UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

AN ANALYSIS OF PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE IN S.H.S. ONE STUDENTS' WRITINGS: THE CASE OF AGONA EAST DISTRICT

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A thesis submitted in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Communication, Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the award of degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Teaching English as a Second Language)
in the University of Education, Winneba

AUGUST, 2019

DECLARATION

I, **WINFRED BAIDEN,** declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: …………………………………

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.
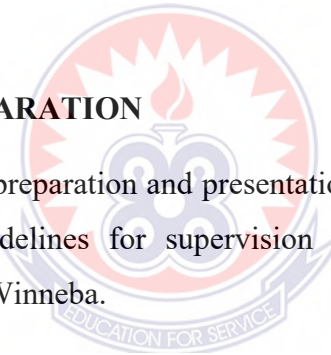
NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. KWAKU OFORI

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DATE: …………………………………

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Robert Quainoo, my children:

Joshuanna, Nhyira, Aseda and Adom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To God, the giver of knowledge who enabled me to work assiduously towards the success of this work, glory and honour be to you.

My profound gratitude goes to you, my able supervisor, father, advisor and teacher of all times Nana Dr. Kwaku Ofori of Applied Linguistics Department, University of Education, Winneba, for your helpful suggestions, comments, inspirations and encouragement. Also, worthy of mentioning at this stage is Dr. Fofo Lomotey for her criticism during our presentations.

My unending gratitude to Dr. Rebecca Akponglo-Nartey, Dr. Asante and all the lecturers in the Applied Linguistics Department.

Finally, to the teachers and students who participated in the interviews and the collection of data, I salute you all.
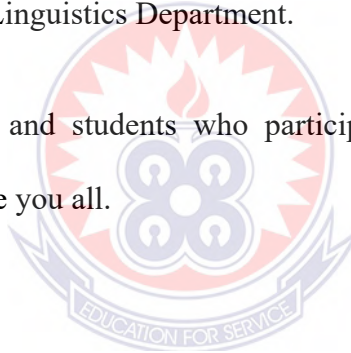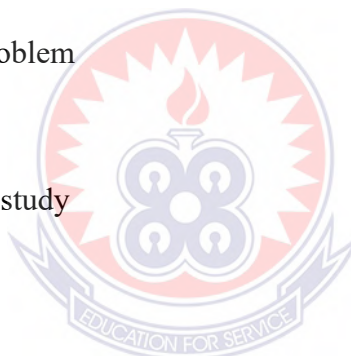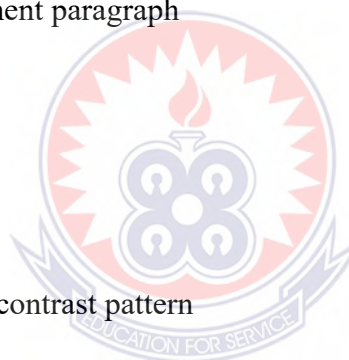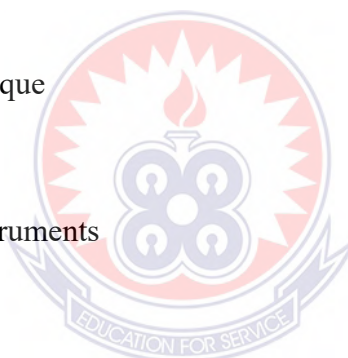
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the paragraph structures of S.H.S.one students in the Agona East District of the Central Region. The study focused on paragraph structure, topic sentence, supporting sentences and the concluding sentence. Patterns of paragraphing difficulties were also investigated in the research. Qualitative research approach was used. Major findings included students' inability to demonstrate in writing explicit knowledge on paragraph structure; writing without topic sentences, multiple topic sentences that appeared within the paragraph, violations in the principles of unity including ideas foreign to the topic under discussion. Some of the paragraphs were not adequately developed. Students wrongly positioned supporting sentences and these affected the logical flow of the sentences in the paragraph. Again, with the patterns of paragraphing, students had difficulties with compare and contrast pattern, definition pattern and process pattern just to mention a few. Suggested teaching strategies in teaching paragraphing have been included in this research work.
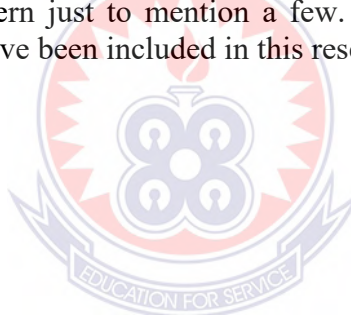
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Language has been an essential tool in human communication from the dawn of human history and the study of its various elements and accurate usage has become a vast field of study in academia. The English language, that has won it way into the competition of trans-national communication, presents its various aspects, including paragraph structure and development for academic research. It is in line with this that the researcher desired to conduct a study into the area of paragraph structure among selected students in some senior high schools in the Agona East District.

This chapter discusses a brief overview of language, its importance to mankind and English being used globally and as an official language. The rest of the chapter is devoted to background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and organization of the study.
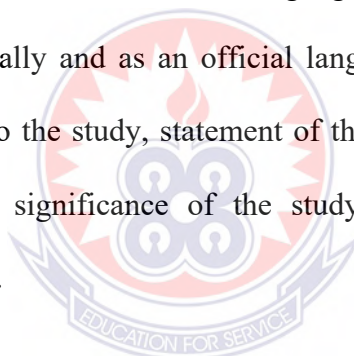
1.1 Background to the study

Language is "a set of finite and infinite sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements". Chomsky (1957, p.13; Lyons, 1981, p.36) these elements include the grammar, sound patterns, semantics etc. whilst Akpanglo-Nartey (2002, p.3) defines language as "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication". These elements and symbols, according to both writers provide the bases for effectiveness in all communications. The most reliable means through which the elements of culture are transmitted from generation to generation is language. Language is basically a system of communication where sounds or signs

convey objects, actions and ideas. This makes it important to teach and learn all the relevant aspects of language.

One can trace the history of English Language in Ghana as the language for trade, education, governance, and as a cross-ethnic lingua franca according to Sey (1973), Boadi, (1994) and Sackey (1997). Adjaye (2005) points out that in the sixteen century, the British had already stepped foot in the Gold Coast (as Ghana was then called).When the British first arrived in the early part of the sixteen century, like the Europeans who had arrived before them, they trained some of the inhabitants as interpreters. It is indeed from this perspective that Boadi (1994) describes the English used in Ghana in the early years as "Mercantile English" with the limited possibility of being "the precursor of the educated English varieties used in West Africa today." (Boadi, 1994, p. 33-45)

Later, the British elbowed their European competitors out of business and acquired their forts and castles. These buildings were subsequently used to house schools for the teaching of English to the inhabitants on a more structured basis. (Sackey, 1997) Sackey also points out that some of these English schools, especially the ones in Cape Coast, survived into colonial times because of the extraordinary effort of Philip Quarcoe, who gave his students lessons in reading, writing, and the study of the Bible. The colonial and missionary language policy also contributed to the consolidation of English in the country. Of significance is the role of one Reverend Denny who became schoolmaster of the Cape Coast Castle School in 1824. He advocated the exclusive use of English in the school, violations of which attracted a penalty. Some of the penalties were that:

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    i.   the funds for these schools were denied by interest groups who advocated for the teaching of the English Language.

    ii.   the money would go to schools that taught English and did not stress on the local languages.

At the same time, the missionaries also saw the use of English as vital in their missionary work; therefore, English was used in several Wesleyan mission schools. Two educational ordinances were passed in 1822 and 1887 respectively and that introduced the English Language into the educational system. Financial support in the form of grants was given to schools established by the missionaries and private persons. Accounts indicate that schools which used the indigenous languages as mediums of instruction could not qualify for financial support. Leadership in the Colonial Office in Britain felt that, instruction in the native language could be left to the stimulus of self-interest and government subsidies were not needed to encourage them. From there, the use of English Language became compulsory to be used in schools.

English is used as an international language and some countries use it as a foreign language and others as a lingua franca. It is widely used on the internet. Circumstances have compelled many countries to adopt English as a national language.

In Ghana, it is used in commerce, in the legislature, judiciary, learned profession, media and other institutions. In the formal education setup, it is the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. English language learning has become very important to every school going child from the basic school to the university. It also serves as a vehicle for learning, understanding and gaining competences in all

subjects in the school curriculum. English has been and continues to be the foundation for all academic work. It is extensively used in international and internal competitive examinations. There are four basic skills in the English language. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The receptive skills are the listening and reading whilst speaking and writing are productive skills. Writing can be found in almost all the world's languages. English, as one of the dynamic global languages emphasizes the importance of writing in different settings and contexts. Writing is one of the productive skills with regard to the English language, and it is widespread and critical, particularly in the area of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) since it is used to communicate and express the ideas of the learners (Meyers, 2009; Harmer, 2004). There are many significant aspects of writing, and these include aside others:

Writing is a skill that every student needs to acquire. Every learner is expected to acquire this important skill to make the individual literate. Acquiring this skill will make the individual know some of the writing conventions (e.g. punctuations, grammar rules and paragraph construction).It is considered to play a vital role in someone's academic achievements. For instance, writing a letter for application or responding to an advertisement.

Again, having mastered listening, speaking, and reading skills, a language learner should master writing skill because mastering all language skills, including writing skill, will make him/her more competent in a language. In other words, a good language learner is required to have all the four language skills completely. Consequently, all skills are further practised and improved (Meyers, 2009). In writing, almost all the skills are applied: listening, speaking and reading. Moreover, since language systems such as grammar and vocabulary are integral parts of writing, both

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are used within writing and this may help the learners to develop their English in general (Harmer, 2004). Another important aspect of writing for the learners is writing for the sake of writing (Harmer, 2004). In other words, there are some other areas of language such as punctuation and capitalization that are essential in writing. It is through writing that learners can know more about the use of punctuation and capitalization.

In addition, writing skill is considered to play a role in the learner's academic achievements. Related to learning to write, Harmer (2004) says that writing should be taught for several reasons. First, writing is useful for reinforcement. Most students acquire a language from seeing the language written down. The students even often find it useful to write sentences using new language shortly after they have studied it. Harmer (2004) again posits that writing is also useful for language development. The actual process of writing helps the students to learn as they go along. The mental activity they have to go through in order to construct a proper written text is all part of the ongoing learning experience.

Harmer (2004) explains that writing can be a quite reflective activity. Some language learners will be able to master a language if they have experiences using the language, like writing activity. With this, when one is exposed to writing, the person sees his mistakes and reflects on the good that should be done.

According to Harmer (2004), writing provides a learner with physical evidence of his achievements and he can measure his improvement. Any write-up is a physical evidence of one's achievement. In a school setting where a student's written work is poorly done, the teacher marks and corrects it and this helps the learner to improve his or her writing. It helps to consolidate their grasp of vocabulary and structure and

complements the other language skills. In other words, there are some other areas of language such as punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing that are essential in writing. Through writing, learners can know more about the use of punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing and other areas of language proficiency.

At last, writing is essential for almost all the lessons they study in school, so its study enhances their learning. In most of the cases, examinations are in written form rather than oral. The more ability they have in terms of writing, the more success they may achieve in their tests. This is in addition to the fact that writing is useful for their future careers.

Further, paragraphing is an essential element in any academic writing, and good essays are made of well-developed paragraphs. In fact, the cardinal rule of paragraph writing is to focus on one idea. A solidly written paragraph takes its readers on a clear path, without detours. A paragraph is a group of related sentences serving two important purposes: paragraphs join sentences into a unit that works to support an essay's main idea or thesis; paragraphs provide breaks that allow readers to pause and make sense of what they are reading. Because paragraphing is a unit, when people read, they pause to make meaning of what they have read. By thinking in the units of the paragraphs, he is encouraged to look more deeply into his message and be able to divide it up into various issues or points.

Again, an essay with jumbled ideas strewn in the various paragraphs affects readability; thereby putting the reader off, and also giving a bad impression about the writer. The ability to write with clarity and finesse is an asset that every student must strive to have. This is because it is incumbent on every writer to package the different pieces of information into well- organized paragraphs for the write-up to be readable.

Anything contrary will affect readability because readers may not know and understand how sub-ideas derived from the thesis of the essay have been partitioned. This calls for a sound knowledge in the construction of paragraphs in essays. (Sarfo-Adu, 2015)

Students in the Secondary Schools are expected to write good paragraphs based on their exposure in the Junior High Schools. It is however unfortunate that form one students who learnt paragraph development in the J.H.S. and passed their Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.EC.E.) successfully and are in the Secondary School have major challenges in writing paragraphs. The root of poor paragraphing can be traced down to their background. Personal interviews with the Kwanyako Senior High students indicate that most of them came from low endowed public basic schools and that affected their academic performance. Most students further asserted that they did not have libraries in their schools and that has affected their reading and writing skills. Again, some students told the researcher that in their former schools, they wrote essays once in a term and sometimes these essays would not be marked. As a result, they do not even know their challenges in relation to paragraphing. Their lack of exposure had made some of them developed negative attitude towards writing and to think of good paragraphing in writing. A student raised a concern that in his former school, they wrote the essay for the teacher before she would discuss the essays with the students and this made him to hate writing essays. Since compositions are part of the English Language course, he managed to pass to the Secondary School and lamented on the approach that his teacher used.

With the foregoing, it is not surprising for students under study to have challenges with paragraphing and it is upon this background that the researcher would like to

investigate how S.H.S.one students in the Agona East District structure their paragraphs and find realistic solutions to these problems.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The first year students in the green track shift system in Kwanyako Senior High school have challenges with paragraph development. The empirical evidence of poor paragraphing work was identified when the researcher gave the students a diagnostic test. The question was "Write a letter to your friend in another school telling him or her about your new school". After marking the scripts, the researcher identified that some of the topic sentences were underdeveloped, and the development of the entire paragraph was also problematic. Several people have worked on paragraph development and these include: Adika (1999) and Appiah (2000). They researched into paragraphing as found in students' essays. They assessed the discourse level problems of expository text of first year students of the University of Ghana, Legon and the University of Cape Coast respectively. They found that although majority of the students were able to introduce their paragraphs with topic sentences, they introduced several unrelated ideas into the paragraphs. Paragraphs were either underdeveloped or had problems with conjunctive markers, and lacked inter-personal connectives.

Sarfo-Adu (2015) investigated paragraph writing skills among Polytechnic Students. The study showed that seventy nine (79) essays representing 66% used a definite topic sentence followed by supporting sentences while forty-one (41) essays representing 34% had problems with paragraph development. The conclusion drawn from the results was that polytechnic students have a fair idea of structuring a paragraph.

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Brenya (2015) looked at the paragraph writing skills among the second year students of Namong Senior High Technical School. Her findings were that: lack of vocabulary and expressions to digest the ideas, teachers' inability to teach effective paragraph development and lack of reading by students were the causes of poor paragraphing work. Though a lot of works have been done on paragraphing, no research work has been done on paragraphing in Agona East District. This work seeks to ascertain how S.H.S. one students in the Agona East District structure their paragraphs.

1.3. Research objectives

The objectives for this research are:

1. Assess students' knowledge of the structure of the paragraph.

2. Examine the students' difficulty with the construction of different paragraph patterns

3. Examine ways of improving paragraphing among the first year students in Agona East District.
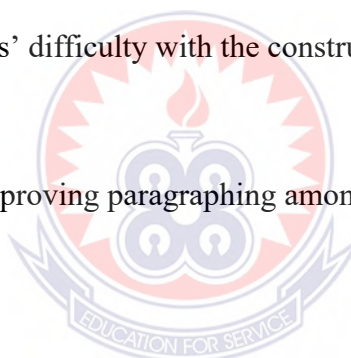
1.4 Research questions

These research questions have been developed to guide the researcher.

1. What type of structures of the paragraph do students create in their writings?

2. What difficulties do students have in the construction of different paragraph patterns?

3. What are the strategies that can be used to improve paragraphing among the first ear students in Agona East District?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is significant in many ways. In the first place, the study will help the researcher to identify how students structure their paragraphs and other problems

associated with paragraph development. In discovering students' challenges with paragraphing, it will help the researcher to adopt pedagogical skills in teaching paragraph development in the Kwanyako Senior Technical and also make recommendations to her colleague English teachers in the school and other English teachers in sister schools in the district where the research was done. Again, the research work will benefit the students because the teachers will be aware of the students' problems in relation with paragraph development and therefore better strategies would be adopted in teaching paragraph development and this will help them improve their writing skills and boost their confidence in writing.

Again, the results and findings that will arise from this work may serve as a very useful source of information and reference to teachers who have problems in teaching paragraph development.

Further, it will provide information to curriculum developers or planners for language arts, especially when it comes to paragraph development. The instructional strategies in teaching paragraph development and the frequency that should be taught would be looked at. This necessitates the need for this topic to be taught at all levels.

Finally, it will serve as a reference material for future researchers to use as a basis for their study.

1.6 Limitations

The data collection had the following limitations: The whole research work was done during the school hours and the researcher had to move from one school to the other in order to gather data. In a particular school, the researcher went to the school early in order to have access to the students. Interviewing some students and teachers were

a herculean tasks because they were not willing to give her information of which the researcher had to explain in real terms. Some students could hardly express themselves in the English Language so interviewing them was a problem especially when they had to explain something or situation candidly. With this, the researcher at times had to use the (L1) for clarification for the interviews in a particular school.

1.7 Delimitation

The study is restricted to the Senior High Schools in the Agona East District so any researcher can conduct similar research in the nearby municipal, Agona West. There are four Senior High Schools in the District and each school has about twenty five or twenty six form one class. The present form one class is made up of green and gold stream (track).Since the researcher teaches in the green stream (track), she randomly sampled twenty participants from two classes in each of the four schools and had one hundred and sixty respondents in all. The researcher would have wished to extend the research to all the form one classes since they were all available but time did not make it possible therefore the researcher limited herself to only to one hundred and sixty students.

More so, though there are other problems in language teaching and composition writing, the researcher delimited this research to paragraphing development.

1.8 Organization of the study

The study is in five chapters. Chapter one deals with background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and organization of the study. Chapter two discusses the literature review of the study. In this chapter, various definitions are outlined and the structure and the types of paragraphing are discussed extensively. Chapter three

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looks at the methodology. In chapter three, the methods or the procedures that were used to gather the data are described. Chapter four discusses and analyses the result of the study. The chapter deals with the findings of the research, conclusions drawn, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

According to Gborsong, Gogovi, Yankah, and Essel (2017, p.25), "writing is one of the aspects of English language. In school, we first learn to write letters of the alphabet and to combine letters to form words, phrases to clauses or sentences. Finally, we learn to combine sentences to form a paragraph and a number of paragraphs together to form an essay". Paragraphing is an essential element in any academic writing. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that "paragraph gives structure to a piece of writing".

From this we can infer that learning to use the English Language especially in written communication, requires a step by step process that culminates in using paragraphs that form the basis for any essay writing exercise, whilst Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) points to the importance of paragraphing when he stated that "it gives structure to a piece of writing". Paragraphs in the essay help readers to identify the introductory paragraph, body paragraph and the concluding paragraph.

However, an essay with jumbled ideas strewn in the various paragraphs affecting readability, thereby putting the reader off and also giving a bad impression about the writer. Sarfo-Adu (2015).The main focus of this research is expressing peoples' opinions about paragraph structure and development. Various authors and language teachers have expressed their views about paragraph structure and development. This chapter thus focuses on reviewing literature related to the work under study. Areas that the researcher would look at include definitions of paragraphing/paragraph, importance of paragraphing, indentation of the paragraph, paragraph structure,

elements of a paragraph, the topic sentence, body paragraphs, concluding paragraphs, types of paragraphs, paragraph patterns, strategies/ methods of teaching paragraphing, theoretical framework/theories of paragraphing, review people's work.

2.1 Definitions on paragraphing

The paragraph has been defined variously by different writers since there is no universally accepted definition. Angus (1862) defines paragraph "as a combination of sentences, intended to explain, illustrate, or prove, or apply some truth; or to give a history of events during any definite portion of time, or relation to any one subject of thought quoted by Duncan (2007, p.111) This is simplified in the writings of Warriner (1982)who defines paragraph as "a physical division of a composition, marking a stage in a writer's thought". They both agree on the single thought the paragraph should present.

Further, Bain (1886) defined it as "a collection of sentences with unity of purpose" quoted by Duncan (2007)"giving further elaboration by Crew (1987) as "a group of sentences which has the ultimate goal of ensuring that the single idea that has been raised is wholly explained, combining illustration, example or figures to make it sound substantial to the reader".

Forlini and Bauer (1990) defines it as a group of sentences linked by a simple main idea whilst Clouse (1993) details it "as a group of sentences that develop one central idea, with most paragraphs divided into two parts, where one part presents a central point and the other supporting the central point. Forlini and Bauer's definition gives a clear distinction between the key ideas from the illustrative ones.

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Meiser (1998) sees paragraph as a group of sentences that talks about a single topic. It could be a short essay requiring no further development. In an expanded form, Lunsford and Connor (2003) state that a paragraph is "a group of sentences that form a unit". With this, the units should exhibit unity, coherence and adequacy of ideas, and this makes an ideal paragraph. This is what Bailey (2003) has summarized "as a group of sentences that deal with a single idea". His emphasis is on dividing a text into paragraphs to help both the writer and the reader to follow the argument more clearly.

Opoku-Agyeman (2008) explains that a paragraph is the presentation of one main idea. Thoughts conveyed must have connection to the main idea and the main idea should have lending support and illustration. A similar argument illustrated by Oshima and Hogue (2006) that a paragraph is the basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of related sentences develop one main idea. The paragraph is the unit of organization of an essay. These two writers also agree on the main idea and the supporting sentences that are keys to every good paragraph. In reviewing these definitions, one would say that:

- A paragraph forms a basic unit of every writing or any composition.
- That unit should have a group of related sentences.
- These sentences should explain a point or an idea through the use of illustration, examples, evidence and figures to the reader.

2.2   Importance of Paragraphing

Bailey (2015) explains that paragraphs are building blocks of academic writing. He further explains that well-structured paragraphs help the reader to understand the topic more easily by dividing up the argument into convenient sections.

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Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) says that paragraphing helps the writer to organise his letter or passage. By thinking in the units of paragraphs, he is encouraged to look more deeply into his message and be able to divide it up into its various issues or points. The ability to divide a whole into parts helps one to delve deeper and be able to present ones message coherently.

According to Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), a paragraph gives structure to a piece of writing. It is a way to organise your thoughts, and to give clarity to your ideas. Paragraph gives structure like the topic sentence, the supporting sentences and the concluding sentence. This makes the individual's thoughts organization and identification easy in either writing or reading.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that paragraphing saves the writer from putting ideas together haphazardly. With this, the writer knows that only ideas that have a common focus can be admitted together into a paragraph or ideas must be arranged logically in order to achieve coherence.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) posits that paragraphing helps to identify one part of an issue from the other easily. This identification is useful because it helps the reader to follow the thread of the presentation of the author.

Djikunu (2006) explains that paragraphing in an essay helps both the writer and the reader by giving scope for the writer to showcase his or her knowledge of the topic in an organized and efficient manner. According to him, paragraph enables us to loosely segregate the topic into relevant subtopics and explore them briefly or in-depth based on our writing style and the purpose of the essay. Without any segregation, an essay might feel too cluttered, creating resistance in the reader from reading it thoroughly

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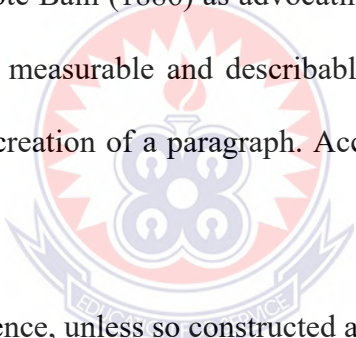
even when they are interested in the topic. An essay with paragraphs will provide less scope for the readers to lose interest.

2.3 Indentation of a Paragraph

Kirszner and Mandell (2003) posit that a paragraph should be indented and every sentence in it should begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Forlini and Bauer (1990) indicate that a paragraph is easily recognized since the first word of the sentence is often indented. Shelter, Martin, Krantz and Widmeyer (1981) share that one exceptional layout of the paragraph is the indentation of the first line.

2.4 Paragraph Structure

Rasheed et al. (2013) quote Bain (1886) as advocating that "the paragraph must have an ideal structure that is measurable and describable" and went on to postulate six principles to govern the creation of a paragraph. According to him, Bain's proposals are that:

i. The opening sentence, unless so constructed as to be obliviously preparatory is expected to indicate with prominence the subject of the paragraph. The beginning of each sentence upon what precedes shall be explicit and unmistakable

ii. When several consecutive sentences iterate or illustrate the same idea, they should, so far as possible be formed alike. This may be called the rule of parallel construction.

iii. a paragraph should be consecutive or free from dislocation.

iv. IV. A paragraph should possess unity; which implies a definite purpose and forbids

v. digression and irrelevance.

vi.   As in the sentence, so in the paragraph a due proportion should obtain between principal and subordinate statements.

O'Donnell and Paiva (1993) provide details about the essential parts for paragraph writing which include a topic sentence, details, logical order, logical connectors, concluding sentence. The ideas in the paragraph must be presented in logical order by using transitional words or connecting words which indicate the relationship between the ideas.

Despain (1991) posits that the structure of a paragraph parallels the structure of an essay in order as well as content. Both contain a coherent argument, supporting evidence/analysis, and a conclusion. Specifically, the contents of a paragraph are as follows: she argues that every paragraph should possess the topic sentence, the supporting sentences and the concluding observation.

According to Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), structured paragraphs link different parts of the essay or letter. They function to bring out the structure or the form of the essay and they do not discuss any particular point or issue. The structural paragraphs are:

- Introductory paragraph

- Body paragraph

- Transitional paragraph

- Concluding paragraph

Bailey (2003) explains that the components of a paragraph should have topic sentence, supporting sentences and a conclusion. For example, Topic sentence: The rate of home ownership varies widely across the country.

Example 1/ supporting sent.1: Germany, for instance, has one of the lowest rates at 42%, while in Spain it is twice as high, 85%. Example 2/supporting sent.2: Both the U.S.A. and Britain have similar rates of about 70%.

Reason/ supporting sent 3: the reasons for this variation appear to be more cultural and historic than economic, since high rates of accommodation are found in rich and poorer countries.

Conclusion sent: there seems to be no conclusive link between national prosperity and the number of home owners. (Bailey, 2015, p.87)

Reid (1994) talks of paragraph structure having introduction, body paragraphs and final paragraph. He summarized that, an introduction is the first thing your audience reads, so it needs to be clear, concise and engaging. Body paragraphs must be supported with evidence and examples with citations and a final paragraph state what the essay will argue about and is a direct response to the essay question. Concluding a paragraph to your essay does not need new information, arguments or citations.

2.4.1 Topic sentence

Bain (1886) advocated that the main idea of a paragraph should be embodied in the topic sentence and should appear at the beginning of the paragraph.

Warriner (1988) indicates that the topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph. The topic sentence states the topic and the writer's assertion or view about it. The topic sentence states the main idea directly limits it and restricts the entire paragraph in terms of content. The topic sentence indicates in a general way what idea or thesis the paragraph is going to deal with. Although not all paragraphs have clear-cut topic sentences, the act is that the topic sentences can occur anywhere in the

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paragraph. (as the first sentence, the last sentence or somewhere in the middle) An easy way to make sure your reader understands the topic of the paragraph is to put your topic sentence near the beginning of the paragraph. Regardless of whether you include an explicit topic sentence or not, you should be able to easily summarize what the paragraph is about.

Reid (1994) argues that the topic sentence is usually the first or second sentence of a paragraph. Occasionally, you may find it interesting or necessary to place the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that the topic sentence is a sentence usually at the beginning of a paragraph. It is a system in which the focus and structure of a paragraph is more or less announced usually at the beginning part. He further states that, there are two kinds of topic sentences. These are: the simple and complex topic sentences. The simple topic sentence just states the focus or subject of the paragraph without adding the form in which the rest of the paragraph is going to take. For example, "A major problem confronting the new nation is leadership" Sekyi-Baidoo (2003, p.159). On the other hand, complex topic sentence goes beyond this. It states in addition to the subject, the skeleton on which the succeeding part of the sentence would be based. In the complex, the role is sometimes performed by two sentences as in" A major problem confronting the new nation is leadership. Leadership here manifest in two ways: the traditional and the modern or I like my parliamentarian for three reasons. These are: honesty, dedication and humility". Sekyi-Baidoo (2003, p.159).

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017) explain that the topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph. You may find it at the beginning of the paragraph, in the middle or even at the end. Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017)

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describe the topic sentence as the controlling idea that the writer intends to develop and it must be one within the paragraph. It guides the writer because it contains the focus of the paragraph. It controls because it contains the focus of the paragraph. Not all paragraphs can have its topic sentence clearly stated especially like narrative or descriptive essays. Sometimes, the controlling idea may be implied.

Driscoll and Brizee (2014) define a topic sentence as a sentence that indicates the main idea or thesis of a paragraph. However, the easy way for your readers to understand you is to write the topic sentence near the beginning. They point that every topic sentence should answer the question "What is the main point, claim, argument or idea in this paragraph? How does this relate to the overall thesis, point, claim, argument or idea? Examples are:

In the paragraph below the topic sentence is located at the beginning.

"Two people influenced my growth as a musician. The first of these was my father, Mr. J. K. Baidoo. He bought musical instrument for me, as a child. I remember the recorder and the xylophone very well. My father was himself a fine bass singer and a teacher of hymns. In addition, he and Mama gave me all the freedom and encouragement I needed to develop in music. As an organist, 1 was guided and encouraged by Mr. J.H. Eshun. In addition to the exciting way in which he played, Uncle Eshun put his piano and music books at my disposal" Sekyi-Baidoo (2003,p.162)

The paragraph below illustrates topic sentences located in the middle of a paragraph.

"Our governments have spent so much of their nations' scarce resources buying fleets of expensive cars for their officials and faithfuls. The money used to maintain these vehicles which are so recklessly run only deprives the poor masses the more**. In fact, Africa governments are more intent on maintaining themselves and their selfish interests than developing their nations and their peoples**. Leaders have created infinite number of high class jobs- many of them useless and duplicating in order to reward and keep their faithfuls. You might even talk about the creation and maintenance of the so called revolutionary organs. Sometimes, in open defiance of the law, they perpetuate their criminal activities. These organs are very useful. . Our governments spend millions of dollars on personal and political security which they wittingly call it, "state security." They keep personal armies or battalions such as Nkrumah's President Own Guard Regiment and Rawlings' Reserve Battalion. These armies are blessed with massive training, equipment and remuneration. Contrasting this is the regular force which decays with deprivation. This situation doubtless puts the government and the leader before the peoples and the nation". Sekyi-Baidoo (2003, p.158)

In the paragraph below, the topic sentence is the last sentence in the paragraph.

"Quickly, the people of Kojokrom gathered the sheep and goat into the pens. The children rushed through the village gathering firewood to pile. Men and women fetched water from the riverside to fill the pots and containers as rapidly as possible. Finally, everybody stood together at the village square just before the warriors went to stand near the wall. And so **the people of Kojokrom prepared for the coming war".**

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017, p.35)

Gborsong, Gogovi, Yankah, and Essel (2017) explain that a topic sentence is good and useful if it is clear and tells the reader exactly what he is going to read about. One must learn to write topic sentences that enable you state clearly and precisely the type of information your paragraph contains and which excludes all information or details that are unnecessary. For example, "some parents can teach their children to value reading. This topic sentence is clear because it argues that some parents can teach their children to see how valuable or useful reading is. On the other hand, a topic sentence like "Isaw Mary Mensah last week" does not appear to be a good topic sentence because it is an open statement therefore the writer can say several things about Mary Mensah and what happened to her.

Djikunu (2006) explains that the topic sentence states one topic of a paragraph. The rest of the sentences are explanations, evidences, data and opinions to strengthen the idea in the topic sentence. With these definitions and explanations, one would say that a topic sentence is a guide to the paragraph. It introduces the main idea that would be discussed within the paragraph. Topic sentence gives the focus of the paper and so every good paragraph should have one topic sentence.

Braddock (1974) writes that the most influential of the non-topic sentence school of thought. He admonishes that not all essays demand the use of topic sentence and so teachers should stop instructing their students that most professional writers begin their paragraphs with topic sentences. The study concluded that that only 13% of expository paragraphs begin with a topic sentence, therefore teachers need to reassess the manner in which they teach reading and writing skills.

Again, Scott and Denney (1893) in their rejection of Bain's paragraph principles, kicked against the topic sentence being subjected to rigid and ironclad positional

constraints, and assert instead that, the topic sentence should be allowed to be mobile, not just in the first position. Similarly, D'Angelo (1986) cites to rubbish the importance of the topic sentence thus: "The topic sentence is a more or less fictitious entity. The topic sentence is something a reader extracts from a paragraph and something a writer has in mind as the unity he wants to achieve. "The schoolboy's notion of a topic sentence is like the big firecracker, from which a string of little firecrackers is ignited, has little relationship to the truth" (p.207). The quotation above downplays the value of a topic sentence by suggesting that it is the reader who extracts it from the paragraph in as much as the writer has in mind to use it to achieve unity. This kind of reasoning is rather spurious just as it is contradictory in that in one breath. D'Angelo acknowledges the topic sentence but in another breath they trivialize it as "a schoolboy's notion." "Contrary to their claim, much academic writing employs the topic sentence to signal paragraph topic. What is more, if we want to produce skilful readers, then it is imperative that we teach readers to find main ideas at the beginning of the paragraph because that is where they are frequently located" (Smith, 2008; Sarfo-Adu, 2015, p.148)

2.4.3 Supporting sentences

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that the supporting sentences support the topic sentence in realising its focus or aim. He further stated that the supporting sentences are divided into two according to their nature of their relationship to the focus. These are:

- The major support sentence
- The minor support sentence

He further explains that a major support sentence takes an element of the topic sentence and expands it. In a paragraph with complex topic sentence, the number of

major support sentences generally tallies with the number of points identified in the topic sentence. Thus, for the topic sentence:

- "I like my parliamentarian: his honesty, dedication and humility."

According to Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), in this example, three major supporting sentences are needed to explain each of the quality. The major supporting sentence divides the topic sentence up into its component. The above complex topic sentence may be broken into:

- "My parliamentarian's honesty is evident in the way he handles his share of the common fund.

- He is quite dedicated to his constituency and all its problems.

- Hon. Asiedu is blessed with a humility one really finds in someone of his caliber". Sekyi-Baidoo (2003, p.160).

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that, the minor supporting sentence expands or illustrates the idea of the major support sentence. "Every major supporting sentence has at least a minor support sentence which supports it. Its role is to develop the major support sentence. It supports it by giving us information that would help us to get a broader view what the major support sentence has. The minor support sentence indirectly supports the topic sentence or the controlling idea". Sekyi-Baidoo, (2003:161).

Arthur (2013) explains that the supporting details of a reading can be divided into major supporting details and minor supporting details, and they are found in the supporting paragraphs. If one distinguishes between major and minor supporting details, it helps in the understanding of the text. In most articles or essays, the major and minor details relate to the thesis statement.

Major supporting details: topic sentences in each body paragraph that support the thesis statement. Minor supporting details: sentences that support the major supporting details. When reading a longer essay, the thesis is included in an introductory paragraph and the major supporting details become topic sentences for distinct supporting paragraphs.

Reid (1994) posits that supporting evidence analysis makes ones claim digestible. The evidence you provide may be facts, quotations, summary of events or plot, etc. If the paragraph is evidence heavy, then you have adequately supported your claim. He explains that supporting details come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph and it should fit the context and flow with the paragraph. In summary, the supporting sentence is located in the body paragraph and it explains the topic sentence. It could be examples, illustrations, facts, evidence and quotations. Supporting sentences may be grouped into two: major and minor supporting sentences.
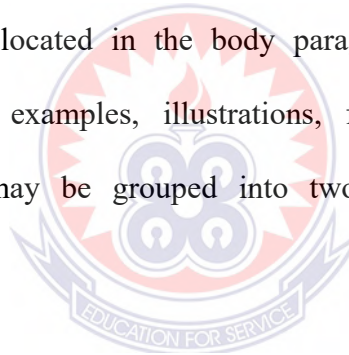
2.4. Concluding sentences

According to Reid (1994), "the concluding sentence summarizes the material, offers a solution to the problem, predicts a situation, makes a recommendation or states a conclusion".

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that "the concluding sentence comes at the end of the paragraph to do just what a concluding paragraph would do in an essay. It generally sums up or reiterates the focus of the paragraph. Concluding sentences can make deductions, refer to the cause of the issue which is the theme of the paragraph, suggest solutions, and take a stand or project into the future." He iterates that in the absence of topic sentence in the paragraph, the concluding sentence may be used as a topic

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sentence. According to Opoku-Agyeman (2008), conclusions to essays are made up of two parts: the first deals with a summary of the ideas discussed in the essay while the second makes a statement out of the findings.

2.5 Elements of paragraphing

In the nineteen century, Alexander Bain used the terms unity, coherence and adequacy to identify the qualities of effective paragraphs. Through his influence, coherence has been referred to in most composition text, vaguely as a quality of a paragraph which helps to establish unity. Rasheed et al (2013; Sarfo-Adu, 2015)

2.5.1 Unity

Crew (1987) indicates that the unified paragraph must have sentences working together in expressing an idea. The group of related sentences should have a link to the leading idea as any sentence that is not linked to the leading is a digression and enough to disrupt the effectiveness of the paragraph.

Warriner (1988) posits that a paragraph in which every sentence helps develop one main idea has unity therefore every sentence in a paragraph should directly relate to the idea to maintain that unity.

Appiah (2000) identifies two additional types, the implied and the emphatic. In the implied, the main idea is often not stated but the details of the sentence give the main idea. The reader is supposed to make inferences as to what the topic sentence is. The emphatic has two topic sentences, each often stated at the beginning and end of the paragraph.

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Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) maintains that "the unity of a paragraph is associated with its purpose". A paragraph shows unity when all the sentences, ideas and images are controlled by a single purpose or focus.

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017) explain that unity occurs when all the sentences work together to develop the main idea. Every sentence should clearly contribute to the point made in that paragraph".

In summary, one would say that the unity of a paragraph begins with the topic sentence. Every paragraph has one single idea and that is expressed in its topic sentence, which is typically the first sentence of the paragraph. A paragraph is unified around this main idea, with the supporting sentences providing details of the discussion. One can ensure unity when all the sentences work together to develop the main idea.

2.5.2 Coherence

Jones and Faulkner (1968) claim that "a paragraph is not a mere jumble of random statements but rather a series of ideas which interlock each sentence using linking expressions".

Hassan (1984) defines coherence as the property of unity of hanging together. The idea of coherence in a text therefore suggests that all pieces of information should be connected together for readers to see easily and understand fully.

Despain (1991) argues that in an expository essay "we can use coherence to describe the kind of writing that makes it easy for readers to move from one paragraph to another and from one major idea to another, always knowing what the author is doing".

Meyer, Sebranek and Kenyer (1992) express a similar view saying in writing, every sentence should fit together with these which come before and after it, giving a sense of oneness to whatever one is writing.

Wyrick (1999) says coherence means "to stick together". In writing, it means that ones thought flows smoothly into the next. One way to achieve coherence is with the use of connectors called transitional words or phrases that linked one sentence to another.

According to Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) coherence refers to the orderly or logical arrangement of sentences and ideas in a paragraph. A paragraph may have a single focus and thus exhibit unity, but still not considered a good paragraph if the ideas are haphazardly arranged. If a paragraph has coherence, it means the ideas are arranged in a way as to ensure some order.

Winkler (2006) also observes that a well written paragraph has coherence. Its sentences are not only clear and grammatically correct but they are also arranged so that the reader easily understands the flow of ideas.

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017) explain that" a paragraph has coherence when all the ideas follow smoothly. They express that coherence can be achieved through the use of pronouns or transitional markers.

One would say that sentences within a paragraph need to connect to one another and work together as a whole. To achieve this is to make use of transitional words. These words create bridges from one sentence to the next. You can use transitional words that show order (first, second, third); spatial relationships (above, below) or logic (furthermore, in addition, in fact).

Some of the connectives are listed below: Sekyi-Baidoo (2003, p. 152)

1. **To signal addition of ideas:** and, also, besides, further, furthermore, too, moreover, in addition, then, of equal importance, equally important, another, additionally, above all, more importantly, again, lastly,

2. **To signal time**: next, afterward, finally, later, last, lastly, at last, now, subsequently, then, when, soon, thereafter, after a short time, the next week (month, day, etc.), a minute later, in the meantime, meanwhile, on the following day, at length, ultimately, presently , later on, eventually, till, during, afterwards, lately

3. **To signal order or sequence :** first, second, (etc.), finally, hence, next, then, from here on, to begin with, last of all, after, before, as soon as, in the end, gradually

4. **To signal space and place:** above, behind, below, beyond, here, there, to the right (left), nearby, opposite, on the other side, in the background, directly ahead, along the wall, as you turn right, at the tip, across the hall, at this point, adjacent to

5. **To signal an example:** for example, to illustrate, for instance, to be specific, such as, moreover, furthermore, just as important, similarly, in the same way, to exemplify, to clarify, for instance, to cite an instance,

6. **To show results:** as a result, hence, so, accordingly, as a consequence, consequently, thus, since, therefore, for this reason, because of this

7. **To signal purpose:** to this end, for this purpose, with this in mind, for this reason, for these reasons

8. **To signal comparisons:** like, in the same manner or way, similarly, in like manner, in similar vein, equally

9. **To indicate contrast**: but, in contrast, conversely, however, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, and yet, on the other hand, of course, on the contrary, or, in spite of this, actually, a year ago, now, notwithstanding, for all that, strangely enough, ironically, on the contrary, as opposed to, in contrast, instead **10. To signal alternatives, exceptions, and objections:** although, though, while, despite, to be sure, it is true, true, I grant, granted, I admit, admittedly, doubtless, I concede, regardless, even though, all the same, despite, anyway, however, anyhow, nevertheless,

11. **To dispute:** it isn't true that, people are wrong to say that, deny that, be that, as it may, by the same token, no doubt, we often hear it said, many people claim, many people suppose, it used to be thought, in any case.

12. **To intensify:** above all, first and foremost, importantly, again, to be sure, indeed, in fact, as a matter of fact, as I have said, as has been noted. (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2003:152)

2.5.3 Adequacy/ Completeness

Jones & Faulkner (1968) assert that a paragraph can be said to be complete when it develops its central idea fully.

Rosen and Behrens (2000) say every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph controlling idea. Gould and Clifford (2001) maintain that each piece of writing must explain, expand and support its ideas. Sometimes facts or

logic is called for; it could sometimes be narration of events, definitions, explanations, examples, illustrations, etc.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) simply explains that a paragraph should not be too short that it cannot sufficiently prosecute the idea for which it was written. At the same time, it should not be too long, far more than necessary. If it is left with questions after reading the paragraph, the paragraph has not been adequately developed. A paragraph which consists of only two or three sentences is under-developed. Adequacy can be achieved through examples, illustrations, explanations, definitions and especially details.

Boamah (2004) also restates that depending on the purpose of the paragraph, the supporting details that will develop the paragraph may be in the form of anecdotes, examples, facts, statistics, sensory details or narrative details. All these details come together to enhance the development of the topic sentence. Conclusively, Completeness means a paragraph is well-developed. If all sentences clearly and sufficiently support the main idea, then the paragraph is complete. If there are not enough sentences or enough information to prove the point, then the paragraph is incomplete.

2.6 Types of paragraphing

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that paragraphs can be differentiated by their position and function in the discourse. These are the mainstream and structural paragraphs. The introductory and concluding as well as the transitional paragraphs are known as the structural paragraphs whilst the mainstream paragraphs contain topics or issues which are part of concerns of the topic is considered as types. He grouped these under

four manifestations: These are: descriptive, narrative, expository and persuasive paragraphs.

2.6.1 Descriptive Paragraph

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017) explain that descriptive paragraph use words that appeal to the sense to create a vivid picture of something in the mind of the reader. Descriptive paragraph makes use of imagery, sensory details; and the five senses. Similes and metaphors are commonly used in descriptive paragraphs. Descriptive paragraph describes a thing, a person, or a place. Detailed information allows the reader to form an image in his or her mind. In a descriptive paragraph, the writer uses sensory details such as sights, sounds, smells, tastes, feelings, and textures to create vivid images in the reader's mind. An experienced writer relies on sense memories of a specific experience to call to mind these details. The better the description, the clearer the image you are describing. In teaching students how to write a descriptive paragraph, it is advisable to let them consider the five senses of touch, smell, sound, taste, and sight. Before writing the paragraph, one can make five columns and list words or ideas for the subject of the paragraph based on these five senses.

Example: "It was all dins of noises-of machines and human speech. You had to listen carefully to hear another very well. Every person was moving and talking fast as though it had been announced the swift passage of time". Sekyi-Baidoo (2003,p. 392)

2.6.2 Narrative Paragraph

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) argues that a narrative paragraph does not necessarily occur in narrative essays though it is mostly found there. He further argues that a report or literal work can have narrative paragraphs which introduce some analysis. He states

that narration deals with telling a story or recounting an event in a chronological manner. It may be fiction or nonfiction. Here is an example: "I lifted the handset of the phone. The writing on the screen instructed me to insert my Westel card, which I did. After a moment, I was instructed again to remove it. I had no choice, just as I have always been, without one plea- I complied. A voice on the phone- I believe a recorded one-told me how many units I had. It asked me to dial my number, which I did with anxiety. The untiring and caring voice assured me my call was being processed. I was patient and for the first time I spoke on WESTEL". (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2003:401).

Yankah, Gborsong, Gogovi and Acquah (2017) explain that a narrative paragraph requires using your imagination and organizing the events in a way that will excite the reader. it has characters, setting, , plot, humour, suspense conflict and resolution. Time and place are usually established in a chronological way.

2.6.3 Expository paragraph

Arthur (2013) explains that the aim of expository writing is to explain or inform and there are four approaches to essay writing. These include: defining, comparing and contrasting, explaining a process and making a clear order.

According to Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), an expository paragraph explains, discusses, or exposes an idea, fact or point. It generally defines it as showing cause and effect of a fact or reality; compare two entities or more. He explains that expository does not occur necessarily in an expository essay but it could be part of descriptive, narrative or argumentative essay. Expository essay may take the form of definition, describing the form, operation and process (how does it work), reasoning, cause or effect and comparison.

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In a nutshell, expository writing analyzes and explains information to the reader. With emphasis on logic and organization, expository may take the form of descriptive, narrative or argumentative. A student may use a descriptive pattern, list items in numerical or chronological order, compare or contrast pattern and a combination of these patterns create an expository essay.

An example: "The piano operates by a process of interaction between a hammer and a string. To each key-black or white is attached to a hammer and a string. The strings are stretched to different densities or pitches. A depression of the key or note raises the hammer which by mechanism strikes the strings associated with it, and it sounds with a volume which corresponds to the force with which the key was depressed. Because the striking is a short instant activity the sound produced is short and does not have the fluidity of the organ. The piano is capable of sustaining its sounds in a way through its pedal. It has no stops but its range of octaves allows it to produce a variety of tones". (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2003:146)

2.6.4 Persuasive/Argument Paragraph

Schor and Summerfield (1986) outline that persuasive or argumentative paragraph tries to persuade readers to agree with the writer on a particular stand or position taken. They further explain that the writer needs to state facts and figures to support the stand taken.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that persuasive writings in general are aimed at moving the reader to make a particular choice or to take a particular course of action. He further explains that persuasive paragraphs occur generally at areas such as introduction, transitions and conclusions.

Arthur (2013) posits that an argumentative essay involves the presentation of two sides of an argument so as to offer a logical analysis and draw a conclusion. Its main purpose is to present one's viewpoint about an issue in such a way that one wins the support of others in reasoning.

In summary, persuasive paragraphing also known as the argumentative essay uses logic and reasoning to show that one idea is more legitimate than another. It attempts to persuade a reader to adopt a certain point of view or to take a particular action. The argument must always use sound reasoning and solid evidence by stating facts, giving logical reasons, using examples, and quoting experts.

2.7 Paragraph patterns

Forlini and Bauer (1990) claim that the pattern of the overall piece of writing strongly depends on the question: what the task words demand, how the thesis statement is presented, therefore it is important to have a good understanding of the task at hand before getting started. A decision is usually made in the planning stages as to how the overall argument will be presented. Some of the patterns are: as follows: space and time, definition, compare and contrast pattern, analysis, cause/effect, problem/solution, process pattern, order of importance pattern spatial order pattern.

Sakyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that all writing has a structure. This can be thought of as a specific format or how the writing is organized. It is important to understand this structure in order to fully comprehend the material written. If you know the organization of the piece of writing, you will better understand the author's message. Some of those include chronological order, order of importance, compare and contrast, and cause and effect.

Opoku-Agyeman (2008) explains that there are different ways in which a paragraph can be developed. These include: the direct, the pivoting and the suspended methods of pattern development.

2.7.1 Space and time

According to Forlini and Bauer (1990), "a paragraph is said to arrange ideas according to time when information flow is based on physical location. In this sense, ideas are arranged from former to latter. In telling a story, the chronology of events happening is important. They further claim that in a narrative paragraph, the arrangement of sentences in a paragraph should be such that a preceding sentence in a paragraph gives a clue to succeeding. They add that it is necessary to present information in a chronological order especially in a recounting of events as they unfold. It is important to note that in the narrative paragraph there should also be corresponding sequence of tense as well as chronology.

2.7.2 Definition

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that "a definition is usually an authoritative statement that describes a process or a thing as a generic and not an individual entity. You can define a process, phenomena or an idea. This pattern is also useful when you are introducing new or specialized terms to your readers or when you need to define a key concept in your thesis. A paragraph of definition aims to give a complete working definition of a term, concept or idea in your paper. One of the central features of this pattern is that it tells both what the term is and what is not, that is, it defines the boundaries of a term so the readers can better understand. The descriptive and expository paragraphs often use the definitions and descriptions to inform the reader about the subject or an entity.

2.7.3 Comparison and contrast pattern

A comparison pattern usually discusses the similarities between two things, whereas, the contrast pattern discusses the differences. This pattern of development is useful when you want to help readers understand a concept by pointing out similarities and differences between it and another concept. The comparison is usually developed either by analyzing all features of one concept and then comparing them to the features of the other. (A block comparison method) or by analyzing each point of comparison (a point by point method). It is important that, the comparison is simply a means to an end and that the conclusion of the paragraph should be drawn from your comparison. The argumentative paragraph brings out a point which competes with others for acceptance. In the argumentative paragraph, there is a perceived opposing idea which the writer seeks to conquer. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) says that audience is of prime interest to the writer. He iterates that the argumentative paragraph also aims favourable decisions of the reader.
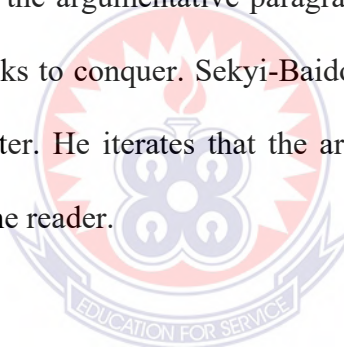
2.7.4 Analysis pattern

An assignment that asks for an analysis pattern divides the topic under discussion into sections and each section is presented in detail, analyzing the various components in separate paragraphs.

2.7.5 Problems and solutions patterning

This type of pattern outlines the problems in the introductory paragraphs and throughout the body of the text. The concluding paragraphs discuss and evaluate various solutions.

2.7.6 Cause and effect patterning

Cause and effect ordering is where a situation can be discussed by addressing the causes or reasons for the situation. The effects or results for the situation separately, or both causes and effects of the situation at the same time. Again, there is a connection between the causes and effects being explained. Questions like: "Is this the only thing that could cause this effect"? "Is this the only possible effect this cause could have"? The cause and effect pattern is better option when a process, an event, a concept is to be explained. In this pattern, transitions of logic (e.g. thus, therefore, consequently, as a result) and phrases like because, for the reason being that, given that, in effect) could be used.

2.7.7 Order of importance pattern

McWhorte (2005) also asserts that "ideas or steps are prioritized by the writer or speaker according to a hierarchy of value". When using the order of importance pattern of organization, information can be structured from most important to least important. Both structures would be considered as the order of importance text structure. Transitional words like less, more, primary, next, last, most important, primarily, secondarily can be used.

2.7.8 Spatial order pattern

Spatial organization is when information in a passage is organized in order of space or location. A good example is to describe the room in which you are sitting right now; you would be using spatial organization. Spatial organization may also be called descriptive writing and it is most frequently used when the narrator describes how something looks. Spatial organization is generally pretty easy to identify because it is used in both fiction and nonfiction texts. Most fictional passages are organized

chronologically, but in paragraphs where the narrator is describing a setting or the appearance of a character, the information may be organized spatially. Some signal words that indicate that the writer or speaker is following the spatial pattern of organization include a wide sweeping array of prepositions and some are: next to, behind, across, from, below that, above that, to the right of and so forth.

2.7.9 Process pattern

Smith (2005) defines process pattern as "the set of activities, actions, work tasks or work products and similar related behaviour followed in a development life cycle". Process paper overview tells the reader how to do something and describes how something is done or proposes specific hypothetical steps to fix an issue. In process writing, one has to make list of all the steps in the process before going into details. Steps must be organized in sequence, thus, classifying major and minor steps if necessary. The body paragraphs must establish clear stages of development and keep the reader aware of phases through the process. A process essay emphasizes how something is done, rather detailing why something is done. The intentions lay in the directions themselves not the motivations. Transitions are crucial to this pattern because readers need guidance throughout the essay. Transitional words like afterwards, immediately, then, at last, at the same time, in the end, in the future, before, later, during currently, finally and others may be used.

2.7.9.1. Types of process

Smith (2005) explains that there are two basic types of process writing and these are: Informational and directional processes. Informational or mechanical process writing provides information on how something works. Exampl*es:* how a bill becomes a law, how an egg becomes a chicken, on the other hand, directional process deals with

giving directions on how to do something. An example of this type of writing would be a recipe or an essay showing how to change a tire on a new car. Regardless of whether you write an informational or directional essay, it is critical to organize the steps in the most logical order. The two most widely used methods for organizing a process essay are chronological order and emphatic.

2.7.10 Description pattern

Taylor (2017) opines that in the descriptive essay, it is necessary to influence the reader's feelings and emotions. You can describe everything, anything: man, animal, flower, emotion, sound. A student is most often asked to describe a person whom he or she knows well. The concept of the essay is a bright, emotional and memorable description of something, using all five senses: vision, taste, smell, touch, and hearing.

3.8   Strategies/methods of teaching paragraphing

Richards (2008) suggests that paragraph development can be taught through paragraph hamburger approach. Paragraph hamburger is a writing that visually outlines the key components of a paragraph. Topic sentence, detail sentences, and a closing sentence are the main elements of a good paragraph, and each one forms a different piece of the hamburger.

How to use paragraph hamburger

The hamburger approach considers the teaching of the three components of the paragraph; topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence to form coherent paragraph. Richards (2008) outlines steps in using this approach

1. Discuss the three main components of a paragraph, or story.

   a. The introduction (top bun)

b. The internal or supporting information (the filling)

c. The conclusion (bottom bun)

2. Ask students to write a topic sentence that clearly indicates what the whole paragraph is going to be about.

3. Let students compose several supporting sentences that give more information about the topic.

4. Instruct students on ways to write a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence.

2.8.2 Process writing

Alves (2008) explains that process writing usually involves several steps. A typical sequence is comprised of three steps: prewriting, of problem-solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a voice with which to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning. Some sequences, however, use four steps, such as prewriting, writing, rewriting and editing or critiquing while others use five steps, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and evaluating.

2.8.3 Collaborative writing

Lunsford (1991) uses the term collaborative writing to refer to projects where written works are created by multiple people together rather than individual. In a true collaborative environment, each contributor has an almost equal ability to add, edit, and remove text. It is easier to do if the group has a specific end goal in mind. In collaborative writing, discussion and communication are very essential. Successful collaboration occurs when each participant is able to make a unique contribution towards achieving a common vision or goal statement.

2.8.4 Paragraph inner structure

According to Rasheed et al (2013) this model provides a rather rational account of the inner structure of a paragraph. More concisely, it links the sentences contained in the paragraph and their order with supra-paragraph elements such as discourse markers. All sentences in a paragraph, except for the topic sentence, have peripheral or even marginal roles in terms of serving the idea involved. What this basically means is that, whereas the topic sentence marks the topic of the paragraph, the other sentences explain this topic sentence involuntarily. Any explanatory sentence shifting its orientation against that topic processed will end up in one of two fates:

1. To be removed from the paragraph involving that topic sentence; hence the coherence and cohesion of the paragraph would break down Haliday and Hasan, (1976).

2. To mark the end of the paragraph and, thus become a topic sentence of another paragraph on its own; hence it disconnects the flow of thoughts and explanation process geared by the previously established topic sentence. For the machinery, the topic sentence is the first "step" of building a paragraph. It becomes quite impossible to access the 1st explaining sentence without crossing over the topic sentence. By the same token, you cannot access the 2nd explaining sentence without crossing over the topic sentence and the 1st explaining sentence, and so on. The topic sentence serves the roles of the station where you can decide to get the train of thoughts you want: There is an opportunity to ponder on a question like this one: "Are the explaining sentences equally important?" Couched within a framework which puts the flow of the idea at the forefront of communication, one can claim that the relevance of any explaining sentence is geared by its closeness, so to speak, to the topic sentence. To be more specific, the 1st

explaining sentence is more important than the 2nd explaining sentence and so forth. The reason is that, the power the topic sentence exercises on the explaining sentences in one paragraph starts to fade out as the explaining sentence falls far from its firm grip.

2.9 Theories of paragraphing

A theory is a general principles and ideas about a subject, an idea or an opinion that someone thinks is true but for which they have no proof. A theory explains a phenomenon or a concept that is commonly agreed or used. The theory attempts to provide explanations to phenomena. The underpinning theory for this research is known as paragraph structure or paragraph components and conceptualized by Alexander Bain. His concept of the paragraph appears to be analogically derived from sentence theory. He is usually called the founder of paragraph theory. Bain, however, was not the first to theorize about paragraphs and may have been influenced by his predecessor, Joseph Angu. Furthermore, his compositional theory in general as well as his sentence theory could have influenced his paragraph theory. An examination of his association psychology reveals a logically consistent rationale for the derivation of Bain's paragraph theory. Since the publication of Joseph Angu's *The Handbook of the English Tongue (*1862)*, which provided twenty pages of paragraphing tips, and Alexander Bain's English Composition and Rhetoric, which set forth formal principles for paragraph composition, two views of paragraph writing have existed: the prescriptive and the descriptive schools (Duncan, 2007).The prescriptive school is rooted in Bain's ideas. Bain is acknowledged to be the first to provide a systematic description of paragraph theory (Shearer 2009, Smith 2008, Duncan 2007, D'Angelo 1986). Bain advocated that the paragraph must have an ideal structure that is measurable and describable and went on to postulate six principles to govern the

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creation of a paragraph. The opening sentence, unless so constructed as to be obliviously preparatory is expected to indicate with prominence the subject of the paragraph.

i.   The beginning of each sentence upon what precedes shall be explicit and unmistakable

ii.   When several consecutive sentences iterate or illustrate the same idea, they should, so far as possible be formed alike. This may be called the rule of parallel construction.

iii. A paragraph should be consecutive or free from dislocation.

iv.   A paragraph should possess unity; which implies a definite purpose and forbids digression and irrelevance.

v.   As in the sentence, so in the paragraph a due proportion should obtain between principal and subordinate statements. (Rasheed et al. 2013; Shearer, 2009; Smith, 2008; Duncan, 2007).

2.10 Review of related works

A lot of researches have been conducted on paragraph writing which among others, include: Rustipa (2016) looked at the paragraph writing difficulties faced by students at the undergraduate students of Samarang University, Indonesia. In her research, she discovered that the incomplete paragraphs written by students of Samarang have the presence of excessive indentation, and undeveloped topic sentence. When one writes a complete paragraph it is given several indentations and contains disjointedness of sentences.

Sarfo-Adu (2015) investigated paragraph writing skills among Polytechnic Students: His finding was that seventy nine (79) essays representing 66% used a definite topic

sentence followed by supporting sentences while forty-one (41) essays representing 34% had problems with paragraph development. The conclusion drawn from the results was that polytechnic students have a fair idea of structuring a paragraph. His finding is different from what this research has discovered. The researcher may conclude that the differences in these two research works may be due to their academic backgrounds or levels.

Rass (2015) investigate problems facing Palestinian Arab students from Israel who are majoring in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in developing well-written paragraphs in English. He discovered that they tend to transfer their first modes and patterns of thinking in their first language to the English Language. In general, Arab students including Palestinians face tremendous difficulties developing well-written paragraphs in English in terms of fluency, content and organization, and accuracy using the acceptable grammatical patterns.

Ali (2015) sought to identify challenges in relation to paragraph writing. In the study, he discovered that Kurdish EFL learners face substantial challenges in writing paragraphs, such as paragraph components and mixing a number of ideas in one paragraph, irrelevance of controlling ideas and support and redundancy and repetition and a lack of description. The work revealed that paragraphing posed a serious challenge to Kurdish EFL learners.

Brenya (2015) looked at the paragraph writing skills among the second year students of Namong Senior High Technical School. In the study, she enumerated some causes of poor paragraphing work as lack of vocabulary and expressions to digest the ideas, teachers' inability to teach effective paragraph development and lack of reading by students to generate simple ideas to develop their paragraphs.

Adika (1999), Appiah (2000) and Amponsah (2009) researched into paragraphing as found in students' essays. They found that although majority of the students were able to introduce their paragraphs with topic sentences, they introduced several unrelated ideas into the paragraphs. Paragraphs were either underdeveloped or had problems with conjunctive markers, and lacked inter-personal connectives. These findings are similar to what this research has discovered.

Though a lot of works have been done on paragraphing, some looked at the structure, topic sentence, completeness, and causes of poor paragraphing work but no research work has been done on the structure and paragraph patterns in Agona East District, so I would like to assess how students structure their paragraphs.

2.11 Summary of chapter two

The literature review in this chapter covered the definitions on paragraphing, importance of paragraphing, indentation, paragraph structure, the topic sentence, supporting sentence, concluding sentence, element of paragraph, types of paragraphing, patterns of paragraphing, strategies in teaching paragraphing, and paragraph theory. Further, the chapter reviewed literature on related works on paragraph development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methods and procedures used during data collection to analyzethe writings of some selected S.H.S.one students of the Agona East District. Thus, this research is descriptive study; it describes the research design, the population and sampling techniques, and data collection instruments and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research design

Neuman (2000) defines research designs "as plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. These plans involve several decisions and they need to be taken in the order which makes sense." The overall decision involