

## Learning From Students' Experiences in Writing Paragraph

Moh. Yamin

Universitas Lambung Mangkurat  
Jl. Brigjen H. Hasan Basri, Banjarmasin, Kalimantan Selatan 70123, Indonesia  
moh\_yamin@ulm.ac.id

Received: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Revised: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Published: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### Abstract

This article aims to describe the students' ability in writing a paragraph. It is a descriptive qualitative in which the number of respondents is 60 students. All samples are taken from the guided writing class as the first subject series of a writing class. The data collection is obtained through a number of assignments they did and uploaded in a blog. From all assignments of writing task, only six assignments of writing task were taken and analyzed, based on top ones in writing quality starting from topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. Based on the analysis result, students' ability is located on weakness in determining the topic sentence, starting the topic sentence, and writing supporting sentences. Their weakness appears because of the inability to formulate the topic, topic sentence, and difficulty to find the relevant supporting sentences to write for supporting the topic sentence. The inability of formulating topic, topic sentence, and supporting sentences contributes towards inability to apply the unity knowledge in making supporting sentences united.

**Keywords:** topic, topic sentence, supporting sentence, and paragraph

### Introduction

The basic skill the learners should have in writing is the ability to know, to understand, and to formulate the idea or issue to write into a topic. This basic ability determines the students' success in the next step for writing process. The ability to understand and catch the issue will open the students' perspective dealing with what to discuss and elaborate in detail. This step takes learners to move forward to be able to arrange their issues gotten so that it helps them in starting to write. The reason why it is basic is that all learners are trained to be able to read and think critically towards text as the source of reading. Formulating the idea or issue to write into the topic will occur because learners have the concept of knowledge. It happens because of the ability to understand and have the issue. Having basic skill in determining the topic and topic sentence is the must for all learners for those who have a high focus on writing. Determining the topic is one thing; writing the topic sentence based on a chosen topic is another thing that should be learned and practiced to be expert. The main failure commonly happens because of inability to determine the topic and write the topic



sentence. Finally, in the next step to develop a topic sentence into supporting sentences, it is more and more difficult.

In deep context, to write topic sentence need to be based on the high concentration so that what to think to write is easy to do. Writing topic sentence not only deals to write but also needs high concentration to make the topic able to generate. Principally, every idea is modal to write into a topic sentence, but every idea in the learners' mind cannot be able to write down into a topic sentence. The reason is that the writing topic should be considered the visibility to write. In other words, having a good topic sentence deals with whether it is able to develop into supporting sentences or not. Too specific topic and topic sentence will make the learners get difficulty in elaborating the idea into supporting sentences because the topic is too specific (Chien-Ching, 2004). Too specific idea commonly ends with the failure because of difficulty in writing supporting sentences. This situation will be the same as the topic and topic sentence that is too general. The too general idea in topic and topic sentence also can end with the failure to finish the paragraph because any ideas that should be written down and discussed are too many. Finishing it in one paragraph is not enough because it should be developed into the next and new paragraph. Do not finish the idea from the topic and topic sentence in one paragraph means that the idea is too general; the goal of writing here is for one paragraph, not more than one paragraph.

Based on the two situations in which writing the paragraph started with too specific is one problem and writing a paragraph begun from too general idea is another problem so that it is the main problem to have a good paragraph, it is necessary to write a paragraph based on a topic sentence that is neither too general nor too specific. It means that a good topic sentence tells something about the content of the paragraph, but none of the details (Hogue, 2007). The topic sentence only opens with the general view dealing with what to write and discuss. The topic sentence determines the main points that will be elaborated in supporting details. Because the goal of a topic sentence is only for opening and giving at a glance perspective, it is important to make the topic sentence clear enough, knowledgeable, and interesting. Clear enough in topic sentence is opened with the sentence in clear and focus on the topic; knowledgeable means the learner should have enough knowledge dealing with the topic sentence. The teacher's presence in guiding students to be able to write is needed so that the process of learning in writing is well organized (Suherman, 2018; Mauludin & Ardianti, 2017).

By having the knowledge, the learner will be able to write easily and with full of energy by discussing the topic sentence in supporting sentences. Interesting means what is written and discussed should make the text interesting to read. Interesting here deals with the readability because of unity and coherence. Good writing because of being interesting to read happens because of unity and coherence. Unity here talks about the writer's capacity to describe all ideas logically (Tosuncuoğlu, 2018; Gallo, 1990; Blass, L., & Durighello, 1985), whereas coherence deals with one central and main idea in each paragraph. What should be discussed in each paragraph should be completed and there are no floating ideas that are inherent in each paragraph. Finishing the elaboration of one central idea in each paragraph should be conducted as deep as possible before



moving to another paragraph. The main principle in unity is finishing one idea in a paragraph before discussing the other ideas following in other paragraphs (Bander, 1985; Eells, 1942).

Writing capacity is not something given but must be obtained by process and the process itself should be trained continuously. Because writing capacity is the result of the writing process and practice, it is important to consider the importance of learning for writing. It means that practice makes perfect is the right proverb to remember. As writing process to have the writing capacity, it is necessary to underline writing that is not only to put the words together in which writing is aimed to arrange the words into a phrase, sentences, and text, but it is also something enabling human intellect and capabilities to be visible. What is visible here deals with the ideas elaborated in words, phrases, and sentences in the text that should be understood by the readers. The text has meaning and goal. Every utterance in the text is developed to build the meaning based on the text and context. Every text is in line with the context so that the text can deliver the meaning and messages to the readers (Dooley, 1995).

Jing (2014) states that coherence is both text-based and reader-based that can be promoted by thematic choices and thematic progression patterns. Sui and Chen (2010) in coherence writing should pay attention to three methods of transition-connectives, lexical coherence, and reference. Lee (2000) defines the local level of coherence as the interconnectedness between sentences and clause units, such as references, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

Dealing with this, writing should represent a high status and means being educated. Writers are privileged and respected as well (Leki, 1992). What is delivered in the text is coming from the high ideas to speak for. It means that the product of writing is produced by the one as the thinking process. What the writer thinks and produces in the text is a thinking process because of undergoing in reality. Therefore, writing is an important skill for both first and second language and it is not a skill which is naturally learned like walking (Lenneberg, 1967). Writing can be had because those want to learn, want to practice, need to have the process of practice to be trained, and so forth. Writing is not the skill that is easy to own because it requires the long process to be able to write in a unity and coherence manner. The person who is accustomed to writing commonly will have logical and critical thinking because he knows what to think, what to write, and what to discuss.

In this context, writing capacity should be understood based on the main feature that writing skill is identical to self-habitation. Good writing capacity means good communicative skill because the person has been able to communicate the ideas into the written form. Writing is called accuracy because it is built on the right use of word or vocabulary, mechanics, and organization. Writing is gradually recognized as a process of thinking and composing as a result of communicative language skills because in writing anyone should be able to elaborate the ideas into written form. The written form here should be interpreted that the writing product is the resulting process of finding the topic, discussing the



topic, and giving any perspective relating to the topic. Writing has been regarded as an important enterprise in and of itself contrary to the traditional view which considers that writing functions to support and consolidate oral language use, grammar, and vocabulary (Wiegler, 2002). The important enterprise in writing is that it stands does not only function and consolidate the oral language use, grammar, and vocabulary in good structure, but also it attempts to communicate the writer's ideas and represents the writer's view towards the topic to discuss.

It is in line with the research result conducted by Dalsky & Tajino (2007) and Bitchener & Basturkmen (2006) stating that the students underwent problems and difficulties to be able to organize ideas and arguments, to use the appropriate styles of writing, and to express thoughts clearly in English. Hasegawa (2013) also states that the factors contributing towards this failure deal with failing to transcribe their ideas and conceptualizations into writing in the form of notes or material they may draw upon when composing their essay, lacking sufficient explanation of the specialized vocabulary items such as 'thesis statement' or 'topic sentence', and the minor knowledge in understanding context to be able to develop the idea in text. Cahyani, Mantra, and Wirastuti (2018) state that the ability in paragraph writing should be measured on norm-referenced of five standard values clearly pointing out good achievement, sufficient achievement, insufficient achievement, and poor achievement.

It means that in the writing process, the students are trained to use their brains and sense at the same time (Jabrohim, 2001). The use of brain and sense are aimed to move the students' capacity in the writing process. The brain is for thinking; sense means for creating the sensitivity towards text and fact so that the learners are able to speak critically in writing text or text writing. This thing is known when the students do the writing activity. In other words, their brains will think about the ideas and their hands will start to write what they think in their minds. Additionally, writing is a very essential capability for being mastered by students; writing is also an excellent communication tool. The meaning of writing as a basic skill is how the learners develop their writing competence in which they are expected to produce a well-structured piece of writing. It is a process in which students create ideas, organize them and write them in a unified form (Okumuş, 2019).

It is also supported by the research result conducted by Sulistyono and Ningsih (2015) stating that to be able to find out the students' ability in writing, it is important to be based on process writing the students have that does not only deal with writing topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences, but also should be based on steps in writing process starting from pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Solikhah (2015) stated that writing is to be viewed as the way to generate ideas and organize the ideas into written form logically and systematically.

In writing a paragraph, the learners are trained to write a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. It means that the learners' capacity in writing should be practiced routinely. By doing this, they can convey their ideas in their mind by organizing them into a good paragraph so that others recognize them. In addition, they can think critically about what should be



organized in a written form (Sharples, 1999). Through writing, each person is able to convey feelings, ideas, and announcements to others. It means that the writing process is the activity that requires the writer to be able to deliver what to think and what to write. Sharples (1999) stated that writing is virtually an opportunity in which it allows students to express something about themselves, explore, and explain ideas. The words expressing, exploring, and explaining are in one package of activity in which the students should be able to them in their activity of writing. By doing this, students can convey their ideas in their mind by organizing them into a good paragraph so that others recognize them. Organizing into a good paragraph is the keyword so that the writing product is readable. By being readable, the readers can read and understand what the text is. Based on this consideration, this article aims to describe the students' ability in writing a paragraph.

### Method

This research attends to describe the students' ability in writing a paragraph. It is a descriptive qualitative in which the number of respondents is 60 students. All of them are population taken as the sample from a guided writing class as the first subject series of a writing class. The data collection is obtained through a number of assignments they did and uploaded in a blog. From all assignments of writing task, only six assignments of writing task were taken and analyzed, based on the well organized writing level viewed from writing quality starting from the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. The researcher also did direct observation class in each meeting so that the researcher could know their learning process of writing in detail. Because of direct observation class, the researcher named students' experience in writing. The data analysis is conducted by assessing the students' writing assignments in which each finding deals with the students' ability in determining the topic, topic sentence, and supporting sentences. The keyword "relevant" is the success indicator whether a topic sentence is generated from topic relevantly, whether a topic sentence is discussed in supporting sentences in a relevant manner, whether all supporting sentences are relevant with a topic sentence so that those sentences are in unity and coherence. All findings towards students' writing assignments will be discussed in a focusing manner. The data analysis was gotten from direct class observation and this was used to strengthen the discussion quality based on finding from students' writing assignments.



## Findings and discussion

### *The Bullying in the field of education*

(1) Lately Indonesia has experienced an increase in cases of bullying in the education sector, especially for elementary school and junior high schools. (2) According to KPAI data in 2018, cases of bullying and physical violence are still the dominant cases in the education sector. (3) Bullying can occur due to lack of empathy, often seeing acts of violence, wanting to be superior to others for the perpetrators. (4) Whereas for the victims caused by a lack of self-confidence, not being good at intercommunication, looking weak so that they were targetted by the perpetrators. (5) The impact of bullying is very detrimental because in addition to violating human rights also causes trauma and severe depression for victims who usually come from children and teenagers to experience a decrease in their potential and achievements in school. (6) To prevent this, we must inform the adverse effects of bullying, strengthen sympathy and mutual respect, build healthy competition, reduce the spectacle of violence in the current generation. (7) This proves the lack of sense of solidaritas and unity in the current generation, even though if this bad action is reduced and stopped it will lead to positive increase and peace for the generation itself.

Figure 1. Student's Paragraph Writing

The underlined topic sentence above is not in line with the supporting sentences written. The core of it deals with the increasing number of bullying in the education sector. Because the core discusses the increasing number of bullying, it means that the supporting sentences should support the topic sentence. The rest of sentences in supporting sentences give strengthening towards what the topic sentence highlights. Every supporting sentence should be in with the topic sentence so that this builds unity. Unity in a paragraph is discussing the importance of supporting sentences to explain, to discuss, and to strengthen topic sentence so that there is the same goal to talk about. The unity in a paragraph is about the importance of topic sentence to be supported by supporting sentences in a discussion.

What happens in that paragraph in supporting sentences is not fully or loses the clear path to discuss topic sentence. Every line of supporting sentences has a different goal in discussing bullying. Bullying in the topic sentence is about the increasing number, but every supporting sentence in the paragraph is not about it. The first supporting sentence is about explaining the dominant case in bullying and it means that it does not talk about the increasing number. It is too general; it should be more specific in giving the explanation. The second supporting sentence is also irrelevant with an increasing number of bullying because it deals with the impact such as why bullying happens. That is why; there is no unity between a topic sentence with supporting sentence. The third supporting sentence is about preventing the bullying whereas the topic sentence is about the increasing number of bullying. It is called no unity between the topic sentence and supporting sentence. The fourth supporting sentence is the lack of solidarity to fight against bullying whereas the topic sentence is about the increasing number of bullying.





Based on four supporting sentences, those do not describe the unity for delivering explanations towards the topic sentence. The student's paragraph writing in figure 1 is not categorized as a good paragraph. The paragraph is full of sub-topics generated from topic sentence so that what the supporting sentences talk about actually does not refer to what topic sentence should achieve. More subtopics in supporting sentences generated from topic sentence create the bias of discussion in the paragraph. More subtopics influence towards the blur discussion in a paragraph because there is no unity to connect the supporting sentences with a topic sentence or topic sentence with supporting sentences and this is not a good paragraph. Rini (2008) states, a paragraph should be viewed as the collection of sentences in which each sentence has the role to support and complete each other in order to build one idea. Building one idea of discussion should be based on the unity of supporting sentences. It is supported by Hogue (1999) stating a paragraph as the basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of related sentences develops one main idea.

*(1) For the students like us, the purpose of this writing is to help us to communicate our thoughts of knowledge for a study. (2) Writing academically will help us learn to analyze, convey understanding, and think critically. (3) We can learn how to write from many perspective. (4) This type of writing also teach us to write according to rules, means that it helps us improving our writing skill. (5) Basically, writing academically can develop our writing skills, stimulates our intelectual development and of course to understand the content that we write, that is why writing academically is important.*

Figure 2. Student's Paragraph Writing

Writing a paragraph should be started with a good topic sentence that can be explained in detail in supporting sentences. A good topic sentence is the starting point to develop into supporting sentences. The student's paragraph writing in figure 2 seems that the underlined topic sentence tends to discuss the importance of writing in communicating the knowledge. It means that writing is for exploring the knowledge in written form. Principally and in an overall manner, this paragraph is acceptable because it can deliver the meaning nevertheless this paragraph does not have the coherence because the flow of one sentence to another sentence in a paragraph is not smooth.

The topic sentence is not built and communicated systematically in the first supporting sentence. In a topic sentence, it talks about the importance of communicating the thought in writing, but in the first supporting sentence, the language used is to analyze, convey understanding, and think critically. The three words are not so relevant that those sound awkward. It also happens in the second supporting sentence in which the phrase how to write from many perspectives is used. The content is understood to support the topic sentence, but the phrase used is not supporting so that it is far away from the context of the topic sentence. It



also occurs to the third supporting sentence that is not too relevant in using the vocabulary and language use so that it seems not meaningful.

Based on those supporting sentences that are not able to use the supporting language use to make the paragraph speak very clearly, it should be understood that it happens because of limitedness in expressing ability in written form. The goal is clear, but the language is not supporting and this is categorized no coherence in the text. In other words, coherence in writing paragraph should be highlighted in order to make the paragraph run well.

*The Importance of Writing for Academic Writing*

*(1) Academic writing is the style of advanced writing that is used by students at college and academics, such as, PhD students, lecturers and researchers for journal publications, presented at conferences, and assignment given in an academic writing setting. (2) It can be used as an assesment of students' knowledge so they can improve with it as a guide. (3) It can be used as proof that a specific experimental result has been obtained with a solid fact and has been proven by searching and observing. (4) It can be used to organized and to learn more about new knowledge. (5) It can help to clarify your thoughts and identify any gaps in your knowledge or understanding. (6) In clonclusion, you will need to learn skill for writing academically no matter what your purposes for writing academically no matter what your purpose for writing academically is to be able to devote yourself to society.*

Figure 3. Student's Paragraph Writing

Writing in any kind of genre should be viewed as the process of delivering the thought into the written form. It is important to learn the writing culture to be able to write well and correctly. The common failure in writing is because of inability in writing. The student's paragraph in figure 3 has weaknesses in determining the title of the text that should not be synchronized with the underlined topic sentence written. The topic sentence deals with academic writing; the title of the text is about the importance of writing for academic purposes in which the two things are different in goal and discussion. The goal of writing for academic purposes is to read in many contexts and one of them is for academic writing. It means that the academic writing deals with the ability to write academic writing itself starting from the introductory paragraph, body of the essay, and concluding paragraph. The different goals and discussion cannot be united in one text as the learner did in figure 3.

What happens in figure 3 is the consequence of the student's failure to understand the substance to discuss. There are two points here. The first is that the learner considers writing for academic purposes the same as academic writing. The second is that the learner concludes academic writing the same as writing for academic purposes. The main source is minor knowledge about writing for academic purposes and academic writing. The minor knowledge causes failure in writing the text.

Based on this, it can be concluded that determining topic sentence should be clear and the learner has the wide knowledge relating to the topic what will be





explained and discussed in supporting sentences. The ability to understand the topic sentence with wide knowledge is the capital in enlarging the discussion. That is why, it is necessary for the learner to be able to function topic and controlling idea in the topic sentence. By being able to function topic and controlling idea in topic sentence accurately, it will be easy in writing. It seems that the learner's problem in topic sentence happens because of not being able to organize the ideas to discuss so that what is written in the text is not the same as what is written in the title of the text.

*(1) Writing is one of the basic skills that is very important; moreover, we have studied it since childhood. (2) Almost every day we see writing, but not all are academic writing. (3) Academic writing has its own structure and technique to do. (4) This is important for use to write for academic purposes. Academic writing can require us to think analytically. (5) When you are able to analyze anything, these skills will be inherent in you forever. (6) Besides that, academic writing can help up convey understanding, think critically and more focused. (7) Therefore, to be able to write better academic writing can be achieved with time and practice. (8) By learning academic writing, it can make us more profesional later.*

Figure 4. Student's Paragraph Writing

The student's paragraph writing in figure 4 is the reflection of the student's thought that is not consistent with the supporting sentences in question. The underline topic sentence opens a discussion dealing with writing importance, but what is talked about more in supporting sentences deal with academic writing. Therefore, it is important to separate topic writing and academic writing. Discussing writing means how to write in a simple manner; discussing academic writing is begun from the introductory paragraph, body of the essay, and concluding paragraph as figure 3 is discussed. The different problem in figure 4 is located on the learner's failure in developing the topic sentence into supporting sentences. Topic sentence writing only aims to elaborate the writing itself and it is focused on basic skill, not as academic writing.

It can be concluded that the basic definition of writing is talking about writing a paragraph. Before discussing the academic writing in detail, writing a paragraph as the basic learning should be learned. Learners should be trained to learn and understand the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. Preferring to academic writing, the learners should be able to have the basic skill in operating the writing paragraph. What the learner underwent in writing a paragraph in figure 4 means that he or she actually has not been able to use the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence correctly. There is no good comprehension of what topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence so that this is the main problem in developing the main idea into a topic, topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.



It is important to state clearly that the learners have the writing experiences in using the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. By experience, they will be focusing on what should be written dealing with a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. Learning for writing a paragraph is the basic one before going on academic writing. Being trained and expert in writing a paragraph will be a good step in academic writing.

*(1) Writing for academic purposes has many benefits and purposes. (2) One of the benefits is improving someone's intellectual ability. (3) The person that has writing ability for academic purposes can measure how far his/her analytical ability towards problems. (4) In addition, the person can train his/her mind to find the newest innovation. (5) The innovation is really needed in these days. (6) The role of a writer has influenced on the world that is always changing. (7) Shortly, writing for academic purposes can improve intellectual ability so it can create innovation in these days.*

Figure 5. Student's Paragraph Writing

Writing is the thinking process to create the main idea dealing with the topic discussed, elaborate it, develop it, and discuss it in detail based on the writing framework to talk about. Because writing is meant to give a detail explanation and discussion dealing with the topic in question, it is important to state that the learner subject should have the thinking concept in elaborating and discussing. Writing in this context dealing with students' capacity in paragraph writing is about how to start the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence that is based on depth view so that this one should be comprehended very necessary and important as the main part in writing paragraph. It means that writing paragraph is the written thought that is based on the knowledge of how the learner connects the knowledge with the paragraph parts starting from a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. The indicators can be found from the ability in paragraph organization: opening, the body, a conclusion that is based on the capacity in writing topic sentence, developing sentences, and concluding sentence correctly. The student's paragraph writing in figure 5 has been able to be started from the topic sentence in a good manner and it is developed into supporting sentences that are relevant, nevertheless; the second from the last supporting sentence is bias and does not support the topic sentence. The supporting sentence "the role of a writer has influenced the world that is always changing" does not deal with the topic sentence. The underlined topic sentence discusses the writing for academic purposes, but one of the supporting sentences is talking about the writer and it is not relevant.

What is discussed does not have a significant correlation towards the main topic of the topic sentence. Therefore, the learner's paradigm in understanding the topic sentence is not fully holistic. The inability in understanding is the key of why he or she cannot generate the detail supporting sentences from the topic sentence. The inability deals with the lack of knowledge in comprehending writing as the topic to develop into the topic sentence and supporting sentences. The inability is dealing with the weakness to strengthen deepening discussion dealing with the topic sentence and several supporting sentences made. It means



that the problem dealing with supporting sentences development should be viewed as the reflection on how the learner has not been able to formulate his or her ideas in determining the sub details of a topic sentence that are developed in supporting sentences.

Therefore, writing a paragraph starting from a topic sentence and supporting sentences does not only stop on one or two supporting sentences but should also be continued on the next supporting sentences needed in one paragraph. Topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence are united. The capacity to develop the next supporting sentences for enriching the previous supporting sentences should be had by the learner. The basic knowledge dealing with topic sentence should be wide so that there is no missing link between one or two supporting sentences and the next supporting sentences. It is important to consider having a united and coherent substance in a paragraph. It means that writing ability in a paragraph should be viewed in multi-perspective for quality consideration. Quality consideration for writing ability is the main part to control how good the students are.

Whatever it is, by basing the five components, it will be able to create the qualified writing paragraph so that the students as the learner subject try to be better in formulating the idea into the topic sentence, developing it into supporting sentences, and end the discussion in concluding sentence. That is why; the basic point to declare is that the main requirement to have high qualified writing ability for paragraph capacity should be started from the mindset in starting the paragraph writing itself. Starting to write the paragraph in good point and right way will be starting point in developing the ideas in whole paragraph.

Mapping semantic strategy here aims to facilitate the students in generating their ideas related to the topic. The students are able to explore their ideas and find the important terms or vocabulary items and also realize the relationship among the words that they would encounter in their writing related to the topic given that is being discussed. What Sulistyo and Ningsih mean that writing process should be paid attention because it is the path to be better in writing quality. The writing process is the main part so that the learners learn to brainstorm the ideas, to collect the ideas, and to formulate the fixed idea into topic and topic sentence. By having the fixed idea into topic and topic sentence, it will be easy to proceed into starting to write a paragraph in a draft containing topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. A draft in paragraph is the learning source whether the writing quality is good and organized. When the draft is considered to need improvement in grammar or substance, to revise is needed as the learning process borderlessly and it is necessary to state the importance of revising in order to sharpen the writing content and to improve the grammatical mistake. Revising determines the next step that will happen, namely editing and publishing. Based on these steps in writing process, Sulistyo and Ningsih view that mapping semantic strategy is effective to help learners in paragraph writing. The students have the more chances to develop their ideas into the organized paragraph.



It is also supported by Lestari and El-Sulukiyyah (2017) who state that students' capacity in writing paragraph can be conducted through explicit planning dealing with word listing aiming to generate ideas for writing descriptive text and word mapping with phrases/sentences for detail aiming to translate the plan into a composition. Students actually need to be guided by the teacher so that they can determine and select the topic to develop. By being able to determining and selecting, it will move on enriching the topic by discussing and reading review of related literature. Word mapping as the other part of explicit planning helps students in composing the topic into paragraph. Word mapping aims so that students can categorize every detail to compose starting from a topic sentence and supporting sentences. Word mapping is needed so that the students can discuss the topic sentence in supporting sentences in detail and argumentatively.

*(1) It is important to write for academic purposes. (2) Writing is an activity to create a note or information on media using letters, but in this era writing is not only done on a paper media, but also digital. (3) This makes it easy for everyone to put their ideas in, especially students. (4) There are some reasons why writing is important in academic purpose. (5) The first is that writing is a creative process pour ideas or ideas to be communicated to other. (6) In others, writing can develop our ideas. (7) Then, writing is a media that distributes knowledge. (8) It's mean with writing, we can share our knowledge or we can find another person's knowledge from other person's writing, which one will improve our knowledge. (9) Next, writing is important in academic purpose because it's make trained to make a writing and especially for college students at the end of the lecture. (10) This will help college students who will write the thesis. (11) Accustomed to writing will make it easier for us to make a paper someday if needed. (12) From some of the descriptions above, we can conclude how writing important for academic purpose. (13) As we can see writing can improve our creativity and our knowledge in writing.*

Figure 6. Student's Paragraph Writing

The student's paragraph writing in figure 6 is started from the underlined topic sentence discussing the importance of writing for academic purposes. Writing for academic purposes can be defined as the written form from the thought and what is talked about should be logical, rational, and based on the reasoning. Every supporting sentence developed from the topic sentence should be united with the topic sentence and there is no bias supporting sentence details. Whatever the supporting sentences discuss should be in line with the topic sentence. Therefore, having the correct perception and definition of writing for academic purposes is a necessity.

Figure 6 above in defining topic sentence is acceptable and supporting sentences are fairly acceptable, nevertheless; supporting sentences used are significantly giving detail information and explanation meant in the topic sentence. The first supporting sentence defines writing for academic purposes based on media, paper media whereas the two points are not relevant towards



writing for academic purposes. The second supporting sentence is not fully acceptable; it is relevant. The third one is talking about creative writing and it does not relate to writing for academic purposes. It also happens to other supporting sentences that do not focus on discussing topic sentence although principally those are acceptable. Therefore, it seems that the learner's understanding dealing with paragraph elements starting from the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence is not fully understood practically although he or she has the knowledge of paragraph. In other words, the learner still has the difficulty in applying the concept of paragraph because of limited experience and knowledge that should be elaborated.

### Conclusion

Students' experiences in writing a paragraph with their capacity in writing topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence can be the learning source to have better quality in writing a paragraph. Therefore, it is important to state the general weakness the students have in writing paragraph. The first is dealing with a topic sentence in which the learners have a problem in determining the topic sentence correctly. The students' experience in determining topic sentence can be generalized not too comprehensive so that this one influences the learners' comprehension on what should be emphasized as controlling idea in a topic sentence. Learners' knowledge that is theoretical causes the learners to have difficulties to sharpen controlling idea in topic sentence.

That problem also happens to the learners' knowledge in writing supporting sentences. Developing one supporting sentence to another supporting sentence needs the habituated effort that writing supporting sentences should be based on the unity knowledge. Unity in supporting sentences is defined as the guide that what should be written in each supporting sentence and should be in the same idea formulated in the topic sentence. The goal is that every supporting sentence has the connected idea towards topic sentence and this is called unity in supporting sentences to explain the topic sentence; this is the learners' weakness in writing paragraph. Shortly, the quality of writing paragraph is based on the firmness of topic sentence what is discussed and the unity of supporting sentences in giving detail strengthening towards the topic sentence.

### References

- Bander, R. G. (1985). *From Sentence to Paragraph: A Writing book*. New York: CBS college publishing.
- Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H. (2006). Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5(1), 4-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2005.10.002>
- Blass, L., & Durighello, J. (1985). *From Concept to Composition*. New Jersey:



Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs.

- Cahyani, I. A. M., Mantra, I. B. N., & Wirastuti, I. G. A. P. (2018). Employing Picture Description to Assess the Students' Descriptive Paragraph Writing. *Soshum : Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 8(1), 86. <https://doi.org/10.31940/soshum.v8i1.797>
- Chien-Ching, L. (2004). Seeing is Understanding: Improving Coherence in Students' Writing. *The Internet TESL Journal*, X(7). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/>
- Dalsky, D., & Tajino, A. (2007). Students' Perceptions of Difficulties with Academic Writing: A Report from Kyoto University Academic Writing Courses. *Kyoto University Researches in Higher Education*, 13(January 2007), 45–50.
- Dooley, D. A. (1995). *Plain and Ordinary Things: Reading Women in the Writing Classroom*. Albany.
- Eells, H. (1942). *Writing Thesis*. Edinburgh: The Antioch press.
- El-Sulukiyyah, L. S. & A. A. (2017). Explicit Planning for Paragraph Writing Class. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.21274/lj.2017.9.2.241-260>
- Gallo, J. D. & Henry W. R. (1990). *Shaping College Writing: Paragraph and Essay* (5th ed.). New York: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Hasegawa, H. (2013). Students' perceptions and Performances in Academic Essay Writing in Higher Education. *International Journal of Innovative Interdisciplinary Research*, 4.
- Hogue, A. O. and A. (1999). *Writing Academic English* (Third). Boston: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.
- Hogue, A. O. and A. (2007). *Introduction to Academic Writing* (Third). New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Jabrohim, et al. (2001). *Cara Menulis Kreatif*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Jing, W. (2014). Theme and thematic progression in learner English : A literature Tema y progresión temática en el aprendiz de inglés : una revisión literaria. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 16(1), 67–80.
- Lee, I. (2000). Exploring Reading-Writing Connections Through a Pedagogical Focus on "Coherence." *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(2), 352–356. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.57.2.252>





- Leki, I. (1992). *Understanding ESL Writers*. Portsmouth: Boyton, Cook Publishers.
- Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). New Ways in Teaching Adults. In *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. White Plains, NY: White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Mauludin, L. A., & Ardianti, T. M. (2017). The Role of Dynamic Assessment in EFL Writing Class. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 1(2), 82–93. <https://doi.org/10.31002/METATHESIS.V1I2.468>
- Okumuş, N. (2019). Nuray Okumuş Ceylana. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 15(1), 151–157. <https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.547683>
- Rini, A. (2008). *Mahir Menulis Paragraf Bahasa Inggris; Cara Jitu Meningkatkan Kemampuan Menulis dalam Bahasa Inggris*. Jakarta: Pustaka Mina.
- Sharples, M. (1999). *How We Write; Writing as Creative Design*. London: Routledge.
- Solikhah, I. (2015). Reading and Writing as Academic Literacy in EAP Program of Indonesian Learners. *Dinamika Ilmu*, 15(2), 325–341.
- Suherman, A. (2018). Exploring EFL Teacher's Interventions on Peer Feedback: a Case Study in a Writing Classroom. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 2(2), 194. <https://doi.org/10.31002/metathesis.v2i2.890>
- Sui, D., & Chen, Z. (2010). Analyzing the Micro Coherence in English Writing and Implications for the Teaching of English Writing. *Online Submission*, 7(12), 7–10.
- Sulistyo, T., & Ningsih, M. G. S. (2015). Encouraging Students To Write a Paragraph By Using Semantic Mapping Strategy. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 3(1), 41. <https://doi.org/10.23971/jefl.v3i1.61>
- Tosuncuoğlu, I. (2018). Forming a Well Organized Writing Activities. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 6(6), 122–127. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v6i6.3111>
- Wiegle, C. . (2002). *Assessing Writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

