

# Paragraph Development in Writing a Process Essay through LMS Forum-Based Collaborative Writing

Siti Musarokah\*, Issy Yuliasri\*, Sri Wuli Fitriati, Widhiyanto

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author: [issy.yuliasri@mail.unnes.ac.id](mailto:issy.yuliasri@mail.unnes.ac.id)

**Abstract.** This study aims at investigating how the students develop the paragraphs in writing a process essay through LMS Forum-Based Collaborative Writing. This study also aims at describing the completeness of major and minor supporting sentences in the body paragraphs of the process essay developed. The design of the study is qualitative descriptive, the object of the study was the paragraphs written by the fourth semester students of the English Education Study Program of Universitas PGRI Semarang. Documentation was used to collect the data, that is in the form of paragraphs taken from LMS Forum submitted by the students in groups. The data was then analyzed by using qualitative data analysis consisting of data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion. The result of the study shows that in writing the process essay in the introduction, the students used two techniques, namely common problem and series of question; chronological order was mostly used to support the thesis statement in the body paragraphs; and in concluding paragraphs, the students conclude the essay by paraphrasing the thesis statements and summarizing the main points in the body paragraphs. Moreover, in developing the paragraphs, there are 7 paragraphs or 41,18% which reach completeness. Moreover, 8 or 47,06 % paragraphs are categorized half complete, and 2 or 11,76 paragraphs are categorized incomplete. It can be concluded that some of the students' paragraph development do not reach completeness.

**Keywords:** Paragraph development, process essay, LMS Forum, collaborative writing

## INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years, researches on essay writing have been researched by many researchers, especially those who applied strategies, methods, media, or learning models in teaching essay writing. The writers investigated that two of the researches were focused on the implementation of strategies, methods, media and learning models (El Sulukiyyah et al., 2019; HidayahNor, 2018). The result of both researches shows positive effects on students' writing performance. The first previous research result shows authentic material could increase students' writing achievement, and the authentic content may assist the students in developing their thesis statement into good writing goods. Moreover, the second previous research result indicates that the students were very engaged and excited about writing the essay; they did not hesitate to share their ideas, opinions, and thoughts with their peers, and they delivered their best solutions to their writing tasks.

In addition, three more previous researches had successfully implemented the learning strategies or approaches as well (Alodwan & Ibnian, 2014; Dewi et al., 2021; Sharif & Zainuddin, 2017). The result of the studies by Alodwan and Ibnian shows that through the process approach, it can develop the students' essay writing skills; the students were able to

generate surprising and unique ideas, particularly during the pre-writing stage, which may be attributed to the brainstorming approaches, which greatly helped to the creation of a free atmosphere. Furthermore, by applying motivational teaching strategies the result of the second previous research demonstrated a statistically significant impact on the students' writing scores, as measured by the improvement from pre-test to post-test scores; the interview data revealed the students' positive response and awareness of their writing progress, indicating the suitability of the strategies in the classroom. The last previous research result shows that the majority of students regard reflective writing as a difficult learning activity; however, in general, the teacher's feedback has been beneficial and encouraging.

Learning writing does not always go smoothly, despite exhibiting optimistic outcomes when certain strategies are used. Several studies reveal that students face numerous challenges when learning to write.

(Ahmed, 2010; Senyoum et al., 2022; Toba et al., 2019). The problems are in the areas of coherence and Cohesion (Ahmed, 2010), in which for coherence the students faced difficulties in the most parts of essay, such as writing the introduction, the thesis statement, the topic sentence, and concluding sentences; meanwhile, for cohesion, the difficulties cover

using cataphoric and anaphoric reference, ellipsis, substitution, and genre related cohesive ties (Ahmed, 2010). The obstacles in writing were not only on the area of the whole essay writing, the area of paragraph writing development was faced by the students as well. In developing the paragraph, some characteristics of a good paragraph: cohesion, coherence, and unity (Ahmed, 2010; Rahman, 2022) became the problems encountered by the students. For example, in the area of coherence, the students tend to struggle to write the thesis statement, topic sentences, transition of ideas, and sequence of ideas. Furthermore, the students' biggest issues when practicing writing with the questioning method include a lack of time, a lack of language competence, and a lack of CT skill (Senyoun et al., 2022). In addition, they found that lack of interest, lack of resources, and other factors all had a role in influencing students' writing skills in the context of the questioning method.

Based on the challenges in learning writing that have been studied by numerous previous researchers, there are limited researches on investigating the techniques used to develop the paragraphs in writing process essay through LMS Forum. The earlier researchers have not investigated completeness of the body paragraphs, which is also one of the qualities of a good paragraph as well. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to discover how students develop introductions; in this case, the writers want to know which techniques used by the students in developing paragraphs. Additionally, this study aims at determining the completeness of the process essay developed by the students utilizing the LMS Discussion Forum.

## **METHODS**

The study employs a descriptive qualitative research design. The writer employed qualitative research because it was primarily concerned with identifying the acquired data. The writers utilized a qualitative approach to investigate the development of a process essay composed by the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program of Universitas PGRI Semarang.

The object of the study was the process essay written by the fourth semester students of the English Education Study Program of Universitas PGRI Semarang who were registered in Academic Writing course in the academic year 2022/2023. There were six process essays written by the students collaboratively through LMS

Forum, each of which consists of five paragraphs.

Since the current study employs descriptive qualitative research, the writers themselves served as the research's instrument. The essential instrument is the researcher; qualitative researchers obtain data through examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing persons (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study used a documentation to collect data. It was the result of the students' writing of a process essay. In analyzing the data, the writers employed data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. In order to reduce the data, the writers summarized, selected, and concentrated on the use of the major supporting sentences (MASS) and minor supporting sentences (MISS) in the construction of the process essay by the students. Furthermore, when displaying the data, the writers described how they created the process essay using the MASS and MISS. After the data was displayed, the writers came to a conclusion, and the problem statements were then answered.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Techniques used to develop the paragraphs in writing process essay through LMS Forum**

In developing the paragraphs of the process essay through LMS Forum, the students in groups write the essay using various topics; however, all of the groups use "how to" essay topics. They are "how to make homemade ice cream in a bag", "how to make authentic Indonesian Rendang", "how to make delicious coffee sachet at home", "how to make delicious strawberry juice", "How to get rid of stretch marks", and "how to make restaurant-style seafood fried rice". In analyzing the techniques used to develop the paragraphs, the writers divided the essay into three parts; they are introduction, body and conclusion. As stated by Oshima and Hogue (2006), there are four models or techniques in developing the introduction so that it can get the readers' attention. The models are 1) funnel, 2) dramatic, interesting, or funny story, 3) surprising statistics or facts, and 4) historical background. Moreover, they state that in organizing the body paragraphs, we can use some sort of pattern; they are chronological order or comparison/contrast, but sometimes we can combine the patterns. Furthermore, in organizing the concluding paragraph, we can use some ways: summarizing the subtopics or paraphrasing the thesis statement. Those models of introduction, patterns of supporting body paragraphs, and ways

of writing conclusion were used to identify the techniques in developing the paragraphs of the students' process essay. The result of the study can be shown as follows:

Group one writes the process essay with the topic "how to make homemade ice cream in a bag". In developing the paragraph in introduction, Group one uses series of question technique, in which two questions are used by asking the readers if they had ever wanted to make their own homemade ice cream and if they had not done it because they thought that they needed an ice cream machine to do it. This group ends the introductory paragraph by writing a good thesis statement; it is "There are a few different ways to make homemade ice cream without an ice cream maker; all you need is a handful of ingredients, the proper utensils, and little time". Moreover, in organizing the body paragraphs, Group one uses chronological order, in which they put the ideas in order or sequence by occurrence in time. The three "then" are used by the students as the typical of chronological order body paragraph. Then, in conclusion, Group one uses restating thesis statement technique to ends the essay. Recommendation ends the concluding paragraph of the essay.

