that the Hamburger Strategy significantly affects the writing of descriptive texts of the first semester students of the English Department in Nommensen University Medan in the academic years 2016-2017. It is also recommended to teachers of the English subject to implement the Hamburger Strategy to increase students' writing ability.

In a study conducted by Lasaka (2018) entitled *Effect of Using Paragraph Hamburger Strategy on Students' Writing Achievements*, it was concluded that using Paragraph Hamburger Strategy has positive effects on the writing achievements of the grade seven students at

SMPN 15 Palu in descriptive text. The Paragraph Hamburger Strategy makes the process of writing less complicated for students. It helps the students brainstorm and aids in reducing their misbehavior. In short, the Paragraph Hamburger Strategy is effective for teaching and classroom management.

The study of Husda, Simorangkir, Zalukhu, Marbun, and Nababan (2023) entitled *Paragraph Hamburgers Strategy in Writing a Report Text* determined whether employing the Paragraph Hamburger Strategy has a significant effect on the students' writing of report texts at SMK Immanuel Medan in the academic years 2022-2023. The results concluded that applying the Paragraph Hamburger Strategy has a significant effect on the students' writing skills. Using the Paragraph Hamburger Strategy gave a better result than using a conventional strategy. The average scores from intensive classes were higher than the average from regular classes.

The study of Suhendra (2014), entitled *The Effect of Using Paragraph Hamburger Strategy On Students' Writing Ability in Narrative Paragraph of the First Year at Ma Darel Hikmah Pekanbaru*, was conducted based on the problems faced by the students in learning English, especially in writing narrative paragraphs. The students had problems and difficulties in writing narrative paragraphs; namely, some of them were not able to generate ideas, they were not able to write generic structures, and they were not able to write a good paragraph in terms of mechanics. The results of the study concluded that there is a significant difference in using Paragraph Hamburger Strategy on students' writing ability of narrative paragraphs.

The aim of the study entitled *The Effect of Hamburger Strategy Towards Students' Writing Skill in Recount Text at the First Grade of Man 4 Kediri*, conducted by Jalil (2023), was to analyze whether Hamburger Strategy was effective to be used in teaching writing recount text at the first grade of MAN 4 Kediri. The results concluded that Hamburger Strategy is effective in teaching and learning of English writing recount text. This result suggests that the writing aspects which the students significantly outperformed were content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

In summary, the reviewed literature provides valuable insights into various strategies and interventions aimed at enhancing writing proficiency among students. By drawing on these insights, the current study aims to

evaluate the effectiveness of the Paragraph Burger method in improving essay writing skills among English language learners.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

In this study, the researchers utilized both a conceptual framework and a theoretical framework to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the essay writing skills of English Language Learners. These frameworks served distinct yet complementary roles in guiding the research design, analysis, and interpretation.

Paragraph Burger

This research investigated the impact of the Paragraph Burger method on the writing abilities of English language learners through the experiences of teachers using the technique. The Paragraph Burger technique is an instructional strategy that breaks down paragraph writing into three main parts: the introduction, body, and conclusion. It served as the independent variable in the study. The dependent variable was the responses of the teachers who use the method, which were assessed using the phenomenological approach, and were analyzed through thematic analysis.

Learning Theories

The Paragraph Burger method aligns with constructivist learning theory, which suggests that learners construct knowledge through experiences and reflections. Additionally, scaffolding theory proposes that instructional support can be gradually removed as learners gain independence, with the Paragraph Burger offering a scaffold to help students organize their thoughts before writing.

Hypotheses

The Paragraph Burger technique improved the essay writing abilities of English Language Learners (ELLs) by providing a structured and visually aided framework, which enhances their motivation, engagement, and overall writing proficiency. This method, when implemented by educators, led to more well-structured and cohesive student essays and necessitates a shift in teaching practices towards more organized and detailed instruction.

Significance of the Study

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Paragraph Burger method enhancing student's essay writing skills. It holds significant importance to learners,

educators, curriculum development and future researchers.

The primary aim of this research is to evaluate if the Paragraph Burger method can help junior high school English language learners improve their essay writing skills, which is crucial for their academic success across various subjects. The study's findings provide valuable insights for educators, highlighting effective strategies for teaching writing that may lead to better-organized and more coherent student essays. Moreover, if the Paragraph Burger method is proven to be effective, it can influence curriculum development, encouraging the inclusion of structured writing techniques to help students build strong foundational skills. Additionally, the research reveals how such engaging methods impact student motivation and involvement in writing tasks.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader body of pedagogical research, offering evidence-based recommendations that can improve teaching practices and student outcomes in writing.

