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### AN ASSESSMENT OF EFL STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH WRITING

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#### Abstract

*This study examines how effectively English as a Foreign Language students can write paragraphs according to such factors as unity, coherence, and organization. They were the English Literature program students of the STBA Prayoga who took a Paragraph Writing subject. Paragraphs written were analysed qualitatively by close examination. Paragraphs were reread multiple times to identify key themes and concerns. This study analyzed a sample of their paragraphs and assessed them through three criteria: organization, unity, and coherence. Organising is nothing but organizing the thoughts in a logical sequence, while unity makes sure every sentence connects back to the main point. Coherence helps ideas flow smoothly within a paragraph. The results showed that students had a variety of skills in these areas. Some were able to write well-structured, unified, and smooth-flowing paragraphs, but others had a harder time keeping their ideas consistent and making their writing flow logically. These findings suggest that we need to focus on teaching strategies that help students better organize their ideas, stay on topic, and improve the flow of their writing. This study helps us understand the challenges faced by EFL learners when writing and offers some helpful ideas on how to support them in improving their paragraph writing skills in school settings..*

*Keywords: assessment, organization, unity, coherence.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is truly about sharing who we are and forming connections with others. It is a chance to communicate our thoughts, share our knowledge, and express our creativity so that is clear and relatable for anyone reading. When we choose our words carefully, we can inform, entertain, persuade, or even stir emotions, making sure our message resonates. As Harmer (2004, p. 31) points out, writing is one of the most effective ways to develop language skills and express our ideas and feelings. It is a powerful tool that helps us communicate with a broad audience. Whether we are jotting down a quick note or developing a detailed story, writing allows us to break down barriers and share our deepest insights with the world.

When it comes to good writing, one key thing is making sure everything is organized logically. Paragraphs—those chunks of sentences centered around one main idea—are super important for keeping things neat. Think of a paragraph as a mini-block where you can share your ideas, arguments, or info clearly. Breaking a long piece of writing into small sections, each with its own focus, makes it way easier for

readers to follow along. Paragraphs are like building blocks that help simplify complicated ideas. Without them, writing can feel jumbled and hard to understand, which might make readers lose interest or miss the main points. That is why learning how to use paragraphs smoothly in your writing is so critical.

Despite ongoing efforts, some students still find it challenging to create well-structured paragraphs. For example, Melati (2020) emphasizes that forming a strong concluding paragraph is one of the major challenges, which is closely tied to organizational issues. Likewise, Asfah (2019) observed that students often struggle with writing engaging introductions, maintaining coherence throughout their writing, and creating impactful closing sentences. Also, Qomariah and Wahyuni (2016) identified that many students have difficulty making their topic sentences clear, which is essential because these sentences set the tone and direction for the entire paragraph. Supporting sentences also tend to be a weak point—students often fail to include enough relevant details, examples, or arguments that reinforce their main idea, resulting in paragraphs that may seem incomplete or disjointed. To

improve, students should focus on adding specific, meaningful details that enhance their main points and improve clarity. Given that writing effective paragraphs remains a challenge—especially for EFL students—this research was conducted to evaluate the paragraph writing skills of EFL students at STBA Prayoga. The goal is that, through analyzing the findings, valuable insights and recommendations can be provided to enhance the quality of writing instruction and curriculum development.

## **II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

A paragraph is a fundamental building block of good writing because clear and well-structured paragraphs lead to overall effective communication. According to Zemach and Rumisek (2010), a paragraph is seen as a cohesive group of sentences centered around a single main idea. Its main role is to express the writer's core message on a specific topic. In academic writing, paragraphs usually range from about five to ten sentences, although this can vary depending on the subject matter. Typically, the first line of a paragraph is indented—that is, pushed in slightly by a few spaces—to visually signal the start of a new

paragraph and help readers follow the flow more easily.

