Essay Writing Problems and Solutions for ESP Learners: A Case Study at the University of Technology-Iraq.

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Abstract:

Among the courses offered at the University of Technology (UoT) for various study programs is English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The improvement of students' English abilities, both in general English and in relation to a particular field, represents one goal of integrating ESP into the curriculum. The English language competence of the ESP program covers skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, as well as grammar for students enrolled in this program. These abilities are then connected to themes relevant to their specific fields.

Essay writing constitutes one of the most crucial skills within such ESP program. In this study, a number of problems was discovered with the lecture process, including ones with brainstorming, the process of writing, and the actual act of writing. The current investigation utilized a qualitative methodology, namely by examining 64 essays composed by students attending different programs of study to determine the challenges these students face. According to the investigation's findings, students have trouble acquiring ESP when they struggle with Plagiarism, grammar, punctuation, word selection, critical thinking, and essay structure.

To address the aforementioned problems and to improve writing abilities of students, the clustering approach was employed. The student's performance was compared on a pretest along with posttest in writing. Every student first completed a pretest to determine his/her essay writing proficiency. Next, the students (the experimental group) received instruction in writing utilizing the clustering approach, and finally, they completed a posttest. Herein, the purpose is to demonstrate how the clustering approach affects students' writing skills. According to the results, students' writing skills have significantly improved as a result of taking the course.

Keywords: Essay Writing, English for Specific Purposes, students, writing problems, clustering technique.

مشاكل كتابة المقالات وحلولها لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة: دراسة حالة في الجامعة التكنولوجية في العراق

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الملخص:

تعتبر اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة (ESP) من بين المقررات التي تدرس في الجامعة التكنولوجية في مختلف البرامج الدراسية وأن هدف تضمين هذا المقرر في المنهج الدراسي هو لغرض تحسين قدرات الطلاب في اللغة الإنجليزية، سواء في اللغة الإنجليزية العامة أو فيما يتعلق بمجال معين. تشمل كفاءة اللغة الإنجليزية لمقرر اللغة الإنجليزية أنف الذكر مهارات التحدث والاستماع والقراءة والكتابة وكذلك القواعد للطلاب الذين يحضرون في هذا البرنامج ويتم بعد ذلك ربط هذه المهارات بالموضوعات ذات الصلة بمجالاتهم المحدد.

تشكل كتابة المقالات أو الأنشاء إحدى أهم المهارات في مقررتعليم اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة. في هذه الدراسة، تم اكتشاف عدد من المشاكل في عملية التدريس، بما في ذلك تحديات العصف الذهني، وعملية الكتابة والقدرة على التعبير. استخدم البحث الحالي منهجية نوعية، وذلك من خلال فحص ٦٤ مقالة قام بكتابتها الطلاب الذين يحضرون برامج دراسية مختلفة لتحديد الصعوبات التي يواجهها هؤلاء الطلاب. وفقًا لنتائج البحث، يواجه الطلاب صعوبة في اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة عندما يواجهون صعوبة في التفكير النقدي والقواعد واختيار الكلمات والأخطاء النحوية وبنية المقالات.

من أجل أيجاد حلول للمشاكل المذكورة أعلاه ولغرض تحسين قدرات الكتابة لدى الطلاب، تم استخدام نهج التجميع. تمت مقارنة أداء الطالب في الاختبار القبلي مع الاختبار البعدي في الكتابة حيث أكمل كل طالب أولاً اختبارًا أوليًا لتحديد كفاءته في كتابة المقالات. بعد ذلك، تلقى الطلاب (عينة الأختبار) دروساً تعليمية في الكتابة والتعبير باستخدام نهج التجميع، وأخيرًا أكملوا الاختبار البعدي. والغرض هنا هو توضيح كيفية تأثير النهج التجميعي على مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب. ووفقا للنتائج، تحسنت مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب بشكل ملحوظ نتيجة لحضور الدروس التعليمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كتابة المقالات، اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة، الطلاب، مشاكل الكتابة، تقنية التجميع.