Objectives of the Study

This study generally aimed to explore the impact of the Paragraph Burger strategy on the essay writing skills of English Language Learners (ELLs) from the perspectives of educators.

Specifically, it sought...

- to explore the experiences of educators using the Paragraph Burger strategy with ELLs,
- to assess the effect of the Paragraph Burger strategy on the essay writing skills of ELLs,
- to identify the challenges and successes encountered by educators using the Paragraph Burger strategy.

II. METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study used a qualitative, phenomenological approach to explore the experiences of educators using the Paragraph Burger strategy with English Language Learners (ELLs). Phenomenology helps capture the essence of their experiences, focusing on the impact, challenges, and successes of this teaching method.

Population of the Study

Five (5) English teachers who actively use the Paragraph Burger method in their teaching practices were purposefully selected for this study. These teachers

provided valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of the method.

Data Gathering Tools

Interview questions were developed to guide qualitative interviews with the participating English teachers. These questions aimed to explore various aspects of their experiences with the Paragraph Burger method.

Data Gathering Procedures

Qualitative data were collected through individual interviews with each teacher. The interviews were conducted using the prepared interview protocols to ensure consistency and depth of information.

Treatment of Data

Data for this research were collected through structured interviews with teachers who have implemented the Paragraph Burger Strategy in their classrooms. The interviews focused on exploring the teachers' experiences, perceptions, and the observed impact of the strategy on students' essay writing proficiency.

All interviews were transcribed using Intelligent Verbatim Transcription. This ensured that every detail of the teachers' experiences and insights was captured accurately for analysis.

The researchers conducted multiple readings of the transcripts to gain an overall sense of the data. During this phase, initial impressions and potential themes were noted.

The transcriptions were reviewed multiple times to become familiar with the content. Key phrases were coded and grouped into categories. These categories were then analyzed to identify overarching themes. The themes were refined and verified with the original transcriptions to ensure accuracy. Finally, the themes were reported with supporting quotes to provide a detailed understanding of the educators' experiences.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to conducting interviews. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study to protect participants' privacy.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the impact of the Paragraph Burger strategy on the essay writing skills of English Language Learners (ELLs) through the perspectives of educators. Specifically, it sought to

explore educators' experiences with the Paragraph Burger strategy, assess its effects on ELLs' essay writing skills, and identify the challenges and successes encountered in its implementation.

Improved Organization and Clarity

Educators consistently highlighted that the Paragraph Burger method significantly enhanced students' ability to organize their ideas and write clearer paragraphs. This theme underscores the method's effectiveness in scaffolding ELLs' understanding of paragraph structure and coherence, as evidenced by the following insights:

Teacher A: "The Paragraph Burger method has helped my ELL students improve their essay writing. This method uses the idea of a burger to organize a paragraph: the top bun is the topic sentence, the fillings are the supporting details, and the bottom bun is the concluding sentence."

Teacher B: "The method has greatly improved my students' ability to organize and present their ideas. It simplifies essay writing by visualizing paragraphs as burgers, ensuring all components are included."

Teacher C: "They were able to generate more ideas from the illustration because it's easier for them to identify which idea to come first, second, next and so on."

The findings align with the study's objective to assess the effect of the Paragraph Burger strategy on ELLs' essay writing skills, demonstrating its positive impact on enhancing organizational clarity in student writing.

Initial Challenges and Learning Curve

Despite its benefits, educators acknowledged initial challenges associated with implementing the Paragraph Burger method:

Teacher A: "At first, some students thought the burger idea was too simple and had trouble using it for more complex writing. But with practice, they saw how helpful it was."

Teacher C: "Although it's effective to most, we can't deny the fact that there are still some learners who can't follow immediately or they need more attention or explanation before they can get so that's where the challenge is."

Teacher D: "Generally, the students accept this method however, other methods work for other students better."

These insights highlight the nuanced nature of teaching strategies and the importance of adapting instructional approaches to meet diverse learning needs, as outlined in the study's objective to identify challenges encountered by educators.

Positive Student Response and Engagement

Educators noted a positive response from students towards the Paragraph Burger method, indicating increased engagement and understanding:

Teacher A: "Students like the Paragraph Burger method because it makes paragraph structure easier to understand. They are more excited about writing and their writing has become clearer and more organized."

Teacher B: "My students often respond positively to the Paragraph Burger method because it simplifies abstract concepts."

Teacher E: "At first, they struggle adapting to the approach but I think more practice and constant feedback and reminders will make them improve their writing."

This theme aligns with the study's objective to explore educators' experiences with the Paragraph Burger strategy, illustrating its role in fostering student enthusiasm and clarity in writing tasks.