Similarly, Oshima and Hogue (2006, p. 65) suggest that a paragraph is a key building block of written communication. Made up of a group of related sentences, its main goal is to develop a central idea clearly. Within a paragraph, you typically find a topic sentence that states the main point, along with supporting sentences that elaborate on it. To make sure the paragraph stays clear and flows smoothly, it should be long enough to fully develop its core message without being too brief or overly lengthy.

In academic writing, a paragraph is essentially a small unit of thought centered around a single, clear idea. Its main purpose is to communicate information in a straightforward and effective way. To write strong, well-structured paragraphs, it is important to pay attention to how sentences are arranged within them. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 38), a good paragraph typically has three key parts: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Each element plays an essential role in helping to express ideas clearly and ensuring the writing flows smoothly.

Clear and logical paragraph organization is essential for clarity and coherence. By applying these principles thoughtfully, writers can produce content that is engaging and demonstrates their expertise on the topic.

The first sentence of a paragraph, known as the topic sentence, sets the stage for what's to come. It tells readers what the paragraph will discuss, giving them a sense of direction and making it easier to follow the writer's thoughts. Creating a concise and compelling topic sentence not only keeps readers interested but also helps in organizing the paragraph's ideas effectively.

Secondly, the supporting sentences that follow act as the building blocks of a paragraph. They provide detailed explanations, evidence, and examples that relate directly to the main idea introduced in the topic sentence. These supporting details not only make the paragraph flow smoothly but also deepen the reader's understanding. When well-researched and logically organized, they strengthen the reader's confidence in the writer's message.

Third, a well-constructed paragraph usually ends with a concluding sentence. This closing

sentence summarizes the key points or rephrases the topic sentence in different words. It helps reinforce the paragraph's purpose and leaves a clear impression on the reader, ensuring the main message sticks.

In summary, having a solid paragraph structure is essential for effective communication. A clear topic sentence, detailed supporting sentences, and a strong concluding sentence work together to guide readers easily through your content. When writers use these elements thoughtfully, they create impactful paragraphs that truly connect with their audience.

Beyond just organizing paragraphs, creating a good paragraph also requires unity and coherence. According to Hoshima and Hogue (2006, p. 18), these are two key elements of a well-written paragraph. First, unity means that the paragraph stays focused on a single main idea from start to finish. This helps keep the message clear and prevents it from becoming scattered. Of course, that does not mean you cannot explore different aspects of the same idea—just ensure they are closely related. Second, coherence is essential for making the paragraph flow smoothly. To achieve this, the sentences should connect smoothly,

guiding the reader naturally from one thought to the next. Strategies to enhance coherence include repeating keywords, using consistent pronouns, incorporating transition words, and arranging ideas logically. For example, repeating key phrases helps reinforce the main point and makes the content easier to follow. Consistent pronoun use avoids confusion and improves readability. Transition signals like 'however,' 'in addition,' or 'on the other hand' act as helpful signposts, indicating shifts or connections between ideas. Organizing supporting details in a logical order, starting with a clear topic sentence, further strengthens the paragraph's flow and clarity.

### **III. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was conducted as a descriptive investigation aimed at understanding the current state of students' paragraph writing skills. The participants involved were students enrolled in a paragraph writing course within the English Linguistics and Literature Study Program at STBA Prayoga in Padang, West Sumatra. During the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, there were 25 students in this class. For data collection, the students' own paragraph

assignments—assigned by their instructor—served as the primary source of information.

Essentially, the data consisted of documents compiled by the paragraph writing instructor. A selection of student paragraphs was randomly chosen for in-depth analysis, especially focusing on those that didn't conform to any specific paragraph structure. A qualitative approach was used to analyze these writings. Each paragraph was read multiple times to identify recurring themes and issues related to three core criteria.

The analysis focused on three main aspects: First, organization, which looked at the presence of a clear topic sentence, logical progression of ideas, and effective concluding statements. Second, unity, which assessed whether the paragraph stayed focused on a single main idea without introducing unrelated information. Third, coherence, which was examined through transitional words, the logical flow of ideas, and clarity in expression.

