

Introduction to Writing

CLA 102



*University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre
Open and Distance Learning Course Series Development*

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Vice-Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.



Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka

Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

As part of its vision of providing education for “Liberty and Development” for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

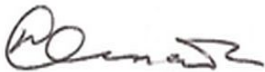
Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre's provide and put these into use.

In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.



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Director

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About this course manual

Introduction to Writing CLA 102 has been produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. All course manuals produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre are structured in the same way, as outlined below.

How this course manual is structured

The course overview

The course overview gives you a general introduction to the course. Information contained in the course overview will help you determine:

- If the course is suitable for you.
- What you will already need to know.
- What you can expect from the course.
- How much time you will need to invest to complete the course.

The overview also provides guidance on:

- Study skills.
- Where to get help.
- Course assignments and assessments.
- Margin icons.

We strongly recommend that you read the overview *carefully* before starting your study.

The course content

The course is broken down into Study Sessions. Each Study Session comprises:

- An introduction to the Study Session content.
- Study Session outcomes.
- Core content of the Study Session with a variety of learning activities.
- A Study Session summary.
- Assignments and/or assessments, as applicable.
- Bibliography

Your comments

After completing Introduction to Writing we would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to give us your feedback on any aspect of this course. Your feedback might include comments on:

- Course content and structure.
- Course reading materials and resources.
- Course assignments.
- Course assessments.
- Course duration.
- Course support (assigned tutors, technical help, etc.)

Your constructive feedback will help us to improve and enhance this course.

Course outcomes

Upon completion of Introduction to WritingCLA 102, you will be able to:



Outcomes

- write flawless sentences;
- identify paragraph types and functions;
- explain the nature of the paragraphs;
- write, unified, coherent, emphatic and complete paragraphs;
- achieve writing between paragraphs in an essay;
- identify the different types of essays;
- write the different types of essays.

Getting around this course manual

Margin icons

While working through this course manual you will notice the frequent use of margin icons. These icons serve to “signpost” a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help you to find your way around this course manual.

A complete icon set is shown below. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the icons and their meaning before starting your study.

			
Activity	Assessment	Assignment	Case study
			
Discussion	Group Activity	Help	Outcomes
			
Note	Reflection	Reading	Study skills
			
Summary	Terminology	Time	Tip

Study Session 1

Writing Skills

Introduction

In this study session, we will be looking at the skill of writing. We will begin by highlighting the basic elements of effective writing. Thereafter, we will discuss the nature of writing itself. We will then proceed to point out the structure of a sentence. We will conclude by classifying elements of sentence structure.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 1.1 *point out* the basic ingredients for effective writing
- 1.2 *explain* the nature of writing as a skill
- 1.3 *highlight* the components of sentence
- 1.4 *discuss* the structural positions of sentence elements.

Terminology

Writing	A medium of human communication that represents language and emotion with signs and symbols.
Listening	The active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages.

1.1 Basic Elements of Effective Writing

The four basic ingredients for effective writing are Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Like most other skills, effective writing comes only through persistent practice. In other words, if you want to be a good writer, you must be prepared to develop your writing skill through constant practice. You need to appreciate the fact that just as it takes time to be a good carpenter, bricklayer, mechanic, speaker, and other kinds; it also takes time to become a good writer. Therefore, a beginner in writing does not become a mature writer overnight. The belief in your ability to write is based on a number of assumptions. First, we assume that you already know all the eight parts of speech in English, and that you understand form and functions. Second, we assume that you understand thoroughly the various forms of the tense.

Finally, we assume that you understand the nature and functions of agreement or concord in the English Language. However, if some or all of our assumptions are wrong, we will strongly advise that you read this up yourself. This is because the emphasis of this course is on writing, and so, we will not have time to go into the mechanics i.e. the basic elements of grammar. Most introductory texts on English Language and Linguistics will help you to acquire the knowledge of grammar that you will need in order to write effectively. Our emphasis on the form, functions and classification of words (i.e. parts of speech); tense (present and past); and agreement is based on our belief and experience that you cannot write effectively unless you master these aspects of the English language. Let us now look at these elements, one after the other.

ITQ

Question

What are the four basic communication skills?

Feedback

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing

1.2 The Nature of Writing

As we stated earlier above, writing is a skill that requires a great deal of practice. A skill is not only interesting but also easy to acquire. Like speaking, writing is an expressive skill because we use it to express our thoughts; to give information to other people. Writing demands that you should be able to think and organize. In addition, you will need to appreciate the importance of words, their forms, functions and meanings in sentences. Given these reasons, writing is also considered to be a skill of literacy, which requires a formal training and deliberate efforts on the part of the learner to acquire the basic skills. In order to write well, you will need to be selective in your words and be discriminating in how you put the words together to form sentences. Furthermore, you must appreciate the nature, types and functions of sentences so that you can use them effectively to show the relationships between the ideas, thoughts and feelings expressed in your writing.

Perhaps you must have noticed that when people speak, they do so mostly in sentences—one, two, three sentences. Each time people speak on an issue, topic or theme, they often show some relationship between and among their sentences. After the first sentence, you will notice that the other sentences that follow are there to explain, elaborate, or provide additional information to that which is provided by the first or the introductory sentence. In writing, the practice is similar.

Thus, in writing, once you pick a theme, you need to settle down and think of what to say first, that is, how best to introduce the theme or topic or idea to the reader. As soon as you write this introductory sentence, you should then think of about three statements (i.e. sentences) that explain, elaborate or provide additional information on your introductory

sentence. In other words, your introductory or theme statement must be a general statement. This general statement must then be followed by other three reasons, or three ways, or three proofs, or three causes, or three effect or four examples which are intended to make the introductory statement clearer to the reader. Each of these statements must be closely related to the introductory statement. In other words, to effectively develop a theme or an idea in a paragraph, you need a topic sentence (i.e. the sentence that presents the main idea), and some other sentences (at least two), that provide details or explanation on the topic sentence. This is continuous writing.

ITQ

Question

What should you do after you have selected a topic you want to write on?

Feedback

After picking a topic, one needs to settle down and think of how best to introduce the topic or idea to the reader. As soon as one writes this introductory sentence, one should then think of about three statements that explain, elaborate or provide additional information on one's introductory sentence.

1.3 The Structure of the Sentence

If we consider words in isolation, that is, out of context, we will realize that they hardly have any meaning of their own. Taking words out of their contexts is like taking live fish out of water; they become useless and cannot perform. So, words derive their meanings within particular contexts where they are used. The sentence, as a unit of the paragraph, usually provides these contexts. The sentence is, therefore, a significant unit of expression in English. The quality of individual sentences determines the quality of a paragraph. Unfortunately, most students do not appreciate this all-important role of the sentences. They neither know what constitutes a sentence nor are they bothered by the quality of the sentences they write. Consequently, lecturers often return students' scripts or assignments to them with comments such as "faulty subject-verb agreement", "faulty pronoun reference", "faulty parallelism", "dangling modifiers", and "misplaced modifiers". We will, in this session and the next four, address our mind to these problems in order to help you improve your sentence quality. The English sentence has four structural elements. These are Subject, Predicator (verb), Object, Complement, and Adjunct. First, we shall consider the structural positions of these elements, and later examine the class of items under each of the elements.

Table 1: Elements of Sentence Structure

Subject	Predicator	Object	Complement	Adjunct
We/You	are	-	students	
I/We/You	started writing	sentences	-	years ago
External Degree students	are learning	quality sentences		in this lesson
Our leaders	are	-	responsible	for our plights
We/He/They	will reply	your letter	-	Promptly
You	Come	-	-	here regularly
Life	Is	-	good	
Manchester United	Is	-	a team to beat	anytime
-	Come	-	-	-
-	Reply			
-	Stop!	-	-	-
The students	Meet	-	-	regularly in the hall
Life	Is	-	good	
Nigerians	elected	Gen. Muhammadu Buhari	their president	in 2015
Nigeria	experienced	Economic recession	-	just after her oil boom years
World leaders	met in Paris			to discuss future of climate change policies

ITQ

Question

The quality of individual sentences does not determine the quality of a paragraph. True or False?

Feedback

False. The quality of individual sentences determines the quality of a paragraph.

Notice that a sentence can be made up of all the elements, or three of the elements or two of the elements, or even only one of the elements. However, when a sentence is made up of only one of the elements that element **MUST** be the predicator (i.e. the verb). This is shown in the examples with Come, Stop and Reply. You may, for example, end your letter with a single word sentence, Reply: Note also, however, that not all predicators can function in this way. In fact, only very few predicator elements, especially verbs expressing commands or requests, can function in this way. Also, take another look at the Subject, Complements and Adjunct positions, you will notice that none of the elements can function alone as a sentence. For instance, none of these—learning to write, quality sentences, Now, Promptly— can stand alone as a complete sentence.

1.4 Classification of Elements of Sentence Structure

Finally, in this lecture, we shall focus our attention on the classification of sentence elements in terms of the words that can occupy each of the constituents of sentence structure. In other words, we want to group the class of words that functions under each sentence element.

Table 2: Classification of Words that Can Occupy Constituents of Sentence Structure

Subject	Predicator/Verb	Object	Complement	Adjunct
Nouns and nominal (i.e. pronouns, noun phrases and noun clauses)	Verbs and verbal groups	Nouns and nominal (i.e. pronouns, noun phrases and noun clauses)	Adjectives, Nouns and nominal (i.e. pronouns, noun phrases and noun clauses)	Adverbial elements
Examples				
We (Noun)	Are (Verb)	-	good students (Adjective and Noun)	-
We (Noun)	Study (Verb)	different courses (Noun phrase)	-	at the University of Ibadan (Adverbial elements)
The students (Noun phrase)	Love (Verb)	their university (Noun phrase)		
That you hate this subject (Noun clause)	Has been worrying (Verb phrase)	me (pronoun)		For a long time (Adverbial elements)

Note that most of the items that function in the subject position can also function in the object and complement positions. However, in the case of pronouns, I, We, they, she, he and who (as subject) must change to me, us, them, her, him, and whom in the object position.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we have discussed the nature of writing. We have established the fact that writing is a skill, and we have argued that like any other skill, 'perfection' in writing will come only through constant practice, writing and re-writing. We have also emphasized that to be able to write effectively, you need some grounding in grammar but we hastened to add, however, that you do not need to understand too much grammar to be able to write effectively. We identified four structure positions for the sentence as follows: Subject, Predicator, Object, Complement, and Adjunct, and we have also identified the class of items that will function under each element.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 1.1 (tests Learning Outcome 1.1)

What are the necessary prerequisite to being a good writer in English?

SAQ 1.2 (tests Learning Outcome 1.2)

Why is speaking an expressive skill?

SAQ 1.3 (tests Learning Outcome 1.3)

What are the four structural elements of the English sentence?

Bibliography



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Study Session 2

Types of Sentence

Introduction

In this study session, we will be discussing different types of sentence. We will start by explaining what a simple sentence is. We will then continue our discussion with an explanation of the compound sentence. Thereafter, we will look at the complex sentence and compound-complex sentence.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 2.1 *identify* a simple sentence
- 2.2 *use* correctly a compound sentence
- 2.3 *describe* a complex sentence
- 2.4 *differentiate* between a complex sentence and a compound complex sentence

Terminology

Sentence	A set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question, exclamation, or command, and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses.
Simple sentence	A sentence consisting of only one clause, with a single subject and predicate.
Compound sentence	A sentence with more than one subject or predicate.

2.1 The Simple Sentence

In study session one, we saw how some elements can be combined to form sentences. Among the four structural elements of the sentence, we stated that the predicator (that is, the verb) is the most important element and may even be the only element in the sentence, especially in commands. In other words, there could even be a one-word sentence as well as sentences without the subject, the object, the complement or the

adjunct. These are the facts of grammar. In writing, however, most of our sentences would normally have the subject as well as the predicator. The subject-predicate pattern is the pattern of simple sentence and it forms the core of all writing. You would, perhaps, have noticed that all our examples under sentence structure in lecture one are simple sentences. They are simple sentences because each expresses only one idea. Neither is two ideas coordinated nor is one idea subordinated to the other. A few other examples of simple sentences are stated as follows:

Writing is a skill.

- Life is good.
- Most Nigerian political leaders are corrupt.
- Violence can never solve our problems.
- Nigeria needs a proper restructuring.
- External Degree Students are a special class of students.
- He often practises how to write.
- We must learn to write good sentences.



Note

A simple sentence is a sentence consisting of only one clause, with a single subject and predicate.

Although we stated above that it is possible to have a single-element sentence as you yourself can see in our discussion of the structural positions of sentence elements, most of our sentences in writing will take the subject-predicator pattern. The subject-predicator pattern means that if the verb (that is, the predicator) is an action verb, the subject performs the action as shown in the following examples:

- The man killed the snake (active voice).
- The boxer struck his opponent a fatal blow (active voice).
- The snake was killed by the man (passive voice).
- The opponent was struck a fatal blow by the boxer (passive voice).

Thus, we can define the subject as what the sentence is talking about. The predicate, on the other hand, can be defined as what is said about the subject. In other words, the predicate indicates what the subject does or what is done to the subject, what is said about the subject, or what the subject is. Consider the following sentences and how most simple sentences have the subject-predicator pattern:

- Most simple sentences (subject) divide into two parts (predicate).
- External Degree Students (subject) take their teaching courses from different faculties (predicate).
- A full knowledge of grammar (subject) is necessary for effective writing (predicate).
- The Judiciary (subject) is the heart of democracy (predicate).
- The National Assembly (Subject) vowed not to confirm the nomination of the EFCC boss (Predicate).

**Note**

Though we stated above that the simple sentence is the core of all writing, it is nonetheless, important to realize that for effective writing, a mixture of various sentence-types will be more desirable. This is because any writing that consists of simple sentences only will be dull, monotonous and uninspiring.

ITQ**Question**

Mr. President, the Commander in Chief of the Nigerian armed forces has arrived. What type of sentence is this?

Feedback

Simple sentence

We shall now consider another type of sentence: the Compound Sentence.

2.2 The Compound Sentence

When we speak or write, we often usually put related ideas together. We may do this by expanding either the subject or the action segment of the sentence. In addition, we must connect these independent ideas by using words such as **and, but, therefore, so, yet**, or by using a semi-colon e.g.