1. Introduction

It may be really difficult to learn English, especially if you're doing it for a specific purpose (ESP). Students enrolled in an ESP program acquire each of the four skills of the English language, namely: speaking, listening, reading, and writing exactly the same way they do in General English (GE). The issues students encounter range from their personal desire to learn the language to having trouble comprehending the program contents. The two previously mentioned issues were linked. According to (Milaningrum, 2018), the majority of learners are not very motivated to gain an ESP program, particularly for writing-related topics. As said by (Su, 2022), study concerning the EFL setting in Asian countries had demonstrated that linguistic knowledge, in particular about grammatical conventions and the use of words, is the most difficult aspect of learners' writing.

These findings demonstrate that writing issues, particularly for the ESP program, stem not just from the language's nature, but from the learners' motivation (Abed, 2019). Experts consider that writing is one of the most important ESP skills. This is because writing helps students

develop their communication skills by teaching them how to utilize a piece of writing's mechanics and language in addition to their knowledge of vocabulary in a particular topic. According to Graham (Graham, 2013), the knowledge and concept would be extensively communicated in writing.

Additionally, the idea may be reviewed and assessed more quickly. In addition, Graham stated that writing skill has a strong capacity for persuasion and has the power to influence readers. Students are thus going to improve their critical thinking skills because the material presented must be concise and reasonable. Due to the fact that English is a worldwide language, students studying ESP programs are likely to be more capable of comprehending their area and communicating it to a larger audience.

ESP constitutes one of the subjects taught at the University of Technology (UOT), particularly for writing. Students must take Essay Writing as part of the required English course that is a requirement for graduation from this university. The brainstorming, writing, and final draft processes are some of the difficulties that professors frequently encounter while instructing during English class.

the ESP program and its issues have been the subject of some investigation. study was done by (Musikhin, 2016) on the creation of technologies that can efficiently improve communication for ESP program students.

another study was conducted by (septiana, 2019), who was worried about the difficulties instructors had while attempting to teach ESP courses. Nevertheless, none of these studies really addressed students' issues, particularly those related to writing an essay for an ESP class.

Consequently, this study aims to determine any difficulties that ESP students at UoT may face with essay writing. Additionally, its objective is to assist ESP students in overcoming challenges and enhancing their writing abilities. To fulfill the goals of the current investigation, the subsequent question was put forth: What challenges do

the University of Technology students face when it comes to writing essays, and how may they be fixed?

2. Literature Review

An ESP modelling, which places emphasis on the growth of professional competency, combining academic knowledge with work experiences within the complicated and dynamic manipulating of many social settings, wherein many kinds of specific communicating happen, has clearly gained favor in recent research, according to those studies (Musikhin, 2016).

It has become less important to argue if students having specific backgrounds ought to concentrate on English language competence; alternatively, the teachers ought to argue how they can accomplish so (Talberg, 2006), making it possible for learners to participate in full-fledged conversations in situations that represent their field of employment. Due to this, the language skills required by learners having various backgrounds must get matched to their field of employment, also learning a language has to focus on activities that are relevant to and distinctive of their line of work in a global setting. Therefore, a language instruction course should also improve students' general abilities to allow them to appropriately converse with coworkers from different fields or places (Musikhin, 2016). Previous scholars have undertaken investigations into ESP and covered a wide range of topics, including instructing ESP programs in certain academic contexts (Musikhin, 2016) (Fadlia, 2020) (Nur Fitria, 2020), difficulties in doing so (Nur Fitria, 2020), and ESP instructing traditions (septiana, 2019). In his research, (Musikhin, 2016) talked about the ESP handbook for business language learning. The manual must provide the finest vocabulary, sets of language exercises, and learning resources to enable professionals to execute comprehensive communication within a setting of global collaboration, compared to defining the objectives it sets in the learner's domain of competence.

Therefore, the two primary goals of an ESP program should be to enhance participants' overall communicating abilities in their field of employment as well as establish the groundwork for future language acquisition and progress.

The main advantage of ESP, according to (Nur Fitria, 2020), is the speed at which a learner can acquire. The acquisition of necessary language elements is accelerated to be a direct consequence of ESP. Efficiency of learning is the second factor to take into account. In an ESP program, students make the best use of their available instructional assets by using them all to study a set of predetermined language abilities and objects. The efficacy of learning represents the third consideration.