### **IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

In evaluating students' paragraphs, we look at three main aspects: organization, unity, and coherence. To start, a good paragraph

typically consists of three essential parts: a clear topic sentence, supporting sentences that develop the idea, and a concluding sentence, as explained by Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 38). They also emphasize that unity and coherence are critical for writing an effective paragraph.

First, unity ensures that the paragraph stays focused on one main idea from start to finish. It is about keeping everything aligned around a single point, which helps readers follow your argument easily. That said, a paragraph can explore different facets of the main idea as long as everything remains closely related. Next up is coherence, which is essential for making a paragraph flow smoothly. For a paragraph to be coherent, the sentences should connect logically and smoothly. You can achieve this through techniques like repeating key words, using consistent pronouns, incorporating transitional phrases to tie ideas together, and organizing your thoughts in a logical order. Overall, these elements help develop clear, focused, and easy-to-understand paragraphs, improving the overall quality of your writing..

The first sample of student's paragraph assessed in three criteria

namely organization, unity and coherence can be seen as follows.

Minangkabau traditional wedding is one of the many weddings in Indonesia which has a unique ceremony. It also known for the luxury and splendor that is raised from the color of the aisle with gold and silver nuances and the red color which symbolizes splendor. The Minang traditional wedding procession also has certain rules such as the tradition before the marriage contract and the tradition after the marriage contract. The tradition that is usually carried out before the Minangkabau marriage contract is the Bainai night. This event is held before the marriage ceremony. Bainai is a ritual to attach the results of the collision of red henna leaves (henna leaves) on the nails of the bride and groom. This tradition has a meaning as an expression of love and blessing of the bride's family elders. After the marriage contract, there are several customs that are commonly carried out, starting from returning the tando, announcing the title of the groom, complaining about the forehead and much more. Indonesia has a variety of cultures that cause various differences in traditions in marriage, both in terms of ceremonies and other customary provisions.

To see the organization of the paragraph, the main idea of this paragraph is that “Minangkabau traditional wedding is one of the many weddings in Indonesia which has a unique ceremony.” This sentence sets the stage, emphasizing how special the Minangkabau traditional wedding is compared to other weddings in Indonesia.

On top of that, the first supporting detail notes that “It is also known for the luxury and splendor that is raised from the color of the aisle with gold and silver details and the red color which symbolizes splendor.” This gives us a peek into the visual beauty of the Minangkabau wedding, displaying its lavishness and meaningful colors. The next detail reveals that “The Minang traditional wedding procession also has certain rules such as the tradition before the marriage contract and the tradition after the marriage contract.” This signals that there are specific customs to observe before and after tying the knot, setting the stage for a closer look at these cherished traditions.

The next supporting sentence is on one key tradition: “The tradition that is usually carried out before the Minangkabau marriage contract is the Bainai night.” This zooms in on Bainai

night, an important event that happens before the marriage contract. In addition, the following sentence explains it further: “This event is held before the marriage ceremony. Bainai is a ritual to attach the results of the collision of red henna leaves (henna leaves) on the nails of the bride and groom.” It explains what Bainai night is all about, detailing the ritual and its significance. The next sentence is “This tradition has a meaning as an expression of love and blessing of the bride's family elders.” This explains why Bainai night is so meaningful—it is all about love and the blessings from the bride's family elders. After the ceremony, there are more customs to explore, with a brief note: “After the marriage contract, there are several customs that are commonly carried out, starting from returning the tando, announcing the title of the groom, complaining about the forehead, and much more.” This introduces what happens post-wedding but definitely leaves room for more details to clarify these customs.

Finally, to wrap things up, there is the sentence, “Indonesia has a variety of cultures that cause various differences in traditions in marriage, both in terms of ceremonies and other customary provisions.” This

concluding thought broadens the conversation, suggesting that Indonesia's rich cultural diversity leads to a fascinating array of wedding traditions. It nicely ties back to the earlier focus on the Minangkabau wedding.