- The student read all his lectures. He passed in flying colours (two simple sentences).
- The student read all his lectures and (he) passed in flying colours (a compound sentence).
- The student read all his lectures. He did not turn in any of the assignments (two simple sentences')
- The student read all his lectures; he did not turn in any of the assignments (a compound sentence).
- The first impact was considerable: The second impact was even more so (two simple sentences).
- The first impact was considerable and the second was even more so (a compound sentence).
- American media did not rate Donald Trump as a favourite candidate. He won the election. He became the American President (three simple sentences).
- American media did not rate Donald Trump as a favourite candidate, but he won the election and became the American President (a compound).

(When we compound two (or more) simple sentences, we do so not because we do not want to compose two separate sentences but because we want to show the close logical relationship between the two or more simple sentences).

ITQ

Question

What type of sentence is “I came, saw and conquered”?

Feedback

Compound sentence

**Note**

Note also that when we use words such as and, but, for, therefore, hence, so, and others to compound two or more simple sentence structures, we are indicating that each of the two or three parts so connected is equal. That is, it is of the same grammatical status to the other and can stand independently to express a complete meaning.

2.3 Complex Sentences

By way of definition, we can say that a complex sentence is one with one independent (i.e. main) and one or more dependent (i.e. sub-ordinate) ideas. Sometimes when we speak or write, we do so in such a way that we have a main sentence (i.e. independent clause) and one or more sub-ordinate (i.e. dependent clause(s)). In this type of structure, only the main clause can stand on its own as a complete sentence. The sub-ordinate clauses cannot stand-alone; they require the support of the main sentence or independent clause. Unlike the case in compound sentences where the sentences linked together are of the same rank or status, in complex sentences, one or more clauses are subordinated to the main as shown in the following examples:

- The smugglers took to their heels when they sighted the customs officials.
- I saw the man who was publicly executed.
- All the students who are taking this course must be prepared to practise the art of writing.
- The course, which was dreaded at first, now turns out to be quite interesting.
- I saw the man who talked to you when you were leaving your office.
- Because he has studied well, he should succeed.
- I know *that God is not partial.*
- Most Nigerian politicians with corruption cases pending against them did not support the nomination of Magu as EFCC Chairman because they believed that they could not manipulate him in order to pervert justice.

Notice that in each of the foregoing examples, the dependent ideas are underlined. In other words, the underlined structures are subordinated to the main sentences (independent clauses) which are not underlined. As you can see in the examples, the words that help to introduce the subordinate clauses are: *when, who, what, which, that, in order to* and *because*. Other words which perform the same function include *unless, if, so that, where, whichever*, and others.

Notice also that the idea expressed in the sub-ordinate clause is closely linked with that expressed in the main clause (or independent clause). In other words, the ideas expressed in the subordinate clauses are logically related to those expressed in the main clause in each sentence. Therefore, in complex sentences, you make one idea a major and the other minor by subordinating the minor idea to the major one. When an idea (or sentence element) is subordinated, it is placed in a position of less significance (importance) than the idea to which it is subordinated.

ITQ

Question

“It is you that I am praying for” is a complex sentence? True or False. Explain the reason for your choice.

Feedback

True. The sentence is a Complex sentence because “It is you” is the main clause. “that” is the conjunction that joins it with the subordinate clause “I am praying for” .

2.4 Compound-Complex Sentence

A compound-complex sentence, as the name implies, is a sentence type that fuses both compound and complex sentences into one. In other words, a compound-complex sentence has at least two main clauses and at least one dependent clause. Let us consider the following examples:

- The guest entered the sitting room and sat quietly*while everyone was busy watching a football match.*
- *If the injured player takes his drugs regularly and exercises well,* he will experience a rapid recovery and return to regular play times soon.

In each of the examples above, one part is underlined and the other part is italicised. While the underlined section contains the compound sentence (two or more independent clauses), the italicised section contains the complex sentence (i.e. one or more dependent clauses). As the case in the complex sentence, all the ideas expressed in the complex component of a compound-complex sentence must show a logical relationship with the

ideas expressed in the compound section of the sentence. Also, the complex component of the sentence has the subordinators (e.g. while, if, because, when, who, which) as the marker of dependence.

ITQ

Question

“Watch and pray if you want to succeed” is a _____ sentence.

Feedback

Compound-complex sentence

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we have considered the types and structures of sentences. We have discussed the four types of sentence: Simple, Compound, Complex and Compound-complex. We have stated the role of the predicator in simple sentences, and hence established that whether the predicator (verb) is active or passive will determine whether the subject will be the doer or receiver of an action. We have also demonstrated how simple sentences can be coordinated to form compound sentences. We have also established the status of sentences so coordinated. Finally, we considered the nature of complex and compound-complex sentences, and how one idea is subordinated to the other in such sentences.

Assessment



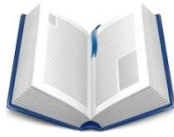
Assessment

SAQ 2.1 (tests Learning Outcome 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

Classify the following sentences according to structure:

- i. When I am ready, I will call you if you are still around.
- ii. Unless you are willing and obedient you may not enjoy this land.
- iii. The man will help us if we go to him and he is capable.
- iv. Although he is a popular candidate, he may lose in the election if he continues like this and his party doesn't intervene on time.
- v. In this place, I will excel whether the atmosphere is favourable or not.
- vi. It is you that I am singing and dancing for
- vii. I sing and dance for my child every day.
- viii. Your service is being recorded and you will be rewarded shortly in this place
- ix. In your name, we will go there in batches in the next season.
- x. Arise, O compatriots of this nation so great and mighty.

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Study Session 3

Avoiding Sentence Pitfall

Introduction

In this study session, we will be looking at some of the pitfalls in sentences. We will begin by reference of pronouns. Under this, we will discuss ambiguous, broad and remote references. In addition, we will point out faulty predications and faulty parallelism.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 3.1 *point out* reference of pronoun
- 3.2 *avoid* faulty predication
- 3.3 *correct* faulty parallelism

Terminology

Reference	A relation between objects in which one object designates, or acts as a means by which to connect to or link to, another object.
Pronoun	A word that can function as a noun phrase used by itself and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (e.g. I, you) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (e.g. she, it, this).

Most of our writings, whether expository, descriptive, narrative or argumentative, must be clear since their chief aim is first and foremost to inform. One chief cause of unclear writing is faulty sentence structure. As you learned in our previous lessons, a sentence is a complex arrangement of several parts, components or elements—subject, predicator, object, complement and adjunct. These elements are made up different parts of speech (i.e. determiners, prepositions, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs adverbs, and conjunctions). Consequently, it is very easy to have mixed-up structures which hinder clarity and understanding.

Most of our errors in sentence structure often take the form of some improper change of structure in the course of developing the sentence. The first part of a sentence signals to the reader and prepares him for what to expect as the sentence develops. If the sentence is properly structured, the signals are in place, the parts work in harmony and the reader can follow the sentence smoothly. If, however, an improper

change of structure occurs, the reader 'stumbles' as he comes across the unusual arrangement. For example, consider this structure;

"I am leaving for."

The structure conditions your mind to expect a noun: home, Lagos, school, the market, and others or a noun phrase: the school compound, the market place, and so on. Thus, if instead of a noun or a noun phrase, you have a verb, an adjective or an adverb as in the following example:

"I am leaving for go"; "I am leaving for attractive" or

"I am leaving for quickly", the structure would have breached (i.e. violated) the accepted pattern of usage in English, thus obscuring meaning.

First, let us consider sentence clarity by looking at Reference of Pronouns

ITQ
<p>Question</p> <p>What is one major cause of unclear writing?</p> <p>Feedback</p> <p>One chief cause of unclear writing is faulty sentence structure.</p>

3.1 Reference of Pronouns

Clear writing is usually blocked by ambiguous, remote or broad (i.e. confusing) pronoun reference. Therefore, to avoid these mistakes, always ensure that your pronoun refers unmistakably to its antecedent. The word *antecedent* means that word, phrase or clause to which a pronoun refers. So, let's consider reference of pronouns along the three dimensions in which mistakes often occur.

3.1.1 Ambiguous Reference

A pronoun reference is said to be ambiguous when it is not clear which of two possible antecedents the pronoun refers to as shown in the following examples:

Ambiguous: He threw the drinking glass through the window and broke it.

(Here, we don't know whether it was the drinking glass or the window that got broken).

Clear: He threw the drinking glass through the window; it broke when it hit the concrete floor.

Ambiguous: Tai told Ikem that he had made a mistake.

(It is not clear who made a mistake).

Clear: Tai told Ikem, "You have made a mistake." *or*

Clear: Tai admitted to Ikem that he had made a mistake.

Ambiguous: When the boxing fans met the boxers, they were excited (who were excited? Not clear).

Clear: The boxing fans were excited when they met the boxers.

ITQ

Question

Explain the meanings do the expression “Olu called Joseph a police”?

Feedback

The first meaning could imply that Olu perceived Joseph to be a police.

The second could mean that Olu requested the attention of police for Josep

3.1.2 Remote Reference

The problem of remote reference occurs when a pronoun is so far removed from its antecedent that the reader finds it difficult to determine its meaning, as in the following example:

Remote

Reference: An External Degree Student found himself unanimously elected into the Constituent Assembly by an Electoral College of his Local Government Chairman and Councillors, who was not a politician. (*who* is too far removed from its antecedent)

Better: An External Degree Student, *who* was not a politician, found himself unanimously elected into the Constituent Assembly by an Electoral College of his Local Government Chairman and Councillors.

Remote

Reference: To enhance the taste of roast rabbit, spill a pint of groundnut oil and sprinkle fresh onion and ginger over it while roasting. Here, the sentence implies that the groundnut oil may be spilled on the floor and that the cook himself is roasting. In addition, *who* is too far removed from its antecedent, roast rabbit?

Better: While the rabbit is roasting, spill a pint of groundnut oil over it and sprinkle it with fresh onion and ginger. This will enhance its taste.

3.1.3 Broad Reference

The problem of broad reference often arises when a pronoun does not refer to an individual noun but to a whole idea or concept expressed in a word group or an independent clause. Therefore, to ensure clarity, you are advised to make each pronoun refer to a specific word.

Faulty Broad

Reference: *I took my over-sized pair of trousers to the tailor because I did not know how to do it.*

Better: Because I didn't know how to trim my over-sized pair of trousers, I took it to the tailor.

Faulty Broad

Reference: He wanted to convince his lecturers that he was brilliant as he could have been if he had used it to advantage.

Better: He wanted to convince his lecturers that he was brilliant, as he would have if he had used his talent to advantage.

ITQ

Question

What is the difference between the problem of remote reference and that of the broad reference?

Feedback

The problem of remote reference occurs when a pronoun is so far removed from its antecedent that the reader finds it difficult to determine its meaning. The problem of broad reference often arises when a pronoun does not refer to an individual noun but to a whole idea or concept expressed in a word group or independent clause.

3.2 Faulty Predication

You will recall that in study session 2, we stated that the basic structure of a simple English sentence is the subject-predicate pattern. The predicate is a crucial (indispensable) element, it completes the meaning begun in the subject; by telling the readers what the subject is, or does, or what is done to the subject. Predication, therefore, means the addition of a predicate to a subject. Both the subject and predicate must fit together; if they do not, faulty predication will result. Most faulty predication results from unclear thinking. Consider the following:

The arguments for public execution of drug pushers are the poor image of the country and the embarrassment to which Nigerians are subjected abroad

(Faulty predication arises here because "the poor image of the country and the embarrassment to which Nigerians are subjected abroad" is taken as arguments. But are they arguments?)

=====

A well-known advertisement is DBA.

Is DBA an advertisement? No. it's a bank.

In correcting faulty predication, re-write the subject rather than the predicate of the sentence. For example:

Lack of accountability is Nigeria's greatest problem.

3.3 Faulty Parallelism

In discussing compound sentences in Lecture 2, we pointed out that when conjunctions such as *and*, *but*, or *or* are used, they signal to the reader that a construction or structure similar to the preceding one is about to follow. Conjunctions join together structures of the same status or rank: a word to a word; a phrase to a phrase; a noun to a noun; a main clause to another main clause. In writing, parallelism involves the use of any kind of sentence elements in a series of two or more, with a coordinating conjunction between the last two elements of the series. Thus, we have a parallel structure when two or more elements of the same grammatical structure are joined by a conjunction. Faulty parallelism therefore, occurs when the elements joined by a conjunction are not similar in structure. The following are good examples of parallel structures.

Tai and Ikem are close friends (two nouns joined together).

The lecturer *dropped* his chalk, *packed* his books, and *rushed* out (three verbs)

He *read* all his lectures and (he) *turned* in all his assignments on schedule (two simple sentences).

Below are examples of structures with faulty parallelism. See whether you can correct them.

1. He had visited the Delta ports of Warri, Burutu, Koko and Sapele with a view to looking at the problem of congestion at these ports and to seek immediate and long-term solutions to them.
2. He promised to obtain necessary clearance, issue directives on the arrest of the accused person and getting him prosecuted.
3. He would leave his farm idle and may cause erosion.
4. The politician regretted that he had been misrepresented, misunderstood, blackmailed and being chased about by an irate mob.

Presence of faulty parallelism in your writing has two implications. One, it confuses the readers as it may be difficult for them (the reader) to get the precise message in your writing. Two, readers consider you to be deficient in writing, thus they may not respect you.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we emphasized the need to write good sentences in order to write effectively. We have observed that sentence clarity is marred by poor sentence structure. Poor sentence structure often occurs from the way the writer builds upon his sentence is underway. We also identified some of the areas in which problems in sentence clarity occur. Lastly, we noted that quality of writing depends on the quality of individual sentences.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 3.1 (tests Learning Outcome 3.1 and 3.2)

When can we say a pronoun reference is ambiguous?

SAQ 3.2 (tests Learning Outcome 3.3)

What is faulty parallelism?

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Study Session 4

Avoiding Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers

Introduction

In this study session, we will be discussing how to avoid dangling and misplaced modifiers. We will begin by explaining the two concepts; dangling modifier and misplaced modifier. Moving on, we will point out four hints on avoiding dangling modifier. We will also look at fused sentences and comma splices.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 4.1 *describe* dangling modifiers
- 4.2 *explain* misplaced modifiers
- 4.3 *differentiate* between fused statement and comma splices

Terminology

Dangling modifier	A word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence.
Comma splice	The use of a comma to join two independent clauses.