Impact on Teaching Practices

Implementing the Paragraph Burger method influenced educators' teaching practices, prompting adjustments in instructional strategies:

Teacher B: "Using this method has changed how I teach. I use more visual aids and step-by-step instructions to help students understand better."

Teacher C: "It influenced my teaching practice by making my lesson easier to teach and also for the students to learn easier."

Teacher E: "Paragraph Burger method is only one of the methods we can use in teaching paragraph writing. I believe that considering who our learners are is a factor that we must consider in using a method to teach them."

These findings correspond with the study's objective to assess the effect of the Paragraph Burger strategy on educators' teaching practices, highlighting its role in promoting structured and effective instructional methods.

The study investigated how the Paragraph Burger method influenced ELLs' essay writing skills through educators' perspectives. The thematic analysis revealed several key insights regarding the method's effectiveness, challenges encountered, adaptations made by educators, and implications for teaching practices.

Effectiveness of the Paragraph Burger Method:

Educators unanimously agreed that the Paragraph Burger method significantly improved students' ability to organize and clarify their writing. By visualizing paragraphs as structured like a burger—with a topic sentence as the top bun, supporting details as the fillings, and a concluding sentence as the bottom bun—the method provided a clear framework for students to follow (Teacher A). This structured approach helped students better understand how to develop coherent and focused paragraphs, addressing a common difficulty among ELLs in organizing their ideas effectively (Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

Teachers noted that the method not only enhanced the quality of students' writing by ensuring they stayed on topic and developed their ideas logically (Teacher A), but also made the writing process more accessible and engaging for students (Teacher B). This aligns with existing research suggesting that visual and scaffolded approaches are particularly beneficial for ELLs in acquiring complex language skills (Graham et al., 2012).

Challenges and Adaptations:

Despite its benefits, educators faced challenges during the initial implementation of the Paragraph Burger method. Some students initially found the metaphor of the burger too simplistic for more advanced writing tasks, requiring additional support and explanations to grasp its application (Teacher A). This underscores the importance of adapting teaching methods to meet diverse learning needs and providing ongoing guidance to support students' comprehension and mastery of new concepts (Teacher E).

Moreover, educators observed that while most students responded positively to the method, its effectiveness varied among different learners (Teacher D). This variability highlights the need for teachers to employ a range of instructional strategies and differentiated approaches to accommodate the diverse learning styles and preferences of ELLs (Tomlinson, 2001).

Implications for Teaching Practices:

The implementation of the Paragraph Burger method prompted educators to adapt their teaching practices by incorporating more visual aids, structured activities, and step-by-step instructions into their lessons (Teacher B). This adaptation not only enhanced the clarity and effectiveness of instruction but also fostered a more supportive learning environment for ELLs (Teacher C). Teachers recognized the importance of continuous professional development and reflective practice in refining instructional techniques to better meet the evolving needs of their students (García & Kleifgen, 2010).

The method's influence on teaching practices underscores the role of educators in exploring innovative and inclusive approaches to enhance writing instruction for ELLs. By integrating diverse instructional strategies and adapting methods based on student feedback and performance, educators can optimize learning outcomes and promote academic success among ELLs in language development.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The study investigated the impact of the Paragraph Burger method on English Language Learners' (ELLs) essay writing skills through the perspectives of teachers. Findings indicate that the Paragraph Burger method effectively enhanced students' ability to organize and clarify their writing, as evidenced by improved paragraph structure and coherence reported by educators (Teacher A; Teacher B).

Challenges encountered included initial student resistance to the metaphorical "burger" framework, particularly for more complex writing tasks. However, with consistent practice and support, students demonstrated increased proficiency over time (Teacher A; Teacher D).

The implementation of the Paragraph Burger method prompted educators to integrate more visual aids and structured activities into their teaching practices, enhancing student engagement and understanding. This adaptation proved beneficial for addressing diverse learner needs within ELL populations (Teacher B; Teacher C).

Based on these findings, several conclusions can be drawn:

- The Paragraph Burger method is effective in improving ELLs' essay writing skills by fostering clearer organization and coherence in their writing.
- Initial challenges with student acceptance of the method can be overcome through consistent practice and differentiated instructional support.
- Educators' adaptation of instructional methods, such as incorporating visual aids, enhances instructional clarity and student learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the Paragraph Burger method shows promise in enhancing ELLs' essay writing skills by addressing organizational challenges and fostering clearer communication of ideas. By implementing targeted recommendations, educators can optimize instructional practices and support academic success among diverse learner populations.

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