After finishing an ESP program, instructors are equipped to perform language-related duties that were identified through demand analyzing before the program, efficiently and appropriately. The researcher (Nur Fitria, 2020) also discussed ESP's characteristics.

In the opinion of (John, 2000), ESP possesses the following three characteristics: (1) it fulfills the learners' specific needs; (2) it utilizes the discipline's essential techniques as well as tasks; and (3) it revolves around and concentrates on the language considered suitable to these tasks with respect to grammars, lexicon, registers, skills of study, discourses, and genres.

ESP also has certain undetermined qualities, such as the following: (1) ESP is associated with or intended for particular fields of study; (2) ESP might be employed in particular instructional settings, or perhaps in an alternative approach rather than general English; finally, (3) ESP is likely intended or utilized for adult students, whether at an institute of higher education or in a setting of professional employment.

Septiana (septiana, 2019) outlines the challenges of instructing ESP in her research. Tricking the instructor is the initial problem. ESP professors in universities have a variety of characteristics, which include young and inexperienced (fresh lecturers) (Alwasilah, 2000). The topic matter constitutes the second obstacle. It is a reality that many of the market's commercial academic books fall short of meeting

the demands of students since such books differ from university to university, year of study to year of study, and even between classes (Anthony L. , 1997).

The third difficulty involves creating curricula, a task that is totally in the hands of university independence. Based on the point where learners are in their learning journey, the course of study is a collection of instructional rules developed according to the missions and visions of certain departments, colleges, and institutions.

Section one

3. Essay Writing problems

This section deals with challenges that ESP students face when writing an essay

3.1. Methodology and Procedure

This research employs a qualitative descriptive technique. The UoT students who took a course in essay writing in the 2022–2023 academic year were the main focus of the current study. The study's subject matter was student essays. The sample, which was randomly picked, consisted of 64 essays.

The tactic for gathering data was the text analysis, an approach for gathering qualitative data. By using this approach, information about items that were previously determined was gathered. In addition, the researcher was able to use any words chosen by students to describe the findings.

The initial part of the data-collecting procedure was to use the text analysis approach to extract data from the writings. To pinpoint the problems encountered by the students while composing their essays, the second phase was data analysis. Identifying and categorizing difficulties in the Writing of Essays for ESP Students was the last stage. Throughout this stage, the data were found and classified in accordance with their category. The classification process employed a checklist, which is especially useful for documenting the presence of issues or problems. Accordingly, any writing problem made by students was listed to be

identified and analyzed, then the list was shortened to the most repeated problems, as explained in the coming section.

3.2. Discussion of Essay Writing problems

Seven issues with essay writing in ESP classes were identified from the 64 writings that were gathered, including plagiarism, sentence construction, punctuation marks, essay organizing, terminology, choice of words, and critical thinking. An examination of every one of the issues identified is provided as follows:

3.2.1 Plagiarism

The act of misusing someone else's intellectual property by copying and pasting it without giving due credit to the authors, creators, or producers is known as plagiarism. This act is either committed purposefully or accidentally. Similarities between two scientific publications that do not provide citations and use their own language to modify the original text are nonetheless regarded as plagiarized material (Shadiqi, 2019).

According to the data being gathered, students engaged in two types of act of plagiarism: (1) copying and pasting text from online sources with no citation to the source or the writer, and (2) producing work that was identical to that of others in the class.

A sample of data that was found to be plagiarized is as follows:

(1) Is utilized to process a design for an element that will be produced from an image. A modified program that could later be read via a CNC machine is created from the image. The required finished goods will then be automatically processed by the machine.

(2) Students carry out hands-on work in the metal fabrication laboratory. Numerous equipment, including milling machines, lathes, welding machines, and CNC machines, are located inside the laboratory. Up until the turning is finished, manufacturing, casting, and welding take place there. By creating things in the lab, from melting metal to forming castings to finished goods, I can gain new experiences.

Products made in the laboratory include electrical car frames, chairs, pipes, and many others.