4.1 What is a Dangling Modifier?

We will start our discussion of the dangling modifier by considering the term ‘modifier’. What, you may ask, is a modifier? A modifier is a word, a phrase or a clause, which is used to describe or explain another word, phrase or clause. Although modifiers are often considered in relation to sentences, they are designed specifically to modify one particular noun or pronoun in the main part of the sentence in which they occur. When, therefore, there is a modifier structure in a sentence, and the modifier has no apparent word to modify, or when it appears to modify the wrong word or phrase, the modifier is described as *dangling*. Thus, a dangling modifier is one that hangs on to a sentence in which it has no place or has nothing to modify. Most errors of dangling modifier occur as a result of change in structure which confuses the sentence signal that the reader's

mind has been conditioned to expect. For example, a structure such as "Pondering on my next line of action, a decision was finally made," suggests or signals to the reader's mind that there is a doer of the action who will immediately be named. Consequently, the reader is confused when the doer is not named eventually. The structure could have been better put this: "Pondering on my next line of action, I finally made as decision." You would notice that in the alternative we provided here, we have introduced "I", which is the doer of the action ("pondering"). Examine the following structures:

- Relaxing on a sofa..... (who is relaxing...?)
- Having taken his seat... (who has taken the seat...?)
- Driving in heavy Lagos traffic..... (who is driving...?)
- Studying for the examination..... (who is studying...?)

Each of the four structures listed above clearly signals to your mind to expect the name of the doer immediately. Your mind or that of the reader is conditioned to find out who was 'relaxing on a sofa', 'who has taken his seat', and so forth. When this expectation is not met, the writer has committed an error of dangling modifier.

4.1.1 Four Hints on Avoiding Dangling Modifiers

To avoid a dangling modifier, the hints below should be put to heart:

1. Find out whether or not there is a word in the sentence for the modifier to modify. If not, supply a suitable one. In other words, provide the doer (subject) of the action suggested in the modifiers and let it come closer to the modifiers. Examples:

Dangling: Relaxing on a sofa, the lecture progressed uninterrupted.

Better: While I was relaxing on a sofa, the lecture progressed uninterrupted.

Dangling: Anticipating disaster, our course was changed

Better: Anticipating disaster, we changed our course.

Dangling: Having expressed our views, a vote was taken.

Better: Having expressed our views, we took the vote.

Better: Driving in Lagos heavy traffic, my head started to ache.

Better: Driving in Lagos heavy traffic, I developed a headache.

2. Make sure you put the modifier as close as possible to the word it modifies or explains. Sometimes, a sentence may have a word for the dangling phrase to modify but the word may be in the wrong place. This often causes the modifier to dangle as in:

Dangling: Rushing desperately to catch the bus, her bag was lost to the pick-pockets.

Better: Rushing desperately to catch the bus, *she* lost her bag to pick pockets.

Dangling: Dancing himself lame, shouts of applause was showered on him.

Better: Dancing himself lame, *he* was showered with shouts of applause.

Dangling: Blowing his whistle frantically, the ball was put in the penalty box.

Better: Blowing his whistle frantically, *the* referee put the ball in the penalty box.

3. Sometimes, the problem of dangling modifier may be solved by re-writing the dangling modifier, making it a dependent (or subordinate) clause as in:

Dangling: Escaping from police custody, a corporal chased the suspect.

Better: The corporal chased the suspect who escaped from police custody.

Dangling: Taking his seat, the match started.

Better: When he had taken his seat, the match started.

Dangling: Having swum our hearts out, the referee decided to blow his whistle to signal the end of the competition.

Better: After we had swum our hearts out, the referee decided to blow his whistle to signal the end of the competition.

4. You could tackle other problems of dangling modifier by changing the passive to the active voice.

Dangling: Dancing through the night, much needed sleep was lost.

Better: Dancing through the night, he lost the much needed sleep.

Dangling: On looking down from the top of the cliff, a sign of dizziness was felt.

Better: On looking down the top of the cliff, he felt a sign of dizziness.

4.2 Misplaced Modifiers

Meaning in English sentences depends, to a large extent, on correct word order. In particular, the position of the parts of a sentence is crucial to clear communication. When the parts of a sentence are not in their right order, you may have misplaced modifiers. In other words, the problem of misplaced modifiers occurs when the modifiers are placed too far from the element(s) they modify in a sentence. Examples:

Misplaced: He installed the air-conditioner in the corner of a room which he had recently purchased.

- Better:** He installed the air-conditioner which he had recently purchased in the corner of a room
- Misplaced:** The man jumped to his death with a baldhead
- Better:** The bald-headed man jumped to this death
- Misplaced:** The young lady was booed in a mini-shirt
- Better:** The young lady in a mini-skirt was booed.

ITQ

Give the hints needed to avoid dangling modifiers?

Feedback

1. Ascertain if there is a word in the sentence for the modifier to modify.
2. Put the modifier as close as possible to the word it modifies or explains.
3. Rewrite the dangling modifier, make it a dependent (or subordinate).
4. Change the passive to the active voice.

4.3 Fused Sentences, Comma Splices

Some other common sources of errors in students' sentences involve writing more than one sentences as if they are only one sentence.

4.3.1 Fused Sentences

Sentences are fused when they are allowed to run together without any punctuation mark to separate them, and when they lack the necessary connecting word. Consider the following cases:

- Fused:** It is depressing to hear that what might have been responsible?
- Better:** It is depressing to hear that.
- Fused:** Why should I apologise when he insulted me he did not apologise.
- Better:** Why should I apologise? When he insulted me he did not apologise.

4.3.2 Comma Splice

The error of comma splice occurs when two sentences are linked with a comma. You can deal with this problem in three ways.

Change the comma to a full stop or a semi-colon

- Incorrect:** This is one of the toughest problems I have had to tackle, it kept me thinking for days.
- Correct:** This is one of the toughest problems I have had to tackle.
It kept me thinking for days.
- Incorrect:** I'll have to give some individual attention to the student,

he keeps failing.

Correct. I'll have to give some individual attention to the student.
He keeps failing.

Subordinate one of the main clauses to the other

Incorrect: Tai is a rascally boy, he must mend his ways.

Correct: Tai is a rascally boy who must mend his ways.

Incorrect: Theo is enthusiastic; he should do well in the university.

Correct: Theo is so enthusiastic that he should do well in the university.

Link the two sentences with a coordinating connective and introduce a subject for the verb in the other clause(s).

Incorrect: She complained of tiredness, doubt that has gone on vacation for years.

Correct: She complained of tiredness but I doubt that she has gone on vacation for years.

Incorrect: Chukwu is planning to retire; I think he wants to be a coach.

Correct: Chukwu is planning to retire and I think he wants to be a coach.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we considered more ways in which you can improve your sentence quality and thus improve your writing quality. We identified a number of error-areas and suggested ways in which you can avoid them. In particular, we have examined the modifiers; the dangling and misplaced modifiers. We also suggested, among other things, that whenever you use modifiers, they must actually modify or explain specific words in the main sentence. In addition to modifiers, we have also looked at error-areas such as fused sentences and comma splices and we have suggested different ways of coping with the problem.

Assessment



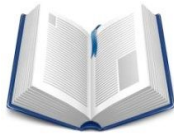
Assessment

SAQ 4.1 (tests Learning Outcome 4.1)
How you recognize a dangling modifier?

SAQ 4.2 (tests Learning Outcome 4.2)
When is a modifier misplaced?

SAQ 4.3 (tests Learning Outcome 4.3)
What is the difference between fused statement and coma splices?

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Study Session 5

Achieving Consistency

Introduction

As we highlighted in lecture four, the most common types of errors in students' writing are those of improper shifts from one type of structure to another while the construction is underway. While some of these shifts are serious and may obscure meaning, others will make educated readers think that you are not so well educated after all. Since any type of shift constitutes a blemish on your writing, make sure your writing is free of them.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 5.1 *correct* errors of shifts in number
- 5.2 *point out* errors of shifts in person
- 5.3 *recognize* error of shifts in tense;
- 5.4 *identify* error of shifts in voice; and
- 5.5 *correct* error of shifts in mood

Terminology

Inconsistency	Lacking in harmony between the different parts or elements
Subjunctive	Relating to or denoting a mood of verbs expressing what is imagined or wished or possible.

5.1 Errors of Shift in Number

Errors of shift in number occur mostly in writers' shifts from the singular to the plural or from plural to the singular.

Inconsistent: *Any student who feels they are cheated should report to the principal.* (Shift from singular subject *any student* to the plural pronouns *they*. The pronoun does not agree with its antecedent).

Consistent: *Any student who feels he is cheated should report to the principal.*

Inconsistent: *The newly elected member* of the Constituent Assembly may think that *they* are smart because *they* have access to information.

(Shift from the singular subject *the newly elected member* to the plural pronoun *they*).

Consistent: *The newly elected member* of the Consistent Assembly may think that he is smart because *he* has access to information.

5.2 Shifts in Person

There are three 'persons' in English grammar.

These are:

- **the first person:** *I, we, me, us;*
- **the second person,** *You;* and
- **the third person:** *he/she, he/him, they, them, it, one, anyone, person, people.*

English grammar allows the writer to refer to people in general by using either the third person or the indefinite second person. Inconsistency arises when a writer mixes the two or shifts from one to the other as shown in the following examples:

Inconsistent: If *one* wants to succeed in academics, *he* should be prepared to publish.

Consistent: If *one* wants to succeed in academics *one* should be prepared to publish.

Inconsistent: If *one* wants to maintain *his* integrity *they* must be prepared to be independent.

Consistent: If *one* wants to maintain *ones* integrity, *one* must be prepared to be independent.

Inconsistent: The president warned that the nation had to accept the Structural Adjustment Programme if *they* were to survive as a virile economy and if *their* economy was not to collapse completely.

Consistent: The president warned and *the nation* had to accept the Structural Adjustment Programme if *it* was to survive as a virile economy and if *its* economy was not to collapse completely.

5.3 Shift in Tense

Errors of shifts in tense are common in the writings of most beginners as well as those of experienced writers. Such improper shifts are common in material that summarises a novel, short story, play, or in history books. These shifts occur because English allows the writer to talk about the past in both the past tense and the historical present. Since English allows the use of either the present or past tense in narrating the past, most careless

writers use both indiscriminately, mixing the present and the past.

Consider these.

The author brings out the conflict between traditional and Western ideas when Amadi refuses to accept the girl his parents have chosen for him; he feels he should be free to make his own choice. (use of the historical present)

Now, consider the shift in the structure below:

The setting of the story *is* Padua in pre-renaissance Italy. Giovanni *has come* to the city to study at the university. He *rents* a suite that *overlooks* the botanical garden of a scientist. Giovanni *had not been* there long when he *saw* a beautiful girl in the garden.

Although, shifts in tense may not obscure meaning, they should, nevertheless, be avoided as they detract from the integrity of the writer. Consider the following cases:

Inconsistent: I *asked* dad if I *may* borrow his car.

Consistent: I *asked* Dad if I *might* borrow his car.

Inconsistent: The student *promised* he *will* submit his project on schedule.

Consistent: The student *promised* he *would* submit his project on schedule.

Inconsistent: The guidance counsellor *advises* we *turned* in the assignments regularly.

Consistent: The guidance counsellor *advises* we *turn* in the assignments regularly.

5.4 Shift in Voice

There are two voices in the English language—the active voice and the passive voice. A sentence can be made either in the active or in the passive voice. For the purpose of consistency, it is advisable that there should be no shift from the active to the passive or from passive to the active voice in the same sentence. Although shifts in voice may not obscure meaning, they often lead to clumsy and uneducated structures and must, therefore, be avoided. Consider these examples:

Inconsistent: The course coordinator loves hard work, but relaxation is also enjoyed by him.

Consistent: The course coordinator loves hard work, but he also enjoys relaxation.

Inconsistent: When I lecture on a topic, it is usually understood by students.

Consistent: When I lecture on a topic, students usually understand it.

Inconsistent: Nigeria earns about 70% of her revenues from sales of crude oil, but diversification to agriculture is also being

considered as a result of drastic falls in the global oil prices.

Consistent: Nigeria earns about 70% of her revenues from sales of crude oil, but she is also considering diversification to agriculture as a result of drastic falls in the global oil prices.

ITQ

Since the English language have two voices, active and passive, why can't a writer use both the way he or she likes?

Feedback

A writer cannot use both active and passive indiscriminately because he or she must maintain consistency in the writing.

5.5 Shift in Mood

The last type of shift often found in students' exercises is shift in mood. **Mood** is a grammatical term which refers to the attitude of the writer or speaker. There are three main types of mood in the English language:

5.5.1 Indicative

A sentence in the indicative (declarative) mood comes in form of a statement e.g.

- The Governor-elect will be sworn in next week.
- Nigeria is gradually getting out of recession.

5.5.2 Imperative

A sentence in the imperative mood, on the other-hand, presents or expresses a request or gives a command. Example:

- Olu, make sure you see the Governor elect before next week.

5.5.3 Subjunctive

Finally, a sentence in the subjunctive mood expresses a possibility, an obligation or a supposition e.g.

- Olu should see the Governor-elect before the swearing-in next week.
- "Nigeria may continue to borrow", said the Finance Minister, Mrs Kemi Adeosun.



Note

Some beginning writers fail to maintain a consistent mood. In other words, they fail to realise that all their sentences must be written in the same mood.

A shift in mood can take any of the following forms:

1. File the nomination papers on time so that it may be ready for the next election.
2. Try and prove, once again, that to a Christian politician, politics can be a pure service to humanity.

In the above, there is a shift from the imperative (a request) to the indicative (a statement) and the subjunctive moods. The question the reader is likely to ask is: Who is to file nomination papers and prove that politics can be a pure exercise of service to humanity as contained in the two sentences? To maintain consistency in mood, you could re-write the passage as follows:

The ex-governor felt that politics is not necessarily a dirty game. He advised the Christian politician to file his nomination papers on time for the next election and prove, once, again that to a Christian politician; politics can be a service to humanity.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we focused our attention on the need to achieve consistency in our writings. We identified the various ways in which shifts can occur in writing: number, person, tense, voice, and mood. We also established the fact that while shifts may not completely obscure meaning, they may reveal inelegant use of language and portray you as an uneducated user of English language.

Assessment



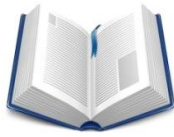
Assessment

SAQ 5.1 (tests Learning Outcome 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5)

Identify the place where the following errors were shifted and correct accordingly:

1. If you want to succeed in life, he or she must work hard.
2. I told her she may not see me again
3. Any girl that thinks they can snatch my husband will pay dearly.
4. My son loves me and he is also loved by his mother too.
5. Try and prove, once again, that to a Christian politician, politics can be a pure service to humanity.