In addition, Group two develops the process essay using "how to make authentic Indonesian *Rendang*" as the topic. In organizing the introductory paragraph, Group two uses combination technique series of question and surprising statistics, in which series of question is used to start the introduction; then it is followed with surprising statistics by presenting that according to CNN International's list, *Rendang* was in the first ranked on the World's 50 Most Delicious Foods. Thesis statement in the essay written by Group two in the end of introductory part is stated well using essay map. It is "To make a good rendang with the best texture and taste we should prepare the right ingredients, process the meat and make sure it is cooked properly". In the body paragraph, the pattern of the organization used to develop the paragraph is chronological order. "The next step, "then" and "after that" are used to indicate that the body of the essay uses chronological order. In the conclusion part, it ends with restating thesis statement technique followed by a recommendation.

Moreover, "How to make delicious coffee sachet at home" becomes the topic of the process essay of Group three. Funnel or general statement is the model used in organizing the introduction. The introduction starts to define sachet coffee. At

the end of the introductory paragraph, Group three writes a thesis statement; however, there is no essay map used. It is "In the following, we will present the steps in making coffee that is guaranteed to be delicious as an intake to start our day." Although there is no essay map in the thesis statement, but it has a controlling idea that can be developed in the body paragraph. In developing the body paragraph, it uses chronological order; the indicators used are "first" and "then". The essay ends with a conclusion by summarizing the main points in the body paragraph.

Then the essay four written by Group four chooses "how to make delicious strawberry juice" as the topic of the essay. It develops the introduction using series of question, and thesis statement is stated well in the essay; but there is no essay map used just like Group three. Although there is no essay map in the thesis statement, but it has a controlling idea that can be developed. The thesis statement is "To make the juice delicious, some of these things should be considered carefully so that it will be successful in making it." In the body paragraphs, they are organized by using chronological order like the previous essays. Transitions or indicators such as "then", "in the first step", "the second step", "the third step", and "the last step" used to indicate that the order of the body paragraphs is using chronological order. Summarizing the main points in the body is used as the technique in writing the conclusion. Then it is followed by giving recommendation at the end of the essay.

The fifth essay of Group five composes "how to" essay with the topic "How to get rid of stretch marks". Surprising facts are used to organize the introductory paragraph. At the end of the introduction is the thesis statement which is written with an essay map. The thesis statement is "In the essay, the author will focus on explaining practical ways to get rid of stretch marks with various methods such as using aloe vera, taking hyaluronic acid through capsules, and applying coconut oil." Moreover, the body paragraphs of the essay use quotation by presenting the result of a research. Only one indicator "this next aid" is used in the body paragraph; however, it shows that the body paragraphs of the essay use chronological order. The essay is concluded by paraphrasing the thesis statement followed with a recommendation.

The last essay of Group six is organized the essay by using the topic "How to make restaurant-style seafood fried rice". The introductory paragraph is using funnel model, in which general

statement is used do organized the introductory paragraph. Then it ends with a thesis statement, but there is no essay map. That is “This time we will make restaurant-style fried rice.” In the body paragraphs, there are some indicators showing that they use chronological order in organizing the paragraphs. The indicators are “then”, “finally”, “first”, and “next”. There is no concluding paragraph of the essay.

The findings show that in developing the essay in introduction part, most students apply series of question technique. In the body of the essay, the technique used to develop the body paragraphs is chronological order. In the last part of the essay, concluding paragraph, the students mostly use restating the thesis statement technique to conclude the essay.

### Completeness of major and minor supporting sentences in the body paragraphs of the process essay

In identifying the completeness of the paragraphs in body, the writers focus on the major supporting sentences (MASS) and minor supporting sentences (MISS). It is stated that the paragraph reaches completeness when there have complete MASS used to fully explain the topic sentence and complete MISS to fully explain the MASS (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). The following is the result of the identification of the completeness of the body paragraphs. As it is explained in the previous discussion that there are six essays written by the students collaboratively by six groups. Therefore, the following table shows the result of the identification.

**Table 1.** Result of completeness identification of the body paragraphs

No	Title	Body Paragraph 1	Body Paragraph 2	Body paragraph 3
Essay 1	How to Make Homemade Ice Cream in a bag.	Incomplete paragraph; there is no topic sentence.	Half complete paragraph; there is no topic sentence; this paragraph should inform the readers the utensils needed to make homemade ice cream, instead of the steps to make it; Transition “next” is used.	Half complete; there is no topic sentence; MASS and MISS used well to develop the paragraph; Some transitions/indicators applied, namely “3 then” to indicate that this paragraph uses chronological order, or it can be said that this paragraph has coherence and cohesion.
Essay 2	How to make authentic Indonesian Rendang	Half complete paragraph; there is no topic sentence; discussion the first idea that is the ingredient to make Indonesian Rendang. Transition “First” and “then” are used.	Half complete paragraph; there is no topic sentence; discussion the first idea that is the ingredient to make Indonesian Rendang. Transition “First” and “then” are used.	Complete; there is a topic sentence to start the paragraph; it discusses the processes to make rendang as the second idea to be discussed in the body; Transitions/indicators “the next step, then” and “after that” are used.
Essay 3	How to make delicious coffee sachet at home	Incomplete; No topic sentence; the paragraph is not developed well (1 sentence only)	Half complete; there is a topic sentence; MASS and MISS are not applied well; transitions or indicators used, namely “first” and “then”	Half complete; no topic sentence; MASS and MISS are not applied well; only one transition used (then).
Essay 4	How to make delicious strawberry juice	Half complete; there is a topic sentence; there is no MISS; there is no transition or indicator.	Complete; MASS and MISS applied well; transition or indicators (then, in the first step, the second step, the third step, and the last step) are used to show that the paragraph has coherence and cohesion; it means that the paragraph uses chronological order; this paragraph is also closed with conclusion.	Complete; MASS and MISS applied well. Transition like “after the first two steps” is also used to connect the previous paragraph; it means that there is a coherence and cohesion in this paragraph.
Essay 5	How to get rid of stretch marks	Complete; there is a topic sentence; MASS and MISS developed well; there is no transition showing chronological order.	Complete; there is a topic sentence; MASS and MISS developed well; there is no transition showing chronological order; it uses quotation technique in developing the paragraph.	Half complete; there is a topic sentence; give example to support the topic sentence.
Essay 6	How to make restaurant-style seafood fried rice	Complete; there is a topic sentence; MASS and MISS developed well; there some s showing chronological order “then and “finally”	Complete; there is a topic sentence; MASS and MISS developed well; transition or indicators used are “first”, “then”, and “next”	No body paragraph 4

From the Table 1, we can see that there are 17 paragraphs in the body developed by the students. From 17 paragraphs, there are 7 paragraphs or 41,18% which reach completeness. It means that these paragraphs start with a topic sentence, and they are supported by using complete MASS and MISS, so they help to develop the paragraphs well. Moreover, 8 or 47,06 % paragraphs are categorized half complete, and 2 or 11,76 paragraphs are categorized incomplete. To sum up, it can be said that some of the students' paragraph development do not reach completeness.

Moreover, the table further illustrates that students encounter challenges when it comes to organizing paragraphs. These challenges encompass the construction of topic sentence, the development of supporting sentences both major and minor supporting sentences, and the formulation of concluding sentences. It is in line with the result of the previous research which found that the students had the problems in some aspects of writing, one of which is the organization of paragraph (Toba et al., 2019). Similarly, lack of topic sentence, supporting sentence, and concluding sentence become the problems faced by the students (Tiryaki & Bican, 2021). In addition, the problems experienced by students in writing a process essay, of course, result in lack of coherence and cohesion in their paragraphs. The same finding of the previous research shows that students had obstacles in both coherence and cohesion of the essay (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017).

## CONCLUSION

The results of the current study indicate that while constructing the introductory section of their essays, majority of students employ an approach involving a series of questions. The body paragraphs of the essay employ the approach of organizing information in a chronological order. In the final section of the essay, specifically the concluding paragraph, the students predominantly employ the strategy of restating the thesis statement as the way of concluding the essay. Moreover, despite the fact that some body paragraphs have attained completeness, some other students' body paragraphs are incomplete. Then it is recommended that it would be better if lecturers of essay writing develop certain media so that students can use them in developing major and minor supporting sentences with the hope that the

element of completeness in paragraph development can be achieved.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, A. H. (2010). Students' Problems with Cohesion and Coherence in EFL Essay Writing in Egypt: Different Perspectives. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)*, 1(4), 211–221.
- Alodwan, T. A. A., & Ibnian, S. saleh K. (2014). The Effect of Using the Process Approach to Writing on Developing University Students' Essay Writing Skills in EFL. *Review of Arts and Humanities*, 3(2), 2334–2935.
- Ariyanti, A., & Fitriana, R. (2017). EFL Students' Difficulties and Needs in Essay Writing. *International Conference on Teacher Training and Education 2017 (ICTTE 2017)*, 111–121.
- Belkhir, A., & Benyelles, R. (2017). Identifying EFL Learners Essay Writing Difficulties and Sources: A Move towards Solution The Case of Second Year EFL Learners at Tlemcen University. In *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* (Vol. 16, Issue 6).
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Fifth Edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Dewi, P., Faridi, A., Saleh, M., & Fitriati, S. W. (2021). Motivational teaching strategies and EFL students' essay writing proficiency. In *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* (Vol. 20, Issue 9, pp. 192–206). Society for Research and Knowledge Management. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.9.11>
- El Sulukiyah, A. A., Aisyah, R. N., & Aisyah, R. N. (2019). Teaching Essay Writing Using Authentic Materials to Improve Students' Writing Performance. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 4(2), 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v4i2.2443>
- HidayahNor. (2018). Providing Web Based Learning Materials (Google Classroom) for Teaching Essay Writing Course. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, 11(1), 45–58. <https://ejournal.radenintan.ac.id/index.php/ENGEDU>
- Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing Academic English*. Pearson Education, Inc.
- Phoophuangpaioj, R., & Pipattarasakul, P. (2022).

- Preliminary Indicators of EFL Essay Writing for Teachers' Feedback Using Automatic Text Analysis. *International Journal of Educational Methodology*, 8(1), 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.8.1.55>
- Rahman, Y. A. (2022). EFL Students' Unity in Paragraph Development: a Matter of Controlling Idea. *Attractive : Innovative Education Journal*, 4(1). <https://www.attractivejournal.com/index.php/aj/>
- Senyoum, W. M., Yigzaw, A., & Bewuketu, H. K. (2022). Students' Attitudes and Problems on Question-Based Argumentative Essay Writing Instruction. In *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning (JELTL)* (Vol. 3, Issue 2).
- Sharif, A. M., & Zainuddin, S. Z. (2017). Students' perceptions of their reflective essay writing experience and teacher feedback comments. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 204–212. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v6i2.4845>
- Tiryaki, E. N., & Bican, G. (2021). Problems Experienced by Prospective Turkish Teachers in Paragraph Development Process. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 9(4), 103. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.9n.4p.103>
- Toba, R., Noor, W. N., & Sanu, L. O. (2019). The Current Issues of Indonesian EFL Students' Writing Skills: Ability, Problem, and Reason in Writing Comparison and Contrast Essay. *Dinamika Ilmu*, 57–73. <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v19i1.1506>