The paragraph is generally well organized, with all the supporting sentences backing up the topic sentence. This topic sentence points out that the Minangkabau traditional wedding features a unique ceremony, which aligns nicely with the content in the rest of the paragraph. However, the flow between ideas in the supporting sentences feels a bit choppy, and a clearer structure could help readers follow along more easily. For example, the first sentence gives an overview of the wedding's luxury and uniqueness, but the next sentence dives straight into the rules and traditions performed around the marriage contract. This shift could catch readers off guard without a smoother transition or some extra context surrounding the importance of these ceremonies and traditions.

As Oshima and Hogue (2006, p. 18) noted, unity in writing means that all sentences in a paragraph revolve around one main idea without wandering off-topic. The paragraph here does a good job of sticking to its

theme, focusing on the Minangkabau traditional wedding while emphasizing various aspects, from pre-marriage traditions to post-marriage rituals, keeping the topic cohesive and relevant throughout.

The final essential criterion for a good paragraph is coherence. According to Boardman and Frydenberg (2008, p. 18), a paragraph is clear and coherent when its supporting sentences are organized based on a clear principle. In this case, the sentences could be arranged better to help the reader grasp the ideas more easily. The paragraph misses some clear transitions and linking phrases that usually guide a reader from one thought to the next. For instance, right after mentioning "Bainai night," the transition to discussing "tradition after the marriage contract" isn't smooth. The sentence jumps straight in without any clear connection.

Moreover, in term of the logical order of ideas for coherence, the paragraph kicks off by emphasizing the unique nature of the Minangkabau wedding, mentioning its luxurious aspects. Nevertheless, the mention of luxury feels a bit disconnected from the more detailed discussions of specific rituals that follow. In addition, looking at how the sentences are



structured for coherence, some of them seem a little disjointed, not leading into one another as smoothly as they could. traditions could use some softening.

The second sample of student's paragraph is as following.

There is a special song that has a deep meaning for me. When I was young I listened to a song played by my older sister. She likes Korean songs, it have intimate meaning. When I hear that music my mind becomes calmer, all of task's and problem's go away instantly. The title of the song is "I will go to you like the first snow". I love this song when rain drops start falling on my window. The melodies of the music that permeate the ears and the soft voice make me drift away with time. The song reminds me of the first love who died while being with me. That is why music feels like soul to me.

Related to the organization of a paragraph, the topic should clearly introduce the main idea. In this paragraph, the first sentence, "*There is a special song that has a deep meaning for me,*" serves as the topic sentence. It introduces the main subject of the paragraph: the song that has personal significance to the writer. It directly presents the topic.

In addition, the supporting sentences provide details about why

the song is meaningful. For example, "*When I was young I listened to a song played by my older sister.*" This sets up context and introduces the song. Furthermore, the second supporting sentence, "*She likes Korean songs, it have intimate meaning*", explains the emotional depth of the song, although it could be clarified (i.e., "the song has intimate meaning" instead of "it have intimate meaning"). The paragraph continues with descriptions of how the song affects the writer's mood ("*When I hear that music my mind becomes calmer...*"), the imagery related to the song ("*I love this song when rain drops start falling on my window*"), and the emotional connection ("*The song reminds me of the first love who died...*"). The supporting sentences provide rich detail and personal reflection, but they are not organized well. Some ideas seem to jump between descriptions of the song's impact on the listener's emotions and the specific memories it evokes.

The last sentence, "*That is why music feels like soul to me,*" serves as a conclusion, tying the writer's emotional connection to the song with the broader theme of music's deep emotional resonance. This concluding sentence provides a strong emotional closure.

From the second criteria of a good paragraph, unity, the first sentence, *"There is a special song that has a deep meaning for me,"* clearly introduces the main idea: the significance of a particular song to the writer. This sentence establishes the focus of the paragraph. Then, the following sentences expand on the idea introduced in the topic sentence by providing details about why the song is meaningful. For example, *"When I was young I listened to a song played by my older sister"*, provides context about when the writer first heard the song. The sentence, *"She likes Korean songs, it has intimate meaning"*, explains the emotional significance of the song. The next sentence, *"When I hear that music my mind becomes calmer, all of task's and problem's go away instantly"*, describes the calming effect the song has. The following sentence, *"The title of the song is 'I will go to you like the first snow'"*, introduces the song's title, which is relevant to the theme. Then, the sentence, *"I love this song when rain drops start falling on my window"*, sets the emotional atmosphere for when the writer enjoys the song. Additionally, *"The melodies of the music that permeate the ears and the soft voice make me drift away with time"* further describes the effect the

song has on the writer. Furthermore, the sentence, *"The song reminds me of the first love who died while being with me"*, connects the song to personal memories, strengthening the emotional tie. Finally, *"That is why music feels like soul to me"* concludes by connecting the overall theme of music's deep emotional impact.

In conclusion, all the sentences in this paragraph are relevant to the main idea of the song's emotional significance. The writer talks about the personal connection to the song, its calming effect, and how it evokes memories of a past love. These details all support the idea introduced in the first sentence. However, it is rather overemphasis on personal details. While the paragraph effectively conveys how the song is meaningful to the writer, some sentences focus more on personal memories, such as the line, *"The song reminds me of the first love who died while being with me."* While this is relevant, it might feel a little too detailed or tangential without a stronger connection to the song's emotional effect. It would help to link this more explicitly to the song and its significance to make sure it does not stray too far from the central idea. In addition, it is slight disconnect between some ideas. For example, the

sentence *"She likes Korean songs, it has intimate meaning"* could be clearer. It seems to shift from discussing the sister's preferences to describing the emotional depth of the song..

Finally, the coherence of the paragraph can be achieved when it allows the reader to follow the writer's thoughts easily from one sentence to the next. The coherence of this paragraph can be seen from the first sentence, *"There is a special song that has a deep meaning for me,"* which sets up the central idea of the paragraph clearly: the writer is talking about a song that is emotionally significant. The sentence directly introduces the theme of the paragraph (the song's importance), which is essential for coherence. It tells the reader what the paragraph will be about.

Then, related to logical order to be a coherent paragraph, the writer introduces the song's significance and then provides context about how the song was first heard, its effect on the writer's emotions, and the memories it brings back. The progression from one idea to the next follows a relatively logical structure, but there are a few places where the ideas could be connected more smoothly. For

instance, the sentence *"When I was young I listened to a song played by my older sister."* jumps directly into the story of the song without much transition from the opening statement.

Furthermore, to be a coherent paragraph, integration of transition signals to link ideas is needed (Oshima and Hogue, 2006). In relation to it, the paragraph has lack of smooth transitions. While most of the sentences are related, the transition between them can feel a bit abrupt at times.. Moreover, the sentences *"I love this song when rain drops start falling on my window"* and *"The melodies of the music that permeate the ears and the soft voice make me drift away with time"* are somewhat repetitive. Both sentences describe how the music makes the writer feel.

Overall, the paragraph has coherence but can benefit from smoother transitions and clearer connections between ideas. By improving the flow of sentences and linking personal memories more explicitly to the song's emotional effect, the paragraph would become easier to follow and more cohesive.

The third student's paragraph is as the followings.

My hometown is a beautiful place to visit. Apart from that

is my place of birth, Pariaman has a very good tourist spot, namely Gandoriah. Gandoriah has a beautiful beach view, you can see several island, Kasiak island, etc. There, you can also do a picnic with you family. You can find special traditional food, sala. The most favorite food in Gandoriah. For me Gandoriah beach is most beautiful, because of its orange light. I have a lot of memory there. I love it more than my soul.

In term of organization, the first sentence, *"My hometown is a beautiful place to visit,"* introduces the main idea of the paragraph well, which is about the writer's hometown and why it is special. It sets the stage for the following sentences to elaborate on why the hometown is beautiful and what makes it worth visiting. The next sentences describe different features of the hometown and the tourist spot, Gandoriah.