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Study Session 6

The Paragraph

Introduction

In this study session, we will be discussing paragraph. We will start the discussion by explaining the nature of paragraph. We will then describe the paragraph length.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 6.1 *discuss* the nature of the paragraph;
- 6.2 *determine* paragraph length

Terminology

Sentence	A set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question, exclamation, or command, and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses.
Paragraph	A distinct section of a piece of writing, usually dealing with a single theme and indicated by a new line, indentation, or numbering.

6.1 The Nature of the Paragraph

You will recall that in the first part of this course, we emphasized the need for you to be able to write good sentences if you are working towards becoming a good writer. Our emphasis is borne out of a conviction that the quality of your writing will be determined by the quality of your individual sentences. Equally, and perhaps to a greater degree, you need to be able to write good paragraphs because the quality of your writing will depend, to a large extent, on the quality of the individual paragraphs that make up the essay. This brings us to a discussion on the nature of the paragraph. The paragraph has been defined as a device for showing the units of thought in a continuous piece of writing, be it a theme, an essay, a report or a term paper. It is made up of sentences which are close-knit (that is, closely related or tied together

by a common bond) in that they develop one central idea, topic or subject matter.

The paragraph is essentially a functional entity, and as such it signals the beginning and the end of a well-developed central thought, topic or subject matter. In addition, the paragraph helps the writer and the reader to break a mass of written or printed material into manageable proportions. It, therefore, performs an essentially organizing function in a piece of continuous discourse. Paragraph indentation is a mechanical device for showing the beginning of a new paragraph. When it is used, the writer is saying, that a phase of thought is ending and another phase is beginning. This break indicates the division of thought within the essay.



Note

The paragraph has been considered as a miniature essay. This is because it has its own topic which is briefly introduced, developed and concluded.

6.2 Paragraph Length

One of the things that are likely to bother you as a beginning writer is how long your paragraph should be. As stated when we were considering the nature of the sentence earlier in this course, an essay that is made up of short simple sentences will be jerky, dull, monotonous and uninspiring, so also is piece of writing that is made up of short paragraphs. Your writing should be a mixture of short and long paragraphs. Specifically, your paragraph should be only as long as it is enough to explain its central idea. In other words, once your paragraph has adequately developed its topic or central idea, it should be concluded.

6.2.1 Writing Unified Paragraphs

As stated earlier in this lecture, a paragraph must be woven around one central idea. Paragraph unity, therefore, derives from the singleness of purpose of the paragraph, that is, the fact that it stems from one central idea. This is why it is usually advised that, as beginning writers, you should place your key or topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph so that it gives rise (that is, gives birth) to all the other sentences in the paragraph. The other sentences in the paragraph take their roots, from the key or topic sentence. If this is done, the sentences will relate closely with one another and the entire paragraph will be unified and integrated.

A unified paragraph, therefore, is one in which there is no unnecessary digression from its central idea. In other words, there are no irrelevances. A unified paragraph is one in which no sentence can be picked on and thrown out as having no bearing with the central idea of the paragraph. One sure way in which you can test whether or not your paragraph is unified is to attempt to summarise the entire paragraph in only one sentence this is because when a paragraph is unified, no matter its length, it should be capable of being summarised in only one sentence. Below is an example of a unified paragraph.

Language Arts is a problem-oriented,

communication-centred study of language. Its main concern is to point the understanding and application of the principles, theories, research findings and practical procedures or skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in all their ramifications. It is also concerned with the diagnosis and remediation of the deficiencies in these four skills when they occur at various stages of human learning, and communication. Related disciplines, such as linguistics and English, tend to be mainly analytical, descriptive, and evaluative of language and literature as by-products of culture, whereas Language Arts, rather than being merely evaluative, tends to be diagnostic, prescriptive, corrective, didactic and creative in its approach to the study of language and communication.

(Unoh, S, (1982) On the Role of Language Arts in Intellectual Development, Inaugural Lecture, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press).

6.2.2 Writing Coherent Paragraphs

Coherence comes from the word 'cohere' which means 'to hand together'. Paragraph coherence, therefore, refers to the sticking together of the various sentences that make up the paragraph. Coherence performs an organising function; it shows a logical order of the facts or events presented in the paragraph. Coherence is a mechanical device by means of which the logical relationship between sentences is made clear.

There are three methods by which coherence can be achieved in your writing:

1. **Through the use of transitional words and phrases:** Transitional words and phrases signal the logical relationship between ideas within and between parts of a sentence, between sentences, or even between paragraphs. They may be conjunctions such as *and, but, yet, and for*. Others include single-word connectives such as *furthermore, nonetheless, however, moreover, therefore, thus, consequently*. Yet, others are connective phrases such as *for instance, for example, of course, in the same way, on the other hand*. When these connectives or connective phrases are used, they show a link between what went before and what is about to be said.
2. **Through repetition of key words, concepts or ideas:** A key word, a concept or a dominant idea in the first sentence of a paragraph can be repeated in the second and subsequent sentences of the paragraph. Such a repetition serves as a signal to the reader that the idea or train of thought begun in the first sentence is carried over into the second and subsequent sentences of the paragraph. Such a repetition makes the sentences to hand together, and the paragraph, coherent.

However, you should use repetition with discretion. Do not overuse it. See how the term 'credit' is repeated in the following:

*The nature of consumer **credit** is the first topic we shall cover. This topic is followed by an examination of reasons for the use of such **credit**. With this background information, we shall focus our discussion on consumer **credit** markets, including rates and term,,; suppliers of consumer credit and economic instability and the pros and cons of consumer **credit** regulations.*

(J. B. Ludtke. *The American Financial System*; Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston: 1961, p. 324. As quoted in S. James: *Reading for Academic Purposes*, p. 73).

ITQ

What is a unified paragraph?

Feedback

A unified paragraph is one in which there are no irrelevances or unnecessary digression from its central idea.

3. **Through the use of pronoun reference:** The third way in which you can achieve coherence in your paragraphs is through the use of pronouns. A pronoun is often used in place of nouns to introduce variety and prevent inelegant repetition of the noun. When a pronoun is used in a sentence to refer to a noun in the preceding sentence, the reader easily recognize a link between both sentences. Such use of the pronoun enables the reader to follow the writer's train of thought. Consider the paragraph below:

Solar radiation is an essential element of the physical environment for three reasons. First, it provides light. Second, it maintains temperature. Third, it makes the cycling of water possible.

and

If a man does not know God from his own experience, so-called intellectual difficulties will make him sceptical. He is like a drowning man, tossed about by the waves of the sea, and because he can grasp at nothing, he will declare that it must be because there is no God.

6.2.3 Writing Emphatic Paragraphs

Paragraph emphasis derives from a judicious (that is, a wise, careful) ordering, placement or arrangement of the fact in a paragraph in such a manner that the points to be emphasized are given prominence while those that are of less significance are given less emphasis.



Note

You, as a writer, can achieve paragraph emphasis by concentrating first on the point(s) to be emphasized, while points that are of less importance come in later in the paragraph.

6.2.4 Writing Complete Paragraphs

By paragraph completeness or wholeness we mean a quality of writing in which the writer treats adequately (that is, completely) the central idea, topic or subject matter of the paragraph. The reader does not end his reading of the paragraph with a feeling that something vital has been left out. Therefore, a complete paragraph is one that develops fully, the central idea, topic or its subject matter; it is a paragraph that leaves the reader with a sense of completeness, fulfilment and satisfaction. A bad paragraph suspends an idea to the next paragraph. Consider the paragraph below:

After a marriage, certain household adjustments are made. When a woman moves to live in her husband's house it is called virilocal or patrilocal transfer. In some cases, the man moves to his wife's house and this is termed a matrilocal movement. Most frequently today, both wife and husband set up a new household of their own which is termed neolocal marriage.

(Adeniran, A. *et. al.* English Language. Heinemann Educational Books (Nig) Ltd., Ibadan: 1982, p.89).

Compare the paragraph above with the one below:

The External Affairs Minister, a renowned Professor of International Affairs, has introduced sweeping changes and injected dynamism into the operations of the ministry; he has brought a new lease of life into the ministry.

You will observe that while the reader is likely to have sense of completeness and satisfaction on reading the paragraph on "marriage", he is not likely to have the same feeling on reading the paragraph on the "External Affairs Minister". In fact, he is likely to end his reading of the paragraph by asking: "By doing what? Such a question is an indication

that the paragraph lacks completeness: More information, facts, illustration and examples are needed to make the paragraph complete.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed about the nature and types of paragraphs. We established the fact that a paragraph is a device for showing the units of the thought in a continuous piece of discourse. We also stated that the paragraph helps both the reader and the writer to hack (divide) a mass of written material into manageable proportions. In the same vein, we explained that a paragraph must have one central idea, topic or subject matter around which all the sentences in the paragraph must be woven.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 6.1 (tests Learning Outcome 6.1)

Describe the nature of a paragraph.

SAQ 6.2 (tests Learning Outcome 6.2)

When is it appropriate for me to end a paragraph in my write-up?

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Study Session 7

Paragraphs Types and Functions 1

Introduction

In this study session and the next, we will be discussing different types of paragraph and its functions. Our focus for this session will be on paragraphs with organizing functions. In doing this, we will look at introductory, transitional, concluding and defining paragraphs.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

7.1 *write* correctly the following paragraphs:

- *introductory paragraphs*
- *transitional paragraphs*
- *concluding paragraphs*
- *defining paragraphs*

Terminology

Introduction paragraph	The first paragraph of your essay.
Transition paragraph	A word, phrase, or sentence that marks a shift in thought from one paragraph to the next.

7.1 Paragraph with Organizing Functions

Different paragraphs perform different functions in a discourse. In the first part of this lecture, we shall be concerned with three paragraphs that perform an organising function. These are: the introductory, the transitional and the concluding paragraphs. In addition, we shall examine the defining paragraph. Each of these paragraph types is examined in detail as follows.

7.1.1 Introductory Paragraphs

An introductory paragraph is a paragraph in which the writer indicates his purpose or plan in the discourse. It is a paragraph that indicates the intention of the writer; it is one in which the reader is alerted to what he

should expect in the discourse. Introductory paragraphs may vary from single paragraphs of a few sentences for essays, themes and short reports, to a series of paragraphs which may run into several pages for major reports, theses and dissertations of long essays.



Note

Introductory paragraphs are usually brief and precise.

Introductory Paragraphs are often introduced with a direct statement that announces the purpose or proposition of the discourse. This direct introductory sentence serves as the key or topic sentence not only for the introductory paragraph but also for the entire essay. Consider the following:

Both 'military rule' and 'nation-building' have attracted considerable attention as foci of academic analysis over the years. The paper reviews the latter as a process and examines the role of the former in it. The reason for nation building is assessed, presenting at the end a balance sheet that falsified many previous assumptions with regard to military rule and nation-nation-building.

(Tunde Adeniran. "Military Rule and Nation-Building". *The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*. Vol. 27, 3 Nov. 1985, p. 329).

The above introductory paragraph provides a number of signals about the writer's purpose or proposition in the paper in the following ways:

1. First, the paper reviews 'nation-building' as a process and examines the role of military rule in nation-building;
2. Second, it considers the reasons for military rule and assess the capacity of military rule for nation-building; and
3. Finally, it presents a balance sheet at the end of the paper.

Thus, in this introductory paragraph, the reader presents his pattern of treatment, that is, what he intends to discuss and the order in which he wants to discuss the points. This prepares the reader for what to expect in the remaining part of the paper.

7.1.2 Transitional Paragraphs

It is not enough to have a good introductory paragraph to arouse the expectations of the reader. We also need to show how the discourse is progressing. We need to show clearly and unambiguously, the relationship between our paragraphs; and how our thoughts are connected. You will recall that in Lecture Six, we discussed ways in which you can achieve coherence in your paragraphs through the use of traditional words and expressions: connectives and connective phrases. We emphasized that coherence can be achieved within individual paragraphs and between one paragraph and another. We also highlighted

the fact that when you indent to show that a new paragraph is beginning, you are indicating, that a phase of thought is ending and another one is beginning. Transitional paragraphs help to show a movement from one phase of thought to another through the use of connectives or connective phrases. Transitional paragraphs, therefore, provide a link with what was said in the preceding paragraph while at the same time, they prepare the reader for what is about to be said. Consider the paragraph below:

In study session One and Two you were introduced to paragraph structure and development. Through the selection discussed, you learnt that the paragraph performs the basic function of (a) signalling the beginning and the end of one properly developed central thought or a group of closely related ideas and (h) breaking of a mass of printed material into manageable bits.

The paragraph therefore is used by an author to organize and expand the central idea or thought of the paragraph. You are, for example, already familiar with the introductory, transitional and concluding paragraphs. In this lecture, we shall focus our discussion on explanatory paragraphs, how they can be identified and how you can apply similar strategies to write your own.

(James S., S.O. Oyerokun, and E.O. Soola, Language in Action for Higher Education Evans Publishers (forthcoming)).

7.1.3 Concluding Paragraphs

Just as most of our discourse will have introductory paragraphs, they certainly will also have concluding paragraphs. Concluding paragraphs are those paragraphs, which come at the end of essays, reports, theses or dissertations. They may also be located at strategic portions of long chapters of books as well as in journal articles. Concluding paragraphs provide a re-statement of the most essential ideas presented, or issues raised in the essay, paper or chapter. When you write a concluding paragraph, therefore, make sure you repeat the controlling idea, thought or concept. You may also redefine some of the terms earlier used. Whichever method you adopt, make sure you leave out trivial (that is, unimportant) facts or minor details, examples or illustrations which should, appropriately have been used in the body of the essay. In addition, a concluding paragraph, like all other paragraphs in the essay, must be seen as a functional entity; it must relate to the other paragraphs of the essay. Your concluding paragraph must, therefore, be seen to derive from the essay, and as such, its tone must agree with the tone of the entire paper, essay or report. The paragraph below is an example of a concluding paragraph.

I have tried to show that the principle of

consent to recognised authority must operate at all levels of a free and organised society. This principle is fundamental to our consideration of political freedom; because it implies the surrender in the interests of the community on part of the individual's or the group's essential freedom to act only in accordance with his own desires, or immediate and narrow interest. It recognises that the community as a whole is greater than its component parts and has over-riding claims over them.

(Adapted from E. Lucas: *What is Freedom?* OUP as quoted in Banjo, L.A. and S.O. Unoh, *Effective use of English*. Nairobi: Thomas Nelson and Sons Lid; 1980, pp 111 – 112).