As for the sample data (1), the student uses text that was copied and pasted from an online resource, specifically: *"https://soloabadi.com/en/the-definition-of-cnc-machines-and-useof-cnc-machines-in-the-industrialworld/"*. Despite not copying and pasting everything in composing, the student continues to be considered to have plagiarized because he wrote a number of sentences whose contents represent an exact match with the ones of the aforementioned website.

As for the sample (2), Two pieces of documents with identical writing that were written by two different authors were discovered.

According to the motivation behind it, (Shadiqi, 2019) distinguishes between three kinds of plagiarism acts, these are deliberate, undeliberate, and inadvertent acts of plagiarism. It is clear from the example data above that the essay writer deliberately plagiarized. This might be due to the student's struggles with the idea development or English writing. As a result, he decided to plagiarize writing by others and include that in his writing assignment.

Three measures are suggested by Cooper (Cooper, 2016) for preventing plagiarism: (1) To stop "intellectual theft" of thoughts, one has to disclose the original sources, most representing sources, or the latest sources. (2) using Quotations and paraphrase (3) employing an application that detects an act of plagiarism.

3.2.2 Grammatical Problems

The term "grammatical errors" in prescriptive grammar refers to a wrong, unusual, or disputed use, for example, an incorrect verb tense or an incorrect placement of modifiers, also known as usage errors. A factual error, logical fallacy, misspelling, mistakes in typing, and incorrect punctuation are usually distinguished from grammatical issues, though such kinds of errors could occasionally be misinterpreted (Nordquist, 2020). The use of tense, both active as well as passive voices, and subject-verb conjugation are among the most prevalent grammatical errors. moreover, using the proper preposition, article, and pronoun was also challenging to students (Peter, 2021). A summary of a number of errors identified in writing examples is provided below.

(3) The lab of metal manufacturing in main building, ground floor.
(4) In the lab has many machineries like milling machine, lathe machine, welding machine, as well as CNC machine.

We can see from example (3) that it is simply in the phrase form, hence it is not a whole grammatical sentence, to grammatically make it correct, the sentence must be" the lab of metal manufacturing is in main building, ground floor." The subject is "The lab of metal manufacturing", "is" represents the verb, while "in main building, ground floor" represents the adverb.

As for point (4), it isn't a full sentence. "In the lab" represents the adverb, "has" represents the verb. So, instead of saying "In the lab" which is an adverb, the word "In" should be deleted and make "the laboratory" to represent the sentence's subject. As a result, the complete correct sentence can be as "The lab has many machines like. A milling machine, lathe machine, welding machine, and CNC machine."

3.2.3 Punctuation Marks

Imagine a sentence that is free of a colon, comma, capitalization, period, etc. Of course, reading it would be challenging. It is simple to misunderstand an author when they use ambiguous language in academic writing. To make sentences clearer, punctuation marks are frequently utilized. For instance, a statement without a comma may be interpreted differently than the author meant. Editors or proofreaders pay particular attention to punctuation errors when editing or reviewing academic writings. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of punctuation in written form, especially in academic writings, but it is additionally crucial to utilize it correctly. Many individuals mistakenly employ many punctuation marks because they appear remarkably alike in English texts.

After considering the data, it is concluded that the most common mistakes in punctuation are the incorrect use of the period (.) and comma (,). Following are few instances:
(5) "In the lab has many machines like milling machine, lathe machine, welding machine, and CNC machine. that location is for manufacturing, casting, welding, up to turning is finished."

(6) "The space is large, clean and comforting." regarding example (5), the data displays that there is a period between two sentences, without using an uppercase letter to start the second sentence and following the period. To make them correct, it should be "In the lab has many machines like milling machine, lathe machine, welding machine, and CNC machine. That location is for manufacturing, casting, welding, up to turning is finished."

Yet, in the example (6), it is a statement that has the conjunction *"and"*. There must be a similar part of speech as well as the appropriate punctuation mark whenever employing parallelism in a statement. As a result, *"The space is large, clean, and comforting."* should be used instead. The conjunction "and" has to be separated by a comma. (Mayada R.Eesa, 2021)

3.2.4 Word Choices

There are certain challenges at the level of vocabulary. these issues are either Interlingual/transfer mistakes or Intralingual/developmental mistakes, as follows:

1- Interlingual/transfer mistakes occur due to the mother Language's interference. Interlingual mistakes occur once a student's L1 patterns hinder or partially prevent him from picking up the conventions of L2 (Corder, 1971).

According to (Diab, 1997) and (AbiSamra, 2003), the majority of word choice mistakes made by Arab English language learners are semantic ones that result from translating Arabic words directly into English. As a result, students frequently choose a word's incorrect equivalent, which is a close in meaning. Many examples of such mistakes from the collected data are noticed, one of them is as follows:

(7) "These machines make high sounds". The literal rendering of the Arabic word "aliah" led to students using the word "high" rather than "loud" (AbiSamra, 2003). similarly, some Arabic words have two distinct English meanings, like the word "maktaba", which has two meanings in English "bookstore" and "library", this is also noticed in the data collected, students make mistakes of such kind like the ones below:

(8) "Due to the accident, he was sent to a special hospital."

(9) "This major has a private place in my heart."

Both of these mistakes happened mainly since the Arabic word for "private" and "special" is "khas" (Diab, 1997). These mistakes of word choice also result in collocational mistakes in the writing of Arab students, according to (Diab, 1997).

2- Intralingual/developmental mistakes are the ones brought on by the target language (TL). These are items generated by the student that represent not the first language structure, but generalizations resulting from incomplete exposure to the second Language (Richards, 1974). Below is an example of that was found in the writing of students:

(10) "*These sensors attained steady state reading due to the high temperature*".

Among the most frequent mistakes in choosing a word is picking a word that seems the same as the meant word yet has an alternative meaning. So, instead of choosing the verb "***attained***" that means "to reach", it is frequently utilized to describe a condition and stage, the student should choose the verb "obtained" that simply means "to get".

3.2.5. Critical Thinking

Along with improving writing skills, writing essays also fosters critical thinking. Critical thinking represents the capability to analyze a situation or an issue via the use of data analysis, assumptions, construction, synthesis, and conclusion drawing from what is carefully reviewed (Imaniah, 2022). in accordance with the data collected, it can be concluded that the student-submitted essays had the highest number of critical thinking problems since both their topic and writing organizations were weak.

In addition, the majority of students did not adequately respond to the input they received.

Perhaps as a result of that, as demonstrated by some work done by students, they were incapable of comprehending the criticism or just chose to disregard it. Even if the writing they produced was comparatively decent, they never responded to the criticism.

The data further demonstrates that several students are not capable of self-editing their work, despite having access to a spelling and grammar checker on their Word computer application. It appears that such a situation has an impact on the way they write.

3.2.6 Essay Organization

The way an essay is organized makes it simple for readers to grasp both the essay's content and its messages. In their work, (Savage and P.Mayer, 2006) similarly supposed that an essay has three essential structures, these are an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Yet, authors frequently overlook how a crucial essay organization can be. The way a writer arranges the material has a big impact on how well an essay turns out. According to the data being gathered, students committed a number of mistakes while structuring their essays, including:

3.2.6.1 Vague Thesis Statement

The essential concept of any essay is stated in the statement of the thesis, which is found in the last part of the introduction.

The sorts of essays as well as the controlling notion are also indicated by such statements (Savage and P.Mayer, 2006). The statement of the thesis in the sample below is ambiguous, which makes it challenging to comprehend the writer's goals.

"Everyone was required to attend school. They must be quite aware of the outstanding level of the school. After high school, they could keep working or go back to school. A school is a place where children are educated under the guidance of teachers or other educators. The majority of states have formal educational systems. It is often necessary to create advanced students who have finished the course of study. A student chooses a major throughout their time in college, which is an additional specialized learning environment. One of the elements to take into account while selecting a major is one's interests and skills." (Data 13).

The extract was derived from the article "School and Lecture." The bolded final sentence of the above paragraph contains the statement of the thesis. Although the essay is essentially a comparison and contrast

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essay concerning school and college, it does not indicate that the writer will discuss the similarities and contrasts between those two things, as was indicated before.

3.2.6.2 Unclear Topic Sentences

The topic sentence, which should be written at the beginning of each paragraph, must sum up the thesis statement and make it obvious about the topic that paragraph deals with. According to (Savage and P.Mayer, 2006), "an efficient paragraph includes an excellent topic sentence." These results demonstrate, however, that topic sentences lack clarity and coherence.

