

STUDENTS' EXPOSITORY WRITING: A CASE STUDY IN PARAGRAPH WRITING CLASS

Puspita Sari

English Department-Faculty of Languages-Widyatama University

Corresponding author: Puspita Sari, Widyatama University
E-mail: puspita.sari@widyatama.ac.id

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Abstract:

This paper is entitled Students' Expository Writing: A Case Study in Paragraph Writing Class. It aims at investigating whether the students' expository writing has met the correct writing structure or not. In addition, this study determines what kind of writing patterns are used by students in conveying their writing. The method used in this research is descriptive analysis method. A method used to find the elements and characteristics of a phenomenon, including correctness of structure of expository writing and types of expository writing used by students in conveying their ideas. The data are taken from students' expository writing with different topics suggested by lecturers at beginning of the lecturing. The results shows that (1) students have fulfilled the structure of expository writing, which consists of an Introductory Paragraph, Body of Paragraph and closed with a conclusion and (2) students use 4 types of paragraphs in conveying their ideas, namely descriptive composition, cause and effect essay, compare and contrast essay and how to do something essay. More specifically, topic 1 (Education) uses the types of compare and contrast essay and descriptive composition, topic 2 (Healthy lifestyle) uses the types of descriptive composition and how to do something essay. Lastly, topic 3 (The Effect of Technology) uses the types of cause and effect essay and the descriptive composition.

Keyword:

Students' writing, Expository Writing, Introductory paragraph, Body of Paragraph and Concluding paragraph.



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INTRODUCTION

Writing is a skill that is acquired out of habit, which is closely related to reading. A person will be able to produce meaningful writing, of course, preceded by reading activities. This activity should be used since childhood, so that one day it will become a culture, namely a culture of good reading and writing. The resulting writings can be in the form of fiction, such as: short stories or poetry; or non-fiction, such as: articles, or academic writing.

Writing is one way to add insight. By writing, someone will actively read a variety of literature in order to enrich word terms and add material for discussion in written form. Writing is an activity that challenges the mind and body, especially the brain. A person who writes will be burdened with the responsibility of completing his writing so that it becomes complete information. By writing, someone can explore everything that is hidden in his mind.

Writing courses are introduced in teaching foreign language classes, one of which is English. When we learn a foreign language, we are required to master four language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. These learning activities are also given to Widyatama University English students that writing material has started to be taught from the first semester. This material is graded starting from Basic Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing, Experience-Based Writing, Text-Based Writing, Academic Writing and Article Writing for Journal. This study will discuss the writing activities of students whose focus is on expository writing learning.

The research data was obtained from the activities of third semester students who took the Paragraph Writing Course,

The importance of writing from students is not only for the thesis process. Writing is also something that must be investigated in making papers, research journals, research reports, activity and research proposals, and so on. A student's written work is a form of their creativity and knowledge, namely how they present their writing in the form of papers, theses, research proposals, and so on.

Writing materials introduced to students related to writing skills is the types of paragraphs including descriptive paragraphs, narrative paragraphs, expository paragraphs, and persuasive paragraphs. Besides, the lecturers provide the materials of types of paragraphs proposed by Oshima, Alice, & Hogue, Ann. 2006 such as descriptive composition, cause and effect essay, compare and contrast essay and how to do something essay. This study will investigate whether the students' expository writing has met the correct writing structure or not. In addition, this study would like to know types of writing pattern used in conveying their ideas. .

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

One form of student writing that is taught is making expository writing. In this study, the writer wanted to investigate how the results of the expository writing of the 3rd semester students. Did the students write an article in accordance with the appropriate and correct expository writing structure based on the theory put forward by Bailey, Stephen 2011? In addition, the writer wanted to know what kind of writing patterns are conveyed by students in conveying their writing.

METHODS

In this research, the writer uses descriptive method. Suryana (2010: 6) in Sari (2021) states that the descriptive method is a method used to find the elements and characteristics of a phenomenon. The method for collecting and processing data has gone through the following processes:

1. Students are given material related to paragraph writing (definition, paragraph structure and paragraph types)
2. Students get information on how to write a good Expository Paragraph.
3. Students are asked to determine 3 major topics related to Expository Writing
4. Students go through a expository writing process based on a predetermined topic.
5. Discussions and interviews are conducted between lecturers and students to produce an appropriate quality of writing.
6. The assessment process is carried out by the lecturer on the results of student writing.