The first supporting sentence, *"Apart from that is my place of birth, Pariaman has a very good tourist spot, namely Gandoriah"* introduces the specific place, Gandoriah, which is a key part of the writer's hometown. However, the sentence structure is somewhat awkward ("Apart from that is my place of birth") and could be improved for clarity. The next sentence

*"Gandoriah has a beautiful beach view, you can see several island, Kasiak island, etc"* provides an example of why Gandoriah is beautiful, mentioning its beach view and islands. The second supporting sentence *"There, you can also do a picnic with you family"* is another supporting detail that adds to the list of things to do in Gandoriah. Moreover, the sentence *"You can find special traditional food, sala"* introduces another reason why Gandoriah is appealing—its food. The sentence *"The most favorite food in Gandoriah"* sentence is a bit redundant and could be combined with the previous one to improve flow and avoid repetition. *"For me Gandoriah beach is most beautiful, because of its orange light."* This sentence shifts to the writer's personal opinion, describing why Gandoriah is beautiful to them specifically, adding a personal touch. *"I have a lot of memory there."* This provides a personal connection to the place but could benefit from more detail on what kinds of memories.

The last sentence *"I love it more than my sou."* is a very strong emotional statement that emphasizes how much the writer loves Gandoriah. However, it is a bit dramatic and could be rephrased for clarity and impact.

There is not a clear concluding sentence that wraps up the paragraph in a strong way. The last sentence feels more like an emotional statement than a conclusion.

According to many writing experts, unity in a paragraph is achieved when all the sentences are focused on a single, clear idea or theme. For instance, *Strunk and White's "The Elements of Style"* emphasize that "each sentence in a paragraph should help develop the main idea" (Strunk & White, 2000). In the same vein, *The St. Martin's Handbook* (Lunsford et al., 2018) suggests that a good paragraph should be organized around a central point that is "developed through details and examples that are relevant to the topic."

The first sentence, "My hometown is a beautiful place to visit," establishes a general idea: the beauty of the hometown. This provides a clear direction for the paragraph, setting up the expectation that the rest of the paragraph will elaborate on this theme.

*Strunk and White* also emphasize that the topic sentence should present the central idea of the paragraph. The sentence works in this context, but it needs more support from the rest of the paragraph to maintain unity.

The sentence "Apart from that is my place of birth" introduces an additional detail, but this feels disconnected from the main idea of beauty and tourism. Similarly, the sentence "Gandoriah has a beautiful beach view, you can see several island, Kasiak island, etc." starts to describe the tourist attraction, but it introduces an abrupt transition. There is no clear connection between the beach description and the previous sentence. Experts like Lannon (2007) recommend clear transitions to maintain unity. A more unified approach would be to link the "beautiful beach view" directly to why it contributes to the appeal of Gandoriah, rather than making a vague transition to islands.

The introduction of "sala" as a special food also seems out of place. According to Lunsford et al. (2018), the details provided should be "relevant" to the topic. While food is a part of tourism, it shifts focus from the beauty of the beach.

The personal feelings introduced at the end, "I love it more than my soul," might be considered a powerful emotional statement, but it disrupts the overall unity. Based on expert principles, the paragraph lacks unity because it deviates from the central idea of "beauty" by introducing

unrelated topics (personal connections, food, and emotional feelings).

To analyze this paragraph in terms of coherence, it needs to assess how well the ideas are logically connected and flow from one to the next. Coherence ensures that the reader can follow the message easily and that the ideas make sense as a whole. The first sentence "My hometown is a beautiful place to visit" sets a general idea and introduces the theme: the beauty of the hometown. It functions as a clear opening that promises a description of why the place is beautiful, which is good for establishing coherence.

The second sentence "*Apart from that is my place of birth, Pariaman has a very good tourist spot, namely Gandoriah*" is problematic because the phrase "Apart from that is my place of birth" is awkward and disrupts the flow. The transition from the opening sentence "My hometown is a beautiful place to visit" to this sentence is unclear. It introduces a new point about the hometown being the writer's birthplace, but this connection is not logically smooth.

The third sentence "Gandoriah has a beautiful beach view, you can see several island, Kasiak island, etc" introduces a new idea about

Gandoriah, but the connection to the previous sentence about Pariaman's beauty is weak. The transition feels abrupt because we go from "place of birth" to describing the tourist spot without a clear link. Moreover, the use of "etc." is vague and does not help with coherence.

The fourth sentence "*There, you can also do a picnic with your family*" is related to the tourist spot, the connection between this and the previous sentence about the beach view is not very clear. The fifth sentence is "*You can find special traditional food, sala. The most favorite food in Gandoriah.*" The introduction of food, "sala," shifts the focus away from the scenic and tourist attractions of Gandoriah. It feels somewhat disconnected, especially as the paragraph has focused on the beach and the view. The sixth sentence "*For me Gandoriah beach is most beautiful, because of its orange light*" introduces a personal opinion, which is fine, but the transition to this personal view feels disjointed from the previous sentences. It is also a shift from describing objective qualities of the place to subjective emotions. The last sentence "*I have a lot of memory there. I love it more than my soul*" is highly personal and emotional. While it does

tie back to the love for the place, it feels disconnected from the earlier descriptions of the beach and food. This statement can disrupt the overall coherence of the paragraph, as it shifts from describing the place to expressing deep personal sentiment.

The findings from this study on the assessment of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) paragraphs reveal key challenges that students face in terms of organization, unity, and coherence. These components are essential for producing clear and effective writing, as they ensure that the ideas within a paragraph are structured logically, unified around a single main idea, and connected smoothly.

The study found that the students had difficulty organizing their ideas within a paragraph. Some paragraphs lacked a clear structure, and the flow of ideas was often disrupted. A well-organized paragraph, according to researchers such as Langan (2008), should include a clear topic sentence, supporting sentences that elaborate on the topic, and a concluding sentence that ties everything together. However, the findings revealed that while students were able to produce topic sentences, they often struggled to

follow through with supporting details, causing their paragraphs to lack cohesion. This observation is consistent with Reid's (2000) assertion that students often have trouble organizing their thoughts in a way that makes their writing easy to follow. Without proper organization, the clarity and effectiveness of the writing can be severely compromised.

Unity in a paragraph refers to the quality of keeping all sentences focused on a single idea. The study revealed that some students included sentences that were off-topic or did not directly contribute to the central idea of the paragraph. As noted by Oshima and Hogue (2006), unity is essential for the reader to understand the main point without distraction. The research indicates that the lack of unity often results from students introducing ideas that are not fully developed or connected to the topic sentence. This supports the concept discussed by Williams (2008), who emphasizes that every sentence in a paragraph should relate to the topic sentence and contribute to the development of the main idea. Without unity, the paragraph may appear fragmented and unclear.

The coherence of a paragraph refers to how well its ideas flow

logically from one sentence to the next. The study found that many students struggled with the use of cohesive devices, such as conjunctions, transition words, and referencing. This resulted in paragraphs that lacked smooth transitions, making it difficult for readers to follow the progression of ideas. Hyland (2004) suggests that coherence is achieved through both syntactical and lexical means, and students must be aware of how sentences are linked to ensure that the paragraph forms a unified whole. The study's findings indicate that students often rely too heavily on basic transition words like “and” or “but,” which can result in repetitive and awkward phrasing. This aligns with the theory of cohesive writing outlined by Halliday and Hasan (1976), who argue that coherence is achieved not only through lexical cohesion but also through the logical connections between ideas, which guide the reader through the text.

## V. CONCLUSION

To wrap things up, looking at how students write EFL paragraphs—considering organization, unity, and coherence—really points out some key challenges they usually struggle with. The study confirms the importance of

these components in effective writing, as they help ensure that ideas are presented in a clear, logical, and focused manner. These findings really align with what scholars like Langan (2008), Oshima and Hogue (2006), and Hyland (2004) have been saying. They all stress how important it is to keep things organized, unified, and coherent when it comes to academic writing. By incorporating focused instruction and targeted feedback, teachers can assist students in overcoming these challenges and improving their overall writing skills.

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