"There are various reasons *why people smoke, no one can stop them"*.

This topic sentence is drawn from an essay in the data collected, the title of the essay is "Cigarette and Vapor", it is about the parallels and discrepancies between vaping and smoking.

The statement of the essay reads as follows:

"I only talk about similarities and differences between a cigarette and its match vapor,".

The aforementioned topic sentence, however, is unrelated to either the parallels or discrepancies. Alternatively, the topic sentence discusses the causes behind why individuals are smoking or vaping.

The topic Sentence of the second paragraph of the essay body reads as follows:

"Secondly, maintaining good mental health is essential."

The topic Sentence of the third paragraph of the essay body reads as follows:

"Lastly, after reading this essay and experiencing the issues that frequently arise, I understood that metal health is crucial and isn't a minor issue."

One can clearly infer that the two distinct paragraphs include two concepts that are comparable, which is "the mental health". The lack of more description throughout the third paragraph, makes the notion

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unclear and confusing. The topic sentence is the single sentence in the whole essay.

Section Two

4. Solutions for Essay Writing Challenges

This section focuses on helping ESP students overcome the problems mentioned in the first section and enhance their writing skills through employing the clustering technique, as follows:

4.1. Clustering Technique

It represents a technique that refers to the application occurring in a classroom. It's similar to specific tactics, schemes, or devices used to achieve a specific goal right away (Rodgers, 1986).

The clustering technique could aid learners in coming up with ideas (Oshima, 1981). Clustering is the putting together of two or more items from a small group close together. (Manser, 1995). To focus on a specific idea and writing the result is called brainstorming. The goal of brainstorming used in this technique is to generate ideas as many as you can.

In order to employ clustering effectively, it is crucial to understand how to do so. It is best to write a topic by circling it in order to create grouping. The core circle is at the center. Afterward, write down any ideas you have about the area in a circle. Activities directed at a group of individuals are more closely clustered together. This method of dividing and setting objectives is connected with figuring out the best location and time to accomplish a goal. The data analysis approach known as a "cluster" is formed by structuring, sorting, and specializing in a certain target-based group or kind (Royan F. M., 2004).

4.2. The Steps of Clustering process

Visually creating and linking ideas is done by clustering. It will be used by the instructor in the early phase of essay planning to identify any subtopic within a theme or to arrange data. The clustering steps are listed below: (Clouse, 2005)

• The student should grab a piece of paper, write down the major topic in the center, and then put a circle around it.

• After that, he circles any idea or thought related to that subject and writes them all around the core circle. He should immediately write them down, proceed to another blank, quickly add down more, and keep moving about while writing.

• He fills in proper circles with thoughts, examples, facts, or other information related to each thought or idea.

• Following is to sketch lines back toward the last word, the keyword, or any other word that may be linked as the learner writes and circles new words and phrases.

• Finally, the student will continue until he is unable to think of any more information on his subject. when a specific clustering circle is sufficient to start a draft, the student could expand the branches by clustering once more or he may eliminate any words or phrases that appear unnecessary. The writer can then start establishing order through the process of the cluster, then start creating his initial draft of composition.
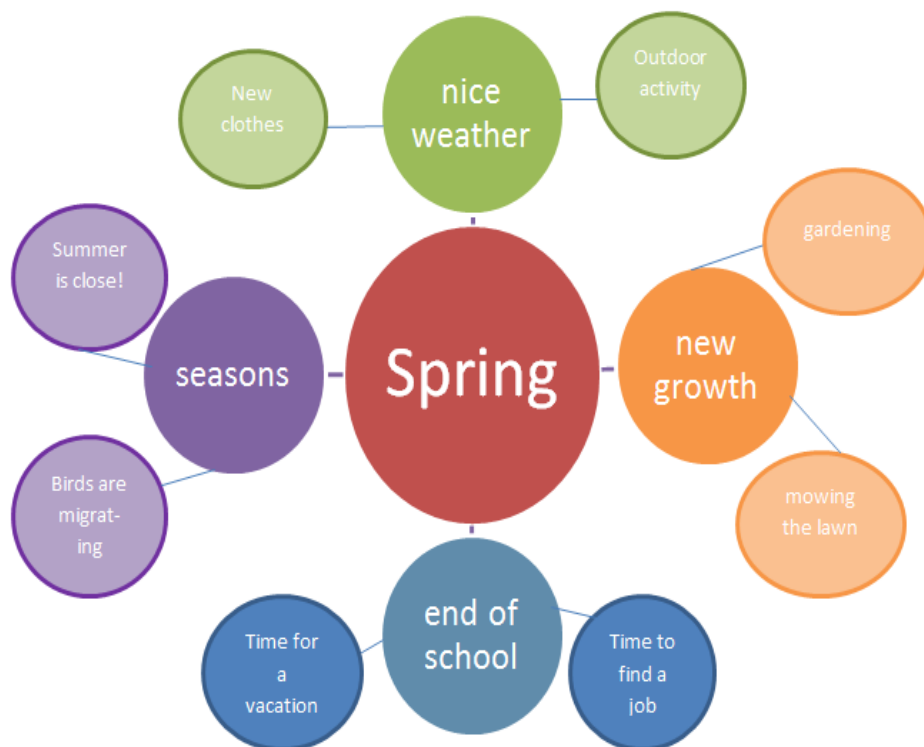
Figure (1) A clustering illustration.

4.3.   Standards Used for Pretest and Posttest Assessment

Based on the difficulties that the students face, Grammar, punctuation, cohesiveness, relevance, and spelling (vocabulary) are the five standards that the researcher used to grade the writing of students. The essay is subsequently separated into three parts, each of which receives a grade according to the information provided in the following table:

Table (1) Standards Used for Pretest and Posttest Assessment

Introduction	10 marks	background information, topic sentence, thesis statement	
The primary body of the essay, which comprises the idea's introduction and development, arguments as well as discussions	50 marks	A. Coherence, cohesiveness, objectivity, as well as unity of concepts	25 marks
		B. Markers of discourse and cohesion, such as: (so, therefore, thus, then, however, accordingly, etc.)	25 marks
Conclusion	40 marks		
linguistic, spelling, and grammatical errors that affect meaning	(5) mistakes	Omitting 5 marks	
	(10) mistakes	Omitting 10 marks	
	(15) mistakes	Omitting 10 marks	

4.4. Procedures

The subsequent steps are carried out:

1. From second-year undergraduate students, the population sample for the study is chosen at random.

2. Choosing an experimentation design with a control group chosen at random, pretest, and posttest.

3. Pretest and posttest will be administered to both groups.

4. All the obtained data will get processed in a statistical way.

5. finally, the results will be discussed, and conclusions will be drawn.

4.5.   Sample of Study

64 second-year undergraduate students were chosen at random from five branches in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Then those students got split into two groups, namely: control along with experimental, every group had 32 students. The clustering approach is used to measure the two groups' independent variables. It follows a comparison of the posttest results. If it is determined that the scores of the experimental group differ considerably from the control group scores, accordingly the clustering method is considered to be the independent variable.

4.6.   Methods of Teaching and Testing

Lectures about essay writing were delivered to the experimental group utilizing the proposed clustering method, whilst the control group was given the lectures without the utilization of the method.

Both pretests along with posttest assignments must be completed by the students in both groups. As previously mentioned in subsection (4.4.), a pretest was given to the two groups at the beginning of the semester. It consisted of one essay-writing question that was chosen based on the researcher's teaching experience to be appropriate for all students and to test their general knowledge, the question was (describe your first year of study in the mechanical department). A posttest with one question, which was (Please tell us your interest in the mechanical department and the specific major you would like to pursue) was given to both groups after the experimental group's students had received English language instruction using the clustering approach. One hour was the time dedicated to completing the pretest and posttest. The two tests yielded a 100-point maximum.

The pretest got administered during the first week of study, and the posttest was given at the 13th week. The experimental group's

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students are required to create a clustered drawing or diagram that represents the topic of the essay. To fulfill the goal of this study, the results of both tests were gathered and assessed. Furthermore, an experimentation design with a control group chosen at random, pretest, and posttest is used.

For the purpose of equalization, pretest data from the two groups were gathered. Then a three-month course was taught in accordance with a lesson plan. The posttest is employed to evaluate students' progress following the experiment and assess how well the chosen technique is working. This is true in particular while doing research since experimental and control groups employ different methods to accomplish the same learning objectives despite having access to the same curriculum (Harris, 1969).

The University of Technology's Halls of Mechanical Department is where the courses are taught. After the experiment, the data from the posttest was evaluated to see if the mean scores of the two groups differ in a way that is statistically significant using the previously indicated clustering technique.

4.7. Discussion of Results

1. Concerning the students' age, it was discovered that there is no difference of statistical significance which exists among the students in the experimental as well as control groups, as the control group's mean test score equals 19.662and its SD equals 0.809, whereas the mean score for the experimental group is 19.85and its standard deviation is 0.741. When the significance level is 0.05 and there are 63 degrees of freedom, the calculated t-value, which equals 0.969, is discovered to be less compared to the tabulated t-value, which equals 2.000 (refer to Table 2).

2. With regard to the pretest, table 3 indicates that there is no difference of statistical significance which exists between the students in the two groups. This is because the mean for the control group equals 79.35and its standard deviation equals 6.7, whereas the mean for the experimental

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group equals 79.635while its standard deviation equals 7.9. The computed t-value equals 0.951, that is less compared to the tabular t-value of 2.000. The significance level is set at 0.05, and there are 63 degrees of freedom (refer to table 3).

3. On the posttest, the mean score of the experimental group equals 80.493, while the control group's equals 75.432. As a consequence, the presence of a difference of statistical significance is apparent. in the posttest scores between the aforementioned two groups. This shows that on the posttest's mean score, students in the experimental group performed much better compared to those in the control group. In light of this, the clustering technique proves its effectiveness in enhancing essay writing (refer to Table 4).

Table (2) equalizing the Experimental and Control Groups according to the student age variable

Group	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed t- value	Tabulated t-value	d.f.	Level of significance
Con.	32	19.662	0.809	0.969	2.000	63	0 .05
Exp.	32	19.85	0.741				

Table (3) equalizing the Experimental and Control Groups according to the *Pretest* Variable

Group	No	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed t- value	Tabulated t-value	d.f	Level of significance
Exp.	32	79.635	7.9	0.951	2.000	63	0.05
Con.	32	79.35	6.7				

Table (4) the T-Value to the students' Posttest Achievement

Group	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed t-value	Tabulated t- value	d.f	Level of significance
Exp.	32	80.493	17.174	2.825	2.000	63	0.05
Con.	32	75.432	25.283				

5. Conclusion

All students must complete essays of class assignments as well as final examinations. Teachers often grade and evaluate these assignments based on the students' competence, correctness, and quality. The first goal of the present study is to determine the challenges that ESP students face when writing essays. According to the findings, there are

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six challenges: these are plagiarism, grammar issues, punctuation marks, word selections, critical thinking, and essay structure.

These challenges show that mastering an ESP program entails many difficulties, particularly with the skill of writing. Because of these difficulties, some students attempt to save time by copying and appropriating a written piece from the net without providing any references. Some of them struggle to develop their ideas because they struggle with critical thinking. Because of this, the information is not effectively conveyed to the reader. In addition to critical thinking, the essay's structure, the choice of words, grammatical errors, and punctuation marks can all make it difficult for readers to comprehend the ideas the essay is trying to express.

The present study also attempts to demonstrate whether or not adopting a course that uses clustering might enhance and strengthen the students' writing abilities. The current paper's results indicate that the most popular approaches for teaching writing skills in second languages are the lecture, instructor demonstration, and student collaboration in creating a topic diagram through clustering. There is, then, no question that the teaching strategy that a teacher employs in the classroom has a significant influence upon the students' abilities. After employing the clustering approach, students' writing performance significantly improves as a result of their ability to gather thoughts on the suggested subject, which facilitates the writing process.

To sum up, Future studies on this subject should take into account the students' perspectives on their challenges when learning how to write essays, particularly in ESP classes. The researcher hopes that this work will help instructors better grasp the essay-writing challenges faced by ESP students, as English is a crucial subject for all students, regardless of their field of study.

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