SOURCE OF DATA

The source of data is obtained from the writing of the 3rd semester English Department students who take the Paragraph Writing course. The students are the evening class students consisting 10 participants in one class. Students are given lecture materials related to paragraph writing for 14 meetings. The theories of paragraph types are given 3 times at the beginning, followed by the practice of arranging paragraphs based on the types of paragraphs. Things related to writing expository paragraphs are carried out at meetings 9 and 10 after the midterm exam according to the theme suggested by the lecturer to students. In this study, the lecturer suggested 3 themes that should be developed in paragraph form to students. Furthermore, the lecturer will check and give an assessment along with the feedback according to the questions in the research questions.

THEORITICAL REVIEW

Goals and Benefits of Writing

When we write, of course there are goals that we expect from the writing that we make. From these goals, we also hope that we will get benefits, both for ourselves as writers and for others who read our writings. As a means for someone to express their ideas through writing, sometimes they do not only have one goal but sometimes expect various goals through their ideas which are arranged through writing.

Hugo Harting (in Tarigan, 1994: 24-25) classifies the purpose of writing, among others:

1. To inform everything, be it facts, data or events, including opinions and views on facts, data and events so that the readers will gain new knowledge and understanding of various things that can or are happening on this earth.
2. Persuading through the writing. A writer also hopes that the reader can determine an attitude, whether to approve or support what he puts forward. The writer must be able to persuade and convince readers by using a persuasive language style. Therefore, the persuasion function of a writing will be able to produce if the writer is able to present it in an attractive, intimate, friendly, and easily digestible language style.
3. Educating is one of the goals of communication through writing. Through reading the results of writing, one's knowledge will continue to increase, intelligence will continue to be sharpened, which in turn will determine a person's behavior. Educated people, for example, tend to be more open and tolerant, respect other people's opinions, and of course tend to be more rational.
4. Entertaining. The function and purpose of entertaining in communication are not the monopoly of mass media, radio, television, but print media can also play a role in entertaining readers. "Light" writings or readings that are rich in anecdotes, stories and funny experiences can also be readings for entertaining or to release tension after a busy day of activities.

There are also benefits from writing activities, including value-style benefits and practical benefits. Value-patterned benefits, such as the following.

1. The more you read and learn, the more developed the writing will be, and the more knowledge you have.
2. Train to think logically and systematically, both in the writing of fiction and non-fiction categories.
3. Writing down what we read is our way of grasping meaning. The meaning that we perceive from reading will be stronger / tied to its meaning if we write it down.
4. A means of catharsis, in which someone will feel relieved if they can put their grievances into writing.
5. The means of da'wah, that writing like this is related to ideological goals. Through writing, of course there is a lot of da'wah material that the writer can convey, also to many people from various circles at large.
6. Means of educating about things that are useful.
7. An invaluable and irreplaceable means of mental, spiritual, and intellectual gratification.

While the practical or pragmatic benefits of writing activities, for example (1) to make the author famous, and (2) in order to complete certain tasks, for example for students or college students.

So, the various purposes of writing activities, at the same time bring various benefits to the writer and the people who read the writing. Therefore, writing activities should be accustomed to it from an early age, so that later it becomes entrenched in us.

Expository Paragraph

There are four types of writing in English in general, namely narrative writing, descriptive writing, persuasive writing and expository writing. If previously we discussed the four types of writing in general and we have discussed narrative writing, in this article we will discuss the understanding, structure, and types of expository writing in English.

An expository paragraph is a type of essay that describes, and explains a topic in the form of sequential, clear and detailed information and aims to provide information as clearly as possible to the reader. Usually an expository paragraph is made in the form of a paragraph explaining one of the inherent elements on an object with the aim of adding insight to readers. This is almost similar to the way in which exposition essays and procedural texts are presented in Indonesian.

The main purpose of expository writing is to provide information to readers about certain information or to explain a truth accompanied by certain evidence or facts to readers. In this type of writing, a text is written in a specific order in order to provide a better understanding to the reader. The following are the characteristics contained in the expository paragraph, including (1) Explaining the subject matter tends to be informational, (2) There are a number of data and facts that support the explanation of the object, and (3) Containing elements of persuasion or

solicitation even though the levels are more little bit compared to example sentences and persuasion paragraphs. Some examples of expository writing are instruction manuals, news articles, textbooks, recipe books, posters, research papers, and city guides.

Expository Writing Structure

In general, Chin, Peter, et al. 2012 states that expository writing has three main parts, namely the opening, the content, and the closing section. Each part of this type of writing has an important role to play in providing an effective argument.

- The Introduction (Opening Section)

The first paragraph of a text is usually the opening section that explains what the essay you are going to write and gives readers an idea of what the essay is about. Use an opening sentence accompanied by several explanatory sentences that can grab the attention of the readers and also so that readers get information about what they will read in the content section.

- The Body (Content Section)

The content section in expository writing consists of at least 3 to 5 paragraphs. This section can also be written in more than 5 paragraphs depending on the topic chosen and also the level of knowledge of the readers who will read the article. Each paragraph begins with a main idea in the form of a statement that contains a purpose or case related to the selected topic.

Furthermore, the main idea in each paragraph is completed with several supporting ideas / sentences that are also related to the topic that has been selected. Remember to add a concluding sentence to each paragraph that also contains a transition to the next paragraph in the essay so that readers will find it easier to follow the ideas stated in the writing.

- The Conclusion (Conclusion / Closing Section)

The final section of the essay expository is the concluding section. This concluding / concluding section should provide the reader with the overall idea contained in the essay that has been written briefly. The thing that you need to remember when writing the closing section is that this section is not a place to summarize all the things / points that you have written in this section. However, this concluding / closing section is used to rewrite the statement containing the main idea of the essay and also contains solutions or actions that must be taken or contains questions related to the essay topic that can be developed into an essay for other writers. However, remember not to write about new ideas / things in this section because it will spoil the writing that you have written in your essay.

Expository Writing Types

In English, Oshima, Alice, & Hogue, Ann. 2006 describes that expository writing can be categorized into several types, namely as follows.

- Descriptive Composition

Descriptive composition is a type of writing that contains a description of an event, person, place or idea accompanied by several supporting details / sentences. This type of writing is widely used as a writing assignment for students at school. Examples of this type of writing are a description of a famous sportsperson (a description of a famous sportsperson), or a description of your favorite holiday destination (a description of your favorite vacation spot).

- Cause and Effect Essays

This type of essay describes the multiple effects of a cause. By writing a cause and effect essay, a writer can describe a cause that occurred and what are the consequences or consequences caused by that cause. As an example of this type of writing, a writer can explain the consequences of global warming, the consequences of water scarcity, and so on.

- Compare and Contrast Composition

Compare and contrast composition is a type of writing that focuses on two or more topics. In this type of writing, a writer compares two or more topics to provide complete information to readers. Examples of this type of writing are essays on childhood versus adolescence, essays on life in high school versus college life, essays on brand A versus brand B soft drinks, and so on.

- How to do Something Essay / Process Essay

In this type of writing, a writer explains the whole process of how to make something sequentially (by writing down the activity steps). In general, an author presents all information in a logical order so that readers can easily follow the steps that the author has mentioned in his writing. Examples of how to do something in an essay / essay process are how to make a power point, how to bake a cake and so on.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Process of Writing

Before students start writing, the lecturer prepares several stages in the writing process. The stage consists of 4 phases: Pre-Writing, Drafting, Reviewing & Revising and Rewriting. These four stages must be passed by students so that students can produce good writing, in accordance with the writing structure of expository writing.

At this stage students must be able to determine the topic first. There are several important criteria for selecting a topic. However, the most important thing that students should know is to choose a topic that they are interested in. The lecturer offered 10 topics but students only choose 3 topics that they like. After they made a discussion with classmates, they decided to choose the topics, such as Education, A Healthy Lifestyle and the Effect of Technology. When students choose a topic they like, then they have the energy to be able to develop it enthusiastically. At least at the end, their writing will be better. Students must be able to recheck the topic that has been selected. Do not let the topic be too broad so that students do not highlight the ideas to be expressed in the body of paragraph or even the topic is considered too specific so that students are too difficult to develop it. After determining the topic, students will collect ideas. One way to get ideas is to list as many ideas as possible according to the topic that has been found. Do not worry whether the lists of ideas written are good or not, whether all of them will be used in the paragraph or not, just write them down. Write these ideas down in sentences, phrases or even just words. Ignore grammar and spelling, write down as much as possible. Later, read the ideas in the list again. Decide which ones they will probably want to use in their paragraph. Cross out any ideas that do not seem useful to them. After gathering ideas, students will write an outline. Writing an outline helps students organize their thought and develop a structure for their paragraph. A well planned outline ensures that their paragraph will be well planned and make sense to their audience. In the process of determining the topic, students did not find significant obstacles. That means they can do well. However, when students write the outline, they confirm with the lecturer to get input on the draft outline they have made. After getting feedback from the lecturers regarding the outline they made, they were much more confident in continuing the writing process.

Writing a Paragraph

The structure of a paragraph should consist of 3 important points. They are introductory paragraph, body of paragraph and conclusion.

A. Writing an Introductory Paragraph

In introductory paragraph students should grab their readers' attention by using hook. A startling fact or a brief story is often what they need. In introduction section students should provide background knowledge to the readers about the topic they write. Making hooks is a challenging for students. Students must think creatively to be able to find the right words, either in the form of open statements or statistical data to make this information an awareness of the reader regarding the topic to be conveyed. On topic 1 (education), 70% of students can provide a good hook. Meanwhile, the other 30% still need to be improved after going through a joint discussion. While on topic 2 (healthy lifestyle) 90% of students can present interesting hooks because the topic is closely related to their experiences in daily life in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and a quality lifestyle. As for topic 3 (The Effect of Technology) 80% of students can present a good hook and are in line with the chosen topic.

The most important part of the introduction section, and indeed of their whole paper, is the *thesis statement*, or statement of purpose. This informs the reader of what the ultimate point of the essay is talking about. Remember, the statement needs to be unbiased and neutral for the expository essay; it should not take sides in any debate. The problems coming in creating the thesis statement are not only how to arrange the words to become a good sentence but also how the ideas thought connected and easily to be developed in the next paragraph (body of paragraph). These are the examples of thesis statement for the topics chosen by students after through discussion and revision.

No	Topic	Thesis statement
1.	Education	Real education, in disciplines such as medicine, science and astronomy, can take place within virtual environments
2.	Healthy Lifestyle	There are many ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

3.	The Effect of Technology	Although technology has made modern life easier, it can have negative effects such as pollution, holes in the ozone layer and the extinction of some animal species
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B. Writing a Body of Paragraph

Now at last we're getting into the analytical meat of the expository essay. Here's where students set out their carefully-outlined points and present their evidence. Each main point should be followed by the factual evidence supporting that point in the same paragraph. In the work practice, students are directed to make 3 paragraphs in the body of paragraphs, each paragraph consisting of the main idea, topic sentence and supporting details. This format depends on types of paragraph for example: three different takes or views on the situation, three opposing points of view, two opposite sides and one side which takes elements of both, three steps to solve a problem, three stages of a journey, and so on.

Most students complete it well although in the completion process they went through discussions with the lecturer to produce a good expository paragraph. For topic 1 (education), the type of paragraph that many students chose in conveying their ideas was compare and contrast, because they tried to present the differences between the education system in Indonesia and the education system abroad. The rest of them present it in a descriptive composition, which provides a specific description of the current education system, especially in the atmosphere of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The types of paragraph made by students related to topic 2 (Healthy lifestyle) are divided into 2 types, namely descriptive composition and how to do something essay. Students present in a descriptive composition because they want to provide a detailed description of the importance of a healthy lifestyle so that humans can live a more qualified life. In addition, this type of how to do something essay contains several strategies or tips on how to live a healthy life.

Last, the types of paragraph made by students related to topic 3 (The Effect of Technology) tends to use cause and effect essay. In this case, students tried to elaborate the positive and negative effect of technology for human's life nowadays. However, some of them also use descriptive composition when they want to describe the importance of the role of technology for human convenience in accessing anything in life in the current industrial era 4.0.

C. Writing a Conclusion

When students finish making their points and draw to a close, they start to make conclusion by restating the main points and thesis in brief form. Students can then conclude in one of several ways, for instance, by restating the main idea using different words, by signaling the end of the paragraph, or by leaving the readers with the most important ideas to remember.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, we can conclude that:

1. Students have fulfilled the structure of Expository writing, which consists of an Introductory Paragraph, Body of Paragraph and closed with a conclusion. In Introductory paragraphs students can make hooks appropriately for grab readers' attention, determine topic and topic sentences as well as thesis statements well even though they go through the process of discussion and revision with the lecturer. In the Body of paragraph, students can write down the main ideas that are right on the topic and bring up supporting details in the form of examples and detailed facts as evidence supporting the ideas the writer is trying to convey. In the Conclusion section, most of the students submitted it in the form of restating the main points and thesis in a brief form.
2. In delivering story ideas on each chosen topic, students use 4 types of paragraphs, namely descriptive composition, cause and effect essay, compare and contrast essay and how to do something essay. More specifically, topic 1 (Education) uses the types of compare and contrast essay and descriptive composition, topic 2 (Healthy lifestyle) uses the types of descriptive composition and how to do something essay. Lastly, topic 3 (The Effect of Technology) uses the types of cause and effect essay and the descriptive composition

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