ITQ

_____ paragraph arouses the expectations of the reader.

- a. Transitional
- b. Arousing
- c. Introductory
- d. introduction

Feedback

c. Introductory

7.1.4 Defining Paragraphs

To define is to make the meaning of something clear. A defining paragraph, therefore, serves to provide a clear meaning of a word, a concept, a term, a theory or a principle. The writer of a defining paragraph tries to clarify the meaning of the word, the concept, the term, the theory or the principle by providing illustrations or explanations that help to make the meaning clear. In addition, the writer of a defining paragraph may list the attributes (that is, characteristics) of the object he is trying to define. Defining paragraphs set the bound and the context (that is, the limit and the situation) within which a word, a concept, a theory or principle is to be understood. It provides a framework within which a term is to be considered. Consider the paragraph below:

Religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say things set apart and forbidden - belief and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church all those who adhere to them.

(E. Durkheim: *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. As quoted in

Otite, O. and W. Ogionwo. An introduction to Sociological Studies, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1985, p. 151).

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed paragraph types and functions. We have looked at the characteristics and features of paragraphs, which perform essentially organizing functions: introductory, transitional, and concluding. We also discussed, with examples, how these paragraphs perform their organizing functions. Lastly, we examined the defining paragraph, its form and features.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 7.1 (tests Learning Outcome 7.1)

Differentiate among the four paragraph types identified in this study session.

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Study Session 8

Paragraph Types and Function II

Introduction

We will continue our discussion from last study session. In this study session, our focus will be on explanatory paragraphs. In doing this, we

will look at programmed material, narrative paragraphs and descriptive paragraphs.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

8.1 *Identify* different types of explanatory paragraphs

Terminology

Explanatory paragraph	A paragraph serving or intending to explain or make clear an essay.
Narrative paragraph	A paragraph that gives an account of a sequence of events usually presented in chronological order

8.1 Explanatory Paragraphs

An explanatory paragraph is employed to explain the idea, thought or subject matter of the paragraph. It performs a function similar to that of defining paragraphs because it provides the reader with information. However, while a defining paragraph provides the reader with information by telling what a thing does, *how* a thing is done, and *why* a thing is done, an explanatory paragraph answers the questions *What? How? and Why?* a thing is done. To understand and be able to write explanatory paragraphs, you need to identify the word, idea, concept or subject matter being explained. In addition, you should read carefully through the paragraph for both graphic and verbal clues; that is, diagrams, pictures, graphs and words used by the author to guide your reading and aid your comprehension. Finally, you must look for synonyms (i.e. words with similar meanings) and signal words that may help your understanding of the paragraph.

From the above, you would have noticed that an explanatory paragraph is a “How-To-Do-It” paragraph. In other Words; it is a paragraph that may - explain a process, instruct a person or group of person on how a particular task is to be accomplished; it may interpret an idea, a thought or a concept, or merely present facts.

Below is an example of an explanatory paragraph on the use of programmed material for teaching purposes.

8.1.1 Programmed Material

Programmed materials make use of some sort of "teaching machine". A programmed material may be simply a book with a grid that covers the correct responses for a book plus tape, or a complex piece of hardware with audio-stimulus and looping or branching facilities, Programmed

materials are most suited for the teaching of reading and writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Programmes in phonetics are also available. Communication and self-expression, however, require at least two people.

The above passage, (an explanatory paragraph) provides the reader with information on programmed material or the "teaching machine". It explains what it is, and the various forms it may take.

8.1.2 Narrative Paragraphs

A narrative paragraph is one that relates an event, a series of events, or tells a story. Most novels, short stories and accounts of events are, therefore, often written in narrative paragraphs. However, we also use narrative paragraphs to explain our ideas, thoughts or concepts; we use them to clarify our point(s). In other words, narrative paragraphs are used for explanatory purposes. When we use narrative paragraph in this way, it helps to clarify our point, idea or concept. Narrative paragraphs are commonly used in expository writing (as you will see later in this course). They are also used as chapters or as introductory to sections of books. In both cases, they are used either to illustrate the main points to be developed or to draw attention to the points to be explained. Consider the following paragraph:

At last the chief's door opened and one of his daughters appeared. She bestowed a smile on Samba Diallo, but his countenance remained expressionless. The girl set down on the ground a large plate containing the left-overs from the evening before. The disciples squatted in the dust and set to on their first meal of the day when they had eaten enough to satisfy their hunger, they put the rest in their wooden bowls, against possible future need. With his bent index finger Samba Diallo thoroughly cleaned the plate, and put the little ball of food, thus recovered, into his mouth. Then he got up and handed the empty plate to his cousin.

(Kane, C.H. *Ambiguous Adventure*. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. London: 1982, pp 14-15).

Let us see this too:

After the customary assurances the "doctor" began to render his services. He gave the reporter a potion which he drank after reciting appropriate incantations. They had an appointment to meet the following day. At the appointed time, he took the reporter to Alaka, the site of the Lagos State Development and Property Corporation's (LSDPC) Low Cost Housing Scheme which was then a swamp. There he had a shrine where he kept a white cock. After the necessary rites at the shrine he cut come

leaves and commanded the reporter to eat them. He did. Then they proceeded to a stream where he had laid a pipe under water. At the end of the pipe he had an accomplice who was not visible to the visitor. When he had invoked the spirit of his ancestors and told whom he had earlier told the reporter was a mermaid of the water his purpose of coming, a deep voice began a conversation with the reporter. He told him that he had known he was coming and why he had come even before he set out. The voice assured him his wish would be accomplished provided he is willing to pay one hundred and fifty pounds the equivalent of three hundred naira. The reporter promised to pay it in two days. He was asked to come the following day to bathe in the stream.

(Sobowale, I. Scientific Journalism, John West Publications Ltd., Ikeja: 1983, p. 13).

8.1.3 Descriptive Paragraphs

Descriptive paragraphs usually appear in essays, biographies and novels. However, they may also be found as part of writings in social studies and sciences. Descriptive paragraphs often embody interesting and important information. In literature, they help to promote understanding and evoke "feeling".



Note

Descriptive paragraphs are intended to "paint a picture".

The writer of description is an artist of some sort. However, one important difference you need to know between a conventional artist and a writer of description as an artist is that while a conventional artist uses conventional tools such as paint and brush to paint his picture, a descriptive writer uses words that are carefully selected and carefully put together to create images or paint his pictures.

ITQ

What kind of paragraph will you expect in an essay titled "The interior of Olubadan's palace"?

Feedback

Descriptive paragraphs

Below are two examples of the descriptive paragraph. The first paragraph describes a television studio and its immediate surroundings, while the second paragraph is science-based. One thing you will notice in these paragraphs is that while the dominant feature of the paragraph is descriptive; there are obvious traces of exposition.

Description of Part of a TV Studio

Spaced around the studio we see the set designer's art: three walled "rooms", part of a street scene, a summer garden, perhaps. But next to our surprise at the colourful realism of these settings, the first impression is one of endless lights. Suspended, clamped to sets, on floor-stand... it is hard to appreciate that each has been placed and angled with careful precision, to fulfil a particular purpose.

(Millerson, G. *The Technique of Television Production*. Hastings house, Publishers, New York: 1974, 9th ed. p. 13).

Description of a Lamprey: (Biology)

The head of a lamprey is curious and quiet different from that of a fish. Instead of jaws, the lamprey has a funnel-like mouth lined with sharp, horny teeth. A rasping tongue, also bearing teeth, lies in the centre of the mouth. Small eyes are situated on either side of the head. Between the eyes, on the top of the head, is a nasal opening that leads to a sac containing nerve endings associated with the sense of smell. Even oval gill slits, resembling portholes of a ship, lie in a row on each side of the head, behind the eyes. These openings lead to spherical pouches that contain numerous feathery gills. Water moves in and out through the external gill slits of the adult sea lamprey.

Otto, J. H. and Towle, *A Modern Biology*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York: 1969. As quoted in H. Alan Robinson. *Teaching Reading and Study Strategies*

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we looked at three paragraph-types; explanatory, narrative and descriptive. We also identified the features of each type and suggested ways in which we can write each of the paragraph types.

Assessment



SAQ 8.1 (tests Learning Outcome8.1)

1. Which type of explanatory paragraph utilizes some sort of teaching machine?
 - a. Programmed utilizer

Assessment

- b. Programmed material
 - c. Programmed paragraph
 - d. Programmed narrative
2. ----- paragraphs is used to explain our ideas, thoughts or concepts.
- a. Narrated
 - b. Narration
 - c. Narrative
 - d. Narratives
3. Descriptive paragraph appears in essays, biographies and novels only. True or False

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Study Session 9

Paragraph Development I

Introduction

In study session Six of this course, you were told how you can write good paragraphs by stating your topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph and building upon it. In this part of lecture nine, we shall concern ourselves with how you can use details to develop your paragraphs.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 9.1 *develop* a paragraph through the use of specific details
- 9.2 *construct* a paragraph through cause-and-effect relationship
- 9.3 *write* a paragraph through extended definition
- 9.4 *create* a paragraph through steps-in-a-process.

Terminology

Paragraph development	The process of collection of sentences which all relate to one main idea or topic.
Statement	Something that you say or write which gives information in a formal or definite way.

9.1 Paragraph Development through the Use of Specific Details

From the outset, we must accept the fact that the topic sentence is a general statement or what we call a 'generality'. With a topic sentence, a writer only suggests, often vaguely, the paragraph topic without the details necessary for an adequate development of the paragraph. Consider the 'paragraph' below:

Since assuming office as External Affairs, he has helped in forging a favourable image for the country.

What we have above is a general statement which withholds desirable information from the reader. It arouses an expectation which it fails to

fulfil. Therefore, it does not qualify as a paragraph. What, you may ask, could be done to make the general statement a paragraph? Essentially, the writer can elevate his generality to the status of a paragraph by providing details of how the External Affairs minister succeeded in forging a favourable image for the country. In other words, the reader should be told what specific things the minister did to give the country a favourable (new) image. The general statement could have been developed like this:

Thus developed, the paragraph now acquires a meaningfulness which is lacking in the generality earlier considered. The reader can now see three things the minister did to give the country a favourable image. So, when you write your own paragraphs, always ensure that you provide enough details to build up (that is to develop) your general statement. Consider the following generality (or paragraph fragment), and then, its full development through the use of details.

The thought patterns of the sexes differ also.

A woman usually thinks differently from a man.

The same paragraph developed through the use of details could read thus:

Another major difference between the sexes is that their thought patterns vary widely. A woman is apt to think of the here and-now; a man more often keeps his eye on the future. A woman's thinking usually centres on home, love, and security; a man's thinking is centres on adventure and sex.

Small accomplishments will delight a woman, but a man is dissatisfied unless he can achieve major successes. In fact, there are few areas in which the thought patterns of the sexes mesh.

(Willis, H. *Structure, Style and Usage*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. New York: 1969, p. 68).

9.2 Paragraph Development through Cause-and-Effect Relationship

In discussing paragraph development through the use of specific details, we emphasized the need to develop your paragraph beyond the general statement (generality) or paragraph fragment level. Here, we shall discuss how you can develop your paragraph through the use of cause-and-effect relationship. When you use cause-and-effect relationship to develop your paragraph you show how one thing affects or is affected by another. In other words, you show how one thing results from another.

Consider the sample paragraph below:

Lack of incentives to farmers in the past has led to the current food shortage and consequent rise in the cost of food items. Farming was, for long,

unattractive as it was considered a dirty job, meant only for the rural poor. It was practised at subsistence level and with primitive tools. Little effort was made to introduce improved technology; modern tools, improved seeds, fertilizer, harvesting and storage facilities. The farmer, usually lost most of his crops and sold whatever remained prematurely and cheaply.

Whenever you need to develop your paragraph through cause-and-effect relationship, you should realise that you can do this in two ways. One, you can trace a given cause to its effects. Two, you may start from effect and trace this back to a given cause. Our example above takes care of the first approach for the second approach; you may look at Nigeria's present economic plight (situation) and consider this as the 'effect' of something. You may then go from this 'effect' to its cause-inflated or unexecuted but paid for contract, reliance on oil as the nation's mono-export, bribery and corruption in high and low places, etc.

ITQ

What is “generality” in paragraph development?

Feedback

The topic sentence as a general statement

9.3 Paragraph Development through Extended Definition

As a writer, you need to appreciate the fact that there were times when you have to define your terms, principle or concept. This need cuts across disciplines: humanities, science, social sciences and education. The need to develop your paragraph through extended definition usually arises because you want to clarify your idea, principle, or concept; or because the meaning of such ideas, principles, or concepts does not enjoy a universal notion. In other words, they mean different things to different people. When you use an extended definition to develop your paragraph, you are, so to speak, providing a framework within which you want to look at the subject matter of your definition. Put differently, definition helps you to set bounds within which you want to consider your subject. As long as your definition is understandable and intelligent, the reader has no choice but to view the subject within the bounds set by your definition. Consider this:

Democracy

The word democracy connotes different things to different people. Ideally, democracy can be defined as the government of the people, by the people for the people. Realistically, democracy is the government of the people by the politicians, for whatever pressure group can get their interest taken care of. Historically, and more acceptably, democracy is a political

organization in which political authority resides in the people rather than in the ruler, it is a governmental structure in which the citizens, or a good number of them effectively representing the common will, act from time to time in accordance with established norms to enact or repeal laws by which the community is regulated.

The above paragraph shows how you can go about developing your paragraph through extended definition. First, it starts by acknowledging the fact that there is no universally agreeable definition of the concept. Second, it looks at the concept from the idealist's point of view. Next, it defines the concept from the realist's perspective, and finally, it gives what it calls the historical definition which, to the writer, is the most acceptable.

9.4 Paragraph Development through Steps-in-a-Process

You can also develop your paragraph through steps in a process. This is a 'How-to-do-it' type of exposition. For example, you could develop your paragraph through steps-in-a-process around such topics as: "How to mould a cement block", "How to train dogs", "How to drive a car", "How to study read". This approach to paragraph development is also used in a writing that involves 'instructions' or 'directions'.

The steps-in-a process pattern of paragraph development requires a great deal of discipline on the part of both the writer and the reader. As a writer of a 'steps-in-a-process paragraph', you must take pains not to leave out any vital step in the process; otherwise, the desired result will not be achieved. Consider, for instance, the steps that a scientist has to take in performing a given experiment. To obtain the desired result, a science student has to follow, rigidly, the steps, one after the other. He cannot re-order the steps or miss out any of the steps. As is it with experiments, so it is with any task that can only be accomplished by taking one step after another.

Let us consider Hulon Willis' steps- in-a process of training a dog to protect children.

Dogs can also be taught to protect young children. The first step the trainer takes in this part of the dog's education is to make the dog aware that the child is helpless. He does this by letting the dog see him rescue the child from various difficulties. Next he tries waiting until the last moment to rescue the child, thus giving the dog a chance to perform the rescue himself. The intelligent dog will soon catch on and will begin to take a possessive interest in the child. Then the trainer undertakes to teach the dog various dangerous situations that confront the child, such as those involving the streets, high places, stray animals, and loose objects. With such training, an

adaptable dog will soon become a better protector that the child's own mother.

(Willis, H. Structure, Style and Usage as cited above p. 77).

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we explained the various ways in which we can develop the general statement of our paragraph and make it more specific and more believable. Each of these approaches has been illustrated to show us, in concrete terms how we should go about developing our topic sentence. In this study session, we also discussed the use of specific details, cause-and-effect, extended definition and steps-in-a-process

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 9.1 (tests Learning Outcome 9.1)

Because of the experience, the woman has not considered marriage as something good for her.

Why is the above thought less qualified as a paragraph?

SAQ 9.2 (tests Learning Outcome 9.2)

Where the effect of over-speeding is developed in a paragraph is a typical example of

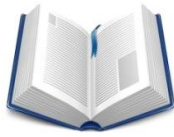
SAQ 9.3 (tests Learning Outcome 9.3)

Give a reason for the need to employ extended definition.

SAQ 9.4 (tests Learning Outcome 9.4)

The essay “How to gain admission to a distance learning programme” can best be developed using

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Study Session 10

Paragraph Development II

Introduction

In this study session, we will continue from where we stopped last session. Our focus now will be on how to develop paragraph through re-statement, comparison/contrast and use of enumeration. We will also look at what topic sentence in paragraph means.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to

- 10.1 *develop* paragraph through Re-statement
- 10.2 *create* a paragraph through Comparison and contrast.
- 10.3 *use* enumeration to create paragraph
- 10.4 *describe* topic statement in paragraph

Terminology

Restatement	An act of stating something again or differently, especially more clearly or convincingly.
Topic sentence	A sentence that expresses the main idea of the paragraph in which it occurs.

10.1 Paragraph Development through Re-statement

From the outset, you need to realise that re-statement is not in itself, a method of paragraph development. What it does is to add to the development. In a re-statement, only the general statement or the generality is re-stated. This is because specific details, examples or illustrations are not normally repeated. When you use re-statement to develop your paragraph you do so to emphasize or amplify the general statement (or the central idea) of the paragraph. In other words, a re-statement does not only repeat the preceding idea for emphasis but it also clarifies the idea and amplifies it through fuller statements. When you amplify your general statement, you enlarge or extend it usually by representing the idea from a different point of view. Re-statement, is

therefore not a thoughtless repetition, rather, it is one that is done with the aim of emphasizing and clarifying the central idea of the paragraph.

You will recall that we described the paragraph as a miniature (that is a short) essay, with its own beginning, a development, and an ending. Thus, a good topic sentence serves to begin a paragraph while a good re-statement (which usually comes at the end of the paragraph) round off (that is, concludes) the paragraph.

Consider the use of re-statement in the following paragraph:

Communication is a demanding process and may break down at any point. Any problem or condition which appears as an obstacle to communication is called noise, a term borrowed from information theory. The noise may be actual physical noise, as a football game outside, or it may come from such problems as mental pre-occupation, a listener's dislike for a subject, the threat of a controversial proposal, a speaker's withholding vital information, and many other forms of interference. Noise refers to any physical, psychological or mental condition that contributes to the breakdown of communication. The interference may be in the setting, in the medium carrying the message, for instance, the airwaves or in the minds and bodies of the participants. It may be a cultural, social, religious, political, or educational phenomenon. In a word, all possible influence must be taken into account in consideration of forces and situations affecting communication. With such a view, we have the beginnings of an understanding of the dynamic and complex process of oral communication.

(James. S. L.; Ode, and O. Soola. (2006) Introduction to Communication: In Business; and Organizations).

10.2 Paragraph Development through Comparison and Contrast

When you develop your paragraph through the use of comparison-contrast, you are trying to explain or illustrate your ideas by showing the similarities and differences between them. By using the comparison-contrast method, you can establish relationships between similar or dissimilar objects or things. If you choose the contrast method, you'll need to present the differences the objects or properties you are trying to contrast. At times, your paragraph may concentrate on the similarities alone or on the difference only. There are also situations when you may first present the similarities and then go on to draw the contrast within the same paragraph.

10.3 Paragraph Development through the Use of Enumeration

By enumeration we mean listing or itemizing. When you choose to develop your paragraph through enumeration, your main task is to show clearly how various parts or incidents add up to give a picture of a whole. Thus, after your general statement (that is, topic sentence), you should go on to list (enumerate) the supporting details. Your enumeration be done within a paragraph or spill over to cover a number of paragraphs. When you are involved in enumeration, you must freely use such signals as, first, second, third, a fourth reason, etc.; or structures such as, in the first place, next, a third reason; or the first way, a second possibility, etc. Consider the paragraphs below.

The spleen has four recognized functions. One is that it is a reservoir for erythrocytes, stored in the spleen until such a time as they are needed. Two, it is sometimes referred to as the "graveyard" of the red cells because of their destruction by the large colourless cells of the spleen. A third function of the spleen is that it produces lymphocytes. Finally, the spleen performs its temporary role in the foetus in that it forms erythrocytes

(Adapted from Pauses, P. B. Reading the Textbook. Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, New York: 1972, p. 279).

10.4 The Topic Sentence in the Paragraph

You should, by now, be familiar with the paragraph, its definition, its characteristics, its form and functions. You should by now have also known that the paragraph can be developed by providing additional information to the message of the general statement (that is, the topic sentence). We shall now look more closely at the general statement or topic sentence of the paragraph. .



Note

The topic sentence is the powerful general statement, usually, but, not always, made as the first sentence of the paragraph.

Topic sentence is a statement of purpose or intention. It prepares the reader for what to expect in the rest of the paragraph. It serves as a compass or rudder to a ship; it guides the reader. The topic sentence, as stated above, usually occurs in the initial position in the paragraph. This suggests that while it is common to have the topic sentence as the first sentence of the paragraph, it may also occur somewhere else. It may occur in the middle or final positions in the paragraph. In other words, the

topic sentence can occur in either the initial, the medial or final positions within the paragraph. Let's consider the topic sentence in these three positions.

10.4.1 The Topic Sentence as the First Sentence in the Paragraph

Go over the sample paragraphs in lectures eight and nine. You will notice that the topic sentence comes first in the paragraphs. In this position, the topic sentence serves to guide the reader through the paragraph. It also controls what the writer has to say in the paragraph. This explains why a beginning writer is often advised to have his topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph. When you locate your topic sentence as the first sentence of the paragraph, then you allow the other sentences to be derived from the topic sentence. You allow the other sentences to be derived from the topic sentence. All the other sentences of the paragraph will take their roots, from the topic sentence. In other words, the topic sentence will give rise to or give 'birth' to all the other sentences in the paragraph.

Now, consider our first sample paragraph in this lesson. You will notice that the topic sentence occurs in the initial position (that is, as the first sentence of the paragraph). The topic sentence in the paragraph is *Communication is a demanding process and may break down at any point*. The central idea of the paragraph is noise in the communication process. Notice how all the other sentences in the paragraph closely relate to this topic sentence. Every other sentence in the paragraph says something about noise.

10.4.2 The Topic Sentence in Medial Position

Though the topic sentence usually occurs as the first sentence of the paragraph as we stated above, it may also appear in the middle of the paragraph. When it occurs in this position, you will normally have a few sentences which serve as introductory or transitional sentences. Such sentences merely prepare you for the central idea (that is, the subject matter) of the paragraph. Consider the paragraph below.

So far we have discussed the theoretical foundations of communication, its form, function, and the grammatical structures used in verbal exchange. We will now consider the application of theory in business, industry and specialized institutions. First, we will focus on written communication, and later in the second part of the module, we will discuss oral communication.

(James, S.L.; Ode, I. and Soola. O. Introduction to Communication in Business and Organisations. Ibadan: Specturm Books (Forthcoming)).

The second sentence of this paragraph ("We will now...") is the topic sentence of the paragraph. See how the first sentence merely prepares you for the central idea (that is, the topic sentence) of the paragraph, and how the remaining sentences of the paragraph merely elaborate on the steps to be taken in achieving the objective incorporated in the topic sentence.

10.4.3 The Topic Sentence in Final Position

When the topic sentence occurs in the final position, it usually summarizes the points or ideas discussed in the paragraph. In this case, you may first of all list the points or details with which the paragraph is developed and gradually build up to the powerful topic statement, which forms the last statement of the paragraph, and which is your topic sentence. Consider the paragraph that follows:

The insects, cocoa pests, called capsids cause considerable havoc to farmers. In Ghana losses due to their activities have been estimated at between 60,000 and 80,000 tons. The government annually spends vast sums trying to check the swollen-shoot cocoa disease transmitted by the early-bug insect pests. The oil-palm industry is seriously affected by the activities of another insect. Even the coconut palm, believed to be relatively free from pests, is attacked by no less than twenty-three species of insects. Similarly, rice suffers from at least fourteen important pests and cotton from nine. In fact, no field crop is free from attacks in varying degrees, from insect pests.

(James. S.L.; S. O. Oyeroku, and E. O. Soola, Language In Action for Higher Education Evans Publishers, (forthcoming)).

ITQ

..... is a statement of purpose or intention.

Feedback

The topic sentence

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed how you might develop your topic sentence by using re-statement, and comparison and contrast. We also attempted to identify the roles that the topic sentence performs in these positions. Therefore, you should be able to write good paragraphs with the topic sentence in various positions. However, for now, we advise that your topic sentence should come at the initial position

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 10.1 (tests Learning Outcome 10.1)

In a only the general statement or the generality is re-stated

SAQ 10.2 (tests Learning Outcome 10.2)

When do you need to present the differences in the objects or properties you are trying to contrast

SAQ 10.3 (tests Learning Outcome 10.3)

To show clearly how various parts or incidents add up to give a picture of a whole, what method is required?

SAQ 10.4 (tests Learning Outcome 10.4)

Identify the topic sentence in the extract below

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigerian Police has been in the news for obvious reasons in the recent time. Parts of the issues raised has been indiscriminate use of firearms, extortion of the members of the public, impunity in the discharge of duties among others. Caution must be maintained in the call for the proscription of the unit. The focus on what to do must be approached from the inside-out.

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Study Session 11

Essay

Introduction

In this study session, we will be discussing essay. We will start explaining the nature of essay. In doing this, we will discuss the role of paragraphing in essay writing. We will also explain how to choose essay topics. Moving on, we will point out how we can gather materials for essay writing. Lastly, we will describe how to outline the essay materials.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

11.1 *explain* the nature of essays

Terminology

Essay	A short piece of writing on one subject, usually presenting the author's own views.
Letter	A written or printed communication addressed to a person or organization and usually transmitted by mail.

11.1 The Nature of Essays

Essay writing is an art. It calls for an intelligent use of communicative skills such as thinking, imagining, reasoning and visualizing. It also requires a good command of the language of communication, which in your case is the English language. It is because essay writing demands so much that teachers of English, particularly at the secondary school level, usually try to ensure a good measure of understanding of the language by their students before asking such students to embark on essay writing. However, essay writing offers a good opportunity for the student to use his creative and imaginative talents and enables him to share his experiences with other people. You will remember that at the beginning of this course we emphasized the need for you to understand the structure of the language: the sentence elements in their various forms. We have also discussed the sentences types: simple, compound and complex. We have talked about co-ordination and subordination in sentences. We have also emphasized the need for you to choose your words (diction)

carefully and arrange such words carefully in an acceptable form and style. The diction you will need in your various types of essays will cover the register, the literal and the figurative expressions as well as occasional acceptable use of clichés and jargons. If you aspire to be a good writer, as I am sure you do, you will need to select and use words that are appropriate for the subject matter of your essay. Your words must also be suitable to your audience as well as to the situation or occasion. For instance, the words you will use in describing things, places, objects or narrating incidents or events will be different from those you will use when you write personal letters to your friends; those you will use for your friends will be different from those you will use for mere acquaintances.

11.1.1 The Role of the Paragraph in Essay Writing

We have in the last two lectures concerned ourselves with a detailed look at the nature, form and functions of paragraphs. You will recall that we stated that the paragraph is in a way a short (that is, a miniature) essay because it must have its own topic (that is, the central idea) which is introduced through the use of the topic sentence. The topic sentence is developed with supporting details, examples, illustrations etc. Then, the paragraph must be rounded off (that is, concluded). In other words, a paragraph, just like an essay, must be introduced, developed; and concluded.

We have also emphasized the need for *unity*, *coherence*, *emphasis* and *completeness* in your paragraphs. However, in addition to this, your paragraphs must also be linked with each other so that your entire essay can look unified. In other words, a thread of unity must not only be seen to run through individual paragraphs, but also through the entire length of the essay.

11.1.2 Choosing the Topic

Unless you are in a class situation in which your teacher gives you an essay topic to write on, you will usually have a number of topics to choose from. This gives you the opportunity to make your own selection of the topic you want to write your essay on. The following steps should guide you in making the best choice out of a number of options, In other words, before selecting your topic, you should;

1. think quickly through, that is, study-read all the topics by paying particular attention to the demand of each question.
2. take into consideration your personal interests or taste. Select a topic that is of interest to you; a topic that will stimulate you.
3. consider your familiarity with the subject. Ask yourself whether or not you know, that is, you are familiar with the subject and you have a reservoir of information or ideas in you to be able to meet the demands of the topic. This is important since you cannot go about consulting sources like books, journals, magazines, etc. If you discover that you do not know enough about the subject, drop it and pick another one.

4. find out who your audience, that is, the reader, is. Your reader will determine what you should include or leave out, your method of presentation, the words you use, and the type of sentence structure you will use.
5. avoid the common, but stupid, idea of 'running away' from a popular topic, one which every other person is likely to select. It is better to select a topic on which you have good points than one on which you have to scratch your head for points.

11.1.3 Gathering Material for the Essay

There are two ways in which the essay topic can be given. One, you may be given your essay topic as a 'take-home', that is, an essay which you are allowed to write and submit within a specific time limit. Two, you may be given the topic in class and be expected to write and submit the essay before leaving the class. When you are given an essay topic for a take-home, you have the opportunity of looking for materials with which to develop the topic. Thus, you can go into the library shelves and look for relevant books, journal, magazines, newspapers, etc. which may throw some more light on your topic and add to your store of knowledge.

However, if your essay is one that you have to write and submit in class, you need to rely completely on your store of knowledge, your imagination and creativity. Thus, once you have selected a topic for which you are well equipped, the next stage of your assignment is to find points, ideas, examples and illustrative materials with which to develop your essay. You will be guided by the operative (that is, the key words) of the topic of the-essay. If you carefully study these words, you will have a clear idea about the nature, the purpose and the scope of the essay.'

11.1.4 Outlining the Material

Once you are certain of what answer the topic requires of you, that is, whether it is expository, narrative, argumentative or descriptive you should think through your topic and put the points down as they occur to you. Do not worry at this stage about how to organize the points, as you will take care of this later in the exercise. If, for example, you are writing on smuggling, your points may come to your head in the following order.

1. Items usually smuggled: clothes, or clothing items, shoes, electronic gadgets, jewellery, etc.
2. Causes of smuggling: high cost of made-in-Nigeria goods; poor quality of locally made goods; love for luxury items; crazy for improved materials, connivance by men of Custom and Excise.
3. Consequences of smuggling: constitute a drain on the nation's scarce foreign reserves, kills local initiative.
4. How to combat smuggling: improving the quality of locally made goods; making the people see the need to patronize locally made goods; restructuring the Customs and Excise Department.

Looking at the points listed above, the first thing that will strike you is that point two should obviously come before point one. You should, therefore, re-order the points so that two becomes one and one becomes two. In addition to this, you may also do some internal re-structuring, that

is, by re-ordering the points according to what you want to say first, next, and last. You may also want your outline to be graphic thus:

A. Causes of Smuggling

1. High cost of made-in-Nigeria goods
2. Poor quality of made-in-Nigeria goods
3. Love for luxury items
4. Craze for imported materials
5. Connivance by men of the Customs and Excise.

B. Items usually smuggled

1. Cloths, or clothing materials
2. Shoes
3. Jewellery
4. Electronic gadgets

What is done in A and B above can also be done for the remaining two major points.

ITQ

What are the steps you can use as guide in making the best choice out of a number of options towards essay writing?

Feedback

Before selecting your topic, you should:

1. Think quickly through or read all the topics by paying particular attention to the demand of each question.
2. Select a topic that is of interest to you.
3. Consider your familiarity with the subject.
4. Identify your audience.
5. Avoid the common, but stupid, idea of 'running away' from a popular topic, one which every other person is likely to select.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we have considered the nature of the essay and its demand on the writer of essays. We attempted to look at what you, as a writer, should do in choosing your topic and the source you should consult in developing topics. We also examined the process of outlining your essay in preparation for its full development.

Assessment

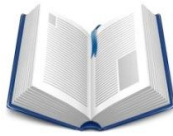


Assessment

SAQ 11.1 (tests Learning Outcome 11.1)

What are the required activities towards the composition of an essay?

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Study Session 12

Handling the Essay Materials

Introduction

In this study session, we will be discussing how to handle the essay materials. We will start by explaining how to write effective introductions. In doing so, we will illustrate how to develop the theme, write effective conclusions and revise essays.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

12.1 *write* effective introductions

Terminology

Theme	A subject of discourse, discussion, meditation, or composition
Conclusion	The last paragraph of an essay.

12.1 Writing Effective Introductions

As a beginner writer, one thing that is likely to bother you from time to time is how to effectively introduce your essay. In other words, once you have selected, gathered material on the topics, and organized the material, you often wonder how best to start the essay. Below, we provide guidelines on how to introduce your essay:

Write your introduction in such a way that it leads the reader directly into the topic of the essay and clarifies the topic.

A topic such as Student Crisis in Nigeria's Institutions of Higher Learning can be introduced like this:

"Students crisis has become so common a feature of academic life in Nigeria that it is often unusual to have a whole academic session without one form of unrest or another. These crises often result in loss of lives, damage to property, interruption of academic programmes and closure of affected institutions."

Another way in which you can introduce the topic of your essay is to encapsulate (that is, wrap up) the main divisions of your outline, as a way of stating the central idea and the main pattern of the organization of your essay.

Whatever method you adopt in introducing your essay, make sure you do not start by apologizing to your reader. Do not start an essay on Crime Control by stating that:

Though I am not an expert in crime control, it is my purpose in this essay to examine how crime can be controlled in Nigeria.

Also, avoid calling attention unnecessarily to the fact that you are introducing your topic.

Don't say: "I am writing to discuss..."

Nor should you start by saying "I want to introduce my topics by..."

The above introductions are not only dull and uninspiring, they also unnecessarily call attention to the fact that the writer is trying to introduce his topic. In addition, they show that the writer is having difficulty in introducing his topic.

12.1.1 Developing the Theme

In study session nine and ten, we discussed extensively the various methods of developing the paragraph. We also emphasized the need to develop our paragraphs adequately to make them interesting and informative. Just as it is important to develop the paragraph fully, it is also important to develop the topic of an essay fully. Below are suggestions on how to develop the body of the essay:

1. Develop each paragraph of the essay from the topic sentence and allow all other sentences in the paragraph to derive or take their roots from this powerful statement (topic sentence). Make sure you provide enough details, examples and illustrations to develop the paragraph
2. Include all the main points of your essay outline and supply all the facts, statistics, data and evidence that support them;
3. Deliberately, order or place your ideas in such a way that you stress what is important, through the use of words and expressions such as chiefly, mainly, most important(ly), first and foremost, especially, etc;
4. Vary your sentence structure. Avoid the use of short, simple sentences only, or long, compound and complex sentences only. Mix the various types of sentences for variety which is the spice of life itself;
5. Be precise in your choice of vocabulary. Know the type of writing you are engaged in and select your vocabulary accordingly. Your vocabulary may be objective, detached, factual, technical or scientific. It may also be subjective, emotional casual, interpretative, caustic or bitter, depending on your motives for writing;

6. Avoid errors of tense, concord, dangling and misplaced modifiers. Do not shift indiscriminately from one person to another, from one voice to another, or from one mood to another; and
7. Punctuate correctly and spell correctly and spell correctly.

12.1.2 Writing Effective Conclusions

The conclusion of an essay is a very important part of the essay. To refresh your memory, read Lecture Seven again and see what we said about concluding paragraphs. It is important to add that the concluding paragraph to a formal essay must help the reader to get a gist of the essentials of the essay. It must help him to see, in a nutshell, the major points or issues raised in the essay. Avoid drawing unnecessary attention to the fact that you are in the conclusion phase of the essay. What is obvious needs no repeating. Do not write conclusions such as:

"To sum up....."

"To conclusion....."

"To conclude this essay...."

"After considering the pros and cons..."

Your conclusion should derive directly from the body of your essay. It must, therefore, clearly relate to the title (or topic) and the main divisions of your outline. Leave your reader in no doubt that the conclusion has been definitive. Don't force a conclusion. When your essay has a natural conclusion, don't force in a formal conclusion. Not all essays need to be formally concluded.

ITQ

Suggest ways to developing the body of the essay

Feedback

Before selecting your topic, you should:

1. Develop each paragraph of the essay from the topic sentence and allow all other sentences in the paragraph to derive or take their roots from this powerful statement (topic sentence). Select a topic that is of interest to you.
2. Consider your familiarity with the subject.
3. Identify your audience.
4. Avoid the common, but stupid, idea of 'running away' from a popular topic, one which every other person is likely to select.

12.1.3 Revising the Essay

Note that a good essay may turnout to be a bad one because the writer did not take the pains to read through to remove avoidable and consequently unpardonable errors. You should, therefore, make some time available to read through your essays and correct wrongly spelt words; insert all omitted words, punctuate correctly and make sure that your tense and concord (agreement between subject and verb) are in order.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we considered effective ways in which you can and should introduce your essays. We stated the importance of good introductions in essays. We also considered how the body of the essay should be developed. Finally, we considered how you should go about your conclusion.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 12.1 (tests Learning Outcome 12.1)

Suggest at least three means on how to construct effective introductions.

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Study Session 13

Essay Types I

Introduction

In this study session, we will be highlighting different types of essay. Our focus in this session is on expository writing. In doing this, we discussed comparison and contrast, use of definition and steps-in-a-process.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

13.1 *write* an expository essay

Terminology

Expository essay	A genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner.
Descriptive essay	A genre of essay that asks the student to describe something—object, person, place, experience, emotion, situation, etc.

13.1 Expository Writing

Expository essays are those essays which are written essentially to convey information. They define, explain, and analyse knowledge, ideas, facts, problems and situations. This is the type of essay you will write if you are called upon to explain how a thing is done or how a thing is made. In other words, when you are involved in expository writing, you are seeking to provide answers to questions relating to how things are made or done; what certain ideas, things or concepts means; why certain phenomena act in a particular way; why certain causes produce certain effects, and why a certain situation, incident, event or happening is true. In other words, expository writing revolves around people, events, ideas, processes, problems, solutions and so on.

At this stage, we will suggest that you go over thoroughly, most of our discussions in lectures ten and eleven. Note, in particular, the various

ways in which the paragraphs given as illustrations are developed. These are the principal methods by which expository essays are developed. Your expository essay may be developed through various means as indicated below:

13.1.1 Comparison and Contrast

What we said in study session ten above will, to some extent, apply here. This approach is justified in the sense that we had earlier indicated that the paragraph is, itself, a miniature essay. When you develop your expository essay through comparison and contrast, you are trying to show the similarities and or differences between your objects of comparison. You may, for example, compare life in the rural areas to life in the city. Depending on your purpose in the essay, you may emphasize the similarities between the two human settlements, that is, say what they have in common. If, however, you are interested only in their differences (that is, things that separate or distinguish one from the other), then, you should emphasize their dissimilarities. As a third method of developing your essay through the use of comparison and contrast, you may first start what a thing, a concept or idea has in common with another thing, concept or idea, and later, go on to draw the contrast. When you engage in comparison - contrast type of essay, you should freely, but appropriately use phrases such as similarly; contrast; on the one hand; etc.

ITQ

One of these is a topic of an expository essay

- a. My first year in the university
- b. How to cook egg
- c. My days as a child
- d. Poverty in Africa

Feedback

- d. Poverty in Africa

13.1.2 Use of Definition

You may also develop your expository essay through the use of definition. Although this is mostly used at the paragraph level, you will occasionally come across essays that are developed principally through the use of definition. Suppose you have to write an essay on 'Democracy', you will likely want to define democracy, that is, give the meaning (the definition) of democracy in different geo-political contexts. Such an essay is likely to begin by the fact that the term means different things to different people. In other words, there is no consensus (no general universal agreement) as to what the word means. You may go on to say what it means in different geographical or political areas. For example, you may define democracy in its idea original Greek meaning: a government of the people by the people and for the people. You may then go on to consider the meaning of democracy in America, the USSR,

Germany, China, etc. From your definition of the term "democracy", in different contexts, you may, then, evolve your own definition for it.

Of course, the point must be clearly made that your definition will involve some explanation, some narration, and possibly, some argumentation as to what democracy is. This, again, confirms our earlier position that we cannot, and should not, strive to write the purely argumentative, the purely expository, the purely narrative or the purely descriptive essay.

13.1.3 Steps-in-a-Process

Steps-in-a-process is another method that you can use in developing your expository essay. This is the "How to" type of essay. Through the use of steps in a process, you may explain how a tool is manufactured, how an experiment is performed, or how a task is accomplished. When you choose this method to develop your essay, your emphasis should usually be on the need to take one step, and then another, until the task is accomplished.

The under listed essay topics call for the use of the expository type of essays:

1. The need for self-sufficiency in food production.
2. The advantages and disadvantages of living in a rural area.
3. How a local tool is fabricated.
4. The role of education in national development.
5. How to prepare for an examination.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we considered the nature and the demands of the essay. We also emphasized the futility of setting out to write the purely argumentative, narrative, expository or descriptive essay. We established the fact that they usually over-lap; the fact that one form of writing shades into another. We have also explored ways in which you can write good expository essays.

Assessment

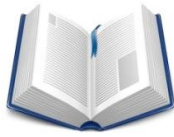


Assessment

SAQ 13.1 (tests Learning Outcome 13.1)

What will you consider in expository essay writing?

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Study Session 14

Essay Type II

Introduction

The narrative essay is a story, or an account of a future, or present event, or a future plan. While an oral narrative is told, a narrative essay is committed into writing. A narrative is a sequence of actions related to convey to the reader the relationship between or among events. It is important to realize that the narrative is most commonly concerned with the past. However, the narrative may also concern itself with the present or even the future.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

14.1 *identify* the features of narrative essays

Terminology

Narrative essay	A fiction-writing mode in which the narrator is communicating directly to the reader.
Tense	A distinction of form in a verb to express distinctions of time or duration of the action or state it denotes.

14.1 Narrative Essay

The narrative will revolve around either the physical or mental. By this we mean that your narrative essay may be woven around things, objects, people or places that exist in the real world, that is, things, objects, people or places that do not exist only in the writer's own imagination. In other words, the things, objects, places or people (subjects of the narrative) are real. When the narrative is mental, it is a product of the writer's imagination until he decides to share it with someone else through narration. Most fictional narratives take this form.

Other features of the narrative include the following:

1. **Character or characters:** Events do not just take place; things do not just happen. They happen to people or exist in the imagination of people. Stories are told (are woven) around people. So, characters are

persons around whom stories are woven. You will realize that you hardly read any story, or an account of an event in books (particularly novels), newspapers or magazines without mention of at least a person or a character. These persons are the subject of the narrative; they are the people whose experience is being related.

2. **Places or Scenes:** Events do not happen in the vacuum. They happen within specific locations or places. The narrative may revolve around a location or locations. Even, an account such as the landing on the moon still has its own location. The location may be in the air or under the sea; events may shift from place to place as a story develops. Whatever it is, the credibility (that is the believability) of your story depends, to some extent, on whether or not it can be located within a particular context. So, when you write your narrative essay, be sure to locate it within specific contexts.
3. **Time sequence:** This is a very important feature of the narrative. It is one of the most important features which separate the narrative from other types of essays. By time sequence, we mean that events take place within specific order of time. If you remove time from the narrative essay you must be able to see clearly the time relationships.

In addition to the above, you need to realize that your narrative essay will either create or re-create. When it creates, then, the writer's narrative is a fresh idea, a product of his imagination, not experience. When he recreates, however, the writer is trying to narrate an event within his experience.

Tension is an essential feature of the narrative. By tension, in this sense, we mean a build up of curiosity that is, a desire, an urge on the part of the reader to want to go on to read on and find out the outcome of a decision (or the lack of it) or how a given character will end up. Tension enables the reader to identify himself with the character or characters. He is, therefore, impelled to follow the progress of events to their outcome. As a writer of the narrative, you must avoid reaching climax soon after you begin your essay. Instead, you should gradually but steadily build up to it.

Use of details: Circumstantialities or the use of details is an important constituent of your narrative essay. In fact, the extent to which your story will be believed will depend on how much detail you pile up into it. If you have read the classic *Robinson Crusoe*, you would be in a position to appreciate the importance of detail in your narrative. In Daniel Defoe's masterpiece of a novel *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe piles up so much detail that it is impossible not to believe that he was actually shipwrecked on an island. The reader is left with the impression that the story cannot but be true even though we know that the story of *Robinson Crusoe* is a product of Daniel Defoe's fertile imagination. Therefore, when you write your narrative essays, make sure you pile up enough detail of happenings, time, places and people so much that it will be difficult not to believe it.

Your narrative essay may revolve around events in nature - a flood disaster, an earthquake, or a volcanic eruption. It may also be an encounter with men of the underworld - kidnappers, armed robbers, etc. It may be a civil disorder, a violent student demonstration, lock-out or sit-in strike or industrial action, or a space exploration. It may be about a day in the life of a student or a professional.

Narratives must take one of the following four forms:

1. facts;
2. fiction;
3. autobiography; and
4. reminiscences.

Find out what is involved in writing each of the above types of narratives.

ITQ

Narrative essay is most commonly concerned with the past only. True or False

Feedback

False. Narrative essay is most commonly concerned with the past and may also concern itself with the present or even the future.

14.1.1 Use of Tense in Narratives

The success of your narrative essay will depend, to a large extent, on the appropriateness of your vocabulary. In addition, you need to use appropriate tense forms. As stated above, most narratives will give account of events of the past. So, appropriately, the tense of most narratives is past. However, since events may also take place in the present and the future, the writer must adopt the appropriate tense for his narrative.



Note

Note also that, like other forms of writing, the narrative hardly exists in its pure form. So, you should expect to find some description and exposition in narratives. Similarly, when you write your own narrative, be free to use expository narrative in form.

Finally, your narrative must have a focus. By focus, we mean that there should be a specific aspect of events toward which you must direct your reader's attention, that is, what you want him to see; what you don't want him to miss.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we considered the narrative essay. We showed how it differs from other types of essays. We have also emphasized the point made earlier about the interrelationships of the various types. We have suggested ways in which you can write your own narrative essays.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 14.1 (tests Learning Outcome 14.1)

What are the features of narrative essays

Bibliography



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Study Session 15

Descriptive and Argumentative Essays

Introduction

In this study session, we will be looking at two types of essay writing; descriptive and argumentative essays. We will look at the role of paragraphing in these two types of essay.

Learning Outcomes



Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

15.1 *write* good descriptive essays

15.2 *create* a good argumentative essays

Terminology

Argumentative essay	A genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.
Descriptive essay	A genre of essay that asks the student to describe something—object, person, place, experience, emotion, situation, etc.

15.1 Descriptive Essays

A descriptive essay is intended to evoke reality by 'calling up' the image of what the writer has seen, experienced, felt or touched. A descriptive essay also aims at conveying information, impressions, feelings, emotions, and sensations rather than ideas. In your discipline, as most other disciplines, you are likely to be called upon to engage in extended description. This type of description spans (that is, covers) a number or paragraphs. Your descriptive essay may also have some narrative and expository paragraphs. This is normal and should be expected if you recall what we said about the nature of essays.

The writer of the descriptive essay has been described as an artist. That is what he is in a sense. However, while the conventional artist use his conventional tools - paint and brush - to create his images, the descriptive

creates his own images through a careful and deliberate choice of words which are carefully put together in “painting” the picture in the mind of the reader. You should be aware that the description may be technical rather than informative. When you engage in technical description, particularly of people, your descriptive essay merely touches on the superficial. This is the type of description given by the police when an accused is declared wanted. This type of description merely helps the reader to 'identify'; it does not help him to know the object of description. For instance, a technical description of a person will concentrate on the physical; outward make-up of the person; his height, weight, complexion; shape and size of the head; colour, size and shape of the hair; colour and size of the eyeballs; length, thickness of the eyebrow, shape and size of the mouth; skin tones of the cheeks, etc. But an informative description will go beyond this to include the attributes of the person, who he is, what he is, how he will predictably react to situations; what excites him or what may court his displeasure.

15.1.1 The Role of Perception and Vocabulary in Description

Effective description depends upon good perception and on a vocabulary that is adequate to convey the experience in concrete specific terms.

Perception

It may sound strange to you that not many people who go about with their two eyes wide open actually see. Perception calls for curiosity on the part of an observer; requires the use of all the sense, particularly the sense of sight. Perception enables the perceiver to have a closer look at a familiar object and see the object from a different perspective each time the closer look is taken.

Vocabulary

As stated above, words are the essential tools that the writer of description uses to paint his picture. Thus, the writer's medium (words) is used to build up the image bit by bit to create the desired effect. Since the writer is interested in making his image vivid to the reader, he should freely talk about size, colour, shape and texture. Word must be put together to make the situation, objects, people and places described look real.

15.1.2 Forms of Descriptive Writing

Descriptive essays are either factual or personal. When *factual*, the descriptive essay presents things, objects or persons as they are. The writer is an objective observer. In this type of description, there should be no room for personal perceptions, associations or impressions. The factual description proclaims; "this is the way it is". The purpose of factual writing is to present information. Its approach is objective and dispassionate. Coverage of the subject matter is matter-of-fact. The language is clear and simple. It appeals to the understanding of the reader. This type of descriptive writing is found mainly in science, therefore, descriptive can be referred to as scientific description The

coverage is complete and exact.

The *personal* description assumes that objects are a product of the writer's imagination. Objects are, therefore, what the perceiver thinks they are or sees them to be. This form of descriptive writing is also called the literary form. Its purpose is to present an impression. The approach is subjective and interpretative. The writer colours his perception and its appeals to the senses. The tone of the writing may be emotional and the author selective. Language is rich and suggestive. This form of description is found in plays, poems, short stories as well as in personal narratives.

ITQ

What comparison exists between a descriptive essay writer and an artist?

Feedback

The comparison is in the aspect of “painting”. The conventional artist use his conventional tools - paint and brush - to create his images, the descriptive essay writer creates his own images through a careful and deliberate choice of words which are carefully put together in “painting” the picture in the mind of the reader.

15.2 The Argumentative Essay

In this type of essay, the writer's intentions are clear: he wants to create impressions where there were on before or change attitudes or reinforce them. It is a persuasive essay. Though the writer's presentation of logical reasons, the reader is persuaded to take a particular lieu of action. In this form of essay, like in all types of essay, the writer must take his audience into consideration. He also needs to convince them that a problem exists, that the problem concerns the man, that he, the writer, is interested in the audience and their problem. He must also demonstrate that he has a solution to their problem. The argumentative essay may be open. By this we mean that the writer is expected to consider the various sides to the issue. He is thus expected to argue for and against before finally taking sides. Essay topics such as: 'Should University Education attract tuition (that is fees)? 'Should drug trafficking attract death penalty?' 'Are politicians the devils they are said to be?' are said to be open because they expect the writer to present the two sides of the coin, to argue for or against. In this type of essay, the writer has to make up his mind first on what side of the argument he will finally conclude. This point is important because this stand must, at least, be hinted at from the introductory paragraph. The writer's argument must also weigh more heavily on the side on which he wants to conclude. This implies that while the writer must have arguments on both sides, his argument must be more concrete on the side of the argument where he wants to learn. If he wants to conclude 'for', he must have more points and a stronger argument 'for' than 'against'.

15.2.1 Introduction

You need to establish your purpose in the introductory part of the essay. Therefore, your introduction must be apt, purposeful and testing. You also need to recognize (appreciate) the needs of your audience and try to meet those needs as suggested earlier.

15.2.2 The Body

Here you need to do your 'persuading' and 'convincing'. You need to advance reasons 'for' or 'against' the proposition of the essay. The audience requires proofs, evidence from various sources as well as illustrations, facts, and figures. You required these to convince them that your claim is true. Also, at this stage, you must avoid potentially disagreeable points. You may delay this till towards the end of the essay so that the audience does not get alienated.

15.2.3 Conclusion

Here, you need to re-emphasize the points you have already made, review what others have said which you have recognized in the body of the essay. Having done this, you need to give a summary of your personal opinion on the subject matter of your argumentation. Finally, you need to take a categorical stand.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed descriptive and argumentative essay. We started by defining a descriptive essay. In doing this, examined the role of perception and vocabulary in descriptive essay. We also pointed out the different forms of descriptive writing. Moving on, we discussed the argumentative essay. We looked at the introduction, the body and conclusion.

Assessment



Assessment

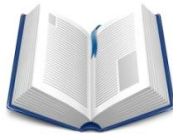
SAQ 15.1 (tests Learning Outcome 15.1)

What makes a good descriptive essay?

SAQ 15.2 (tests Learning Outcome 15.2)

How will you clearly present your thoughts in an argumentative essay?

Bibliography



Reading

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Notes on Self Assessment Questions

SAQ 1.1

To be a good writer, the following are necessary: knowledge of English's parts of speech including form and function; of forms of tense; and of the nature and functions of agreement or concord in the English Language.

SAQ 1.2

Writing is an expressive skill because we use it to express our thoughts; to give information to other people.

SAQ 1.3

The four structural elements in English sentence are Subject, Predicator (verb), Object, Complement, and Adjunct.

SAQ 2.1

- i. Complex sentence
- ii. Compound-complex sentence
- iii. Compound-complex sentence
- iv. Compound-complex sentence
- v. Complex sentence
- vi. Complex sentence
- vii. Compound sentence
- viii. Compound sentence
- ix. Simple sentence
- x. Simple sentence

SAQ 3.1

A pronoun reference is said to be ambiguous when it is not clear which of two possible antecedents the pronoun refers to.

SAQ 3.2

Faulty parallelism occurs when the elements joined by a conjunction are not similar in structure.

SAQ 4.1

When there is a modifier structure in a sentence, and the modifier has no apparent word to modify, or when it appears to modify the wrong word or phrase, the modifier is said to be dangling.

SAQ 4.2

A modifier is misplaced when the modifiers are placed too far from the element(s) they modify in a sentence.

SAQ 4.3

Sentences are fused when they are allowed to run together without any punctuation mark to separate them, and when they lack the necessary connecting word. Regarding comma splice, the error occurs when two sentences are linked with a comma.

SAQ 5.1

Identify the place where the following errors were shifted:

1. Shift in person (If you want to succeed in life, you must work hard).
2. Shift in tense (I told her she might not see me again)
3. Shift in number (Any girl that thinks she can snatch my husband will pay dearly).
4. Shift in voice (My son loves me and his mother loves him too).
5. Shift in mood (He advised the Christian politician to file his nomination papers on time for the next election and prove, once, again that to a Christian politician; politics can be a service to humanity).

SAQ 6.1

A paragraph is made up of related sentences; it is essentially a functional entity; it enables both writer and reader to break large printed materials into manageable proportions. Revert to SS 66.1 for more.

SAQ 6.2

Your paragraph should be only as long as it is enough to explain its central idea. As soon as your paragraph has adequately developed its topic or central idea, it should be concluded.

SAQ 7.1

An introductory paragraph is a paragraph in which the writer indicates his purpose or plan in the discourse. Transitional paragraphs, therefore, provide a link with what was said in the preceding paragraph while at the same time, they prepare the reader for what is about to be said. Concluding paragraph provides a re-statement of the most essential ideas presented, or issues raised in the essay, paper or chapter. A defining paragraph serves to provide a clear meaning of a word, a concept, a term, a theory or a principle.

SAQ 8.1

1. b
2. d
3. False.

SAQ 9.1

The above thought is less qualified as a paragraph, because it arouses an expectation which it fails to fulfil.

SAQ 9.2

Cause-and-effect relationship

SAQ 9.3

The need to develop your paragraph through extended definition usually arises because you want to clarify your idea, principle, or concept; or because the meaning of such ideas, principles, or concepts does not enjoy a universal notion.

SAQ 9.4

Steps-in-a process pattern of paragraph development.

SAQ 10.1

Restatement

SAQ 10.2

When the contrast method is chosen

SAQ 10.3

Paragraph through enumeration

SAQ 10.4

The topic sentence is woven around **“the call for the proscription of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad”**.

SAQ 11.1

The required activities towards the composition of an essay include:

Choosing the topic; gathering of material for the essay; and Outlining the Material. See SS 11.1 for details.

SAQ 12.1

The following were suggested in SS 12.1:

Let your introduction leads the reader directly into the topic of the essay ad clarifies the topic; or introduce the topic of your essay in a way that it will wrap up the main divisions of your outline, as a way of stating the central idea and the main pattern of the organization of your essay.

SAQ 13.1

Expository essays are those essays which are written essentially to convey information. They define, explain, and analyse knowledge, ideas, facts, problems and situations. In writing an expository essay, parts of what to be considered are:

1. Comparing and contrasting
2. Use of definition
3. Deploying steps-in-a-process

Related expository essay topics were suggested in SS 13.1.3. It will enhance your knowledge if you can give some of them a try. Good luck.

SAQ 14.1

The features of narrative essays are centred on the physical and the imaginary idea of the world and its components. These include: Character or characters, Places or scenes, Time sequence. Revert to SS 14.1 for more on this.

SAQ 15.1

A good descriptive essay creates own images through a careful and deliberate choice of words which are carefully put together in “painting” the picture in the mind of the reader. Apart from this, a good descriptive essay is known for its good perception and vocabulary that is adequate to convey the experience being described in concrete specific terms. For more insight, revert to SS 15.1

SAQ 15.2

To present one’s thoughts clearly in an argumentative essay, the writer must take his audience into consideration. He/she also needs to convince them that a problem exists, that the problem concerns the man/woman, that he/she, the writer, is interested in the audience and their problem. He must also demonstrate that he has a solution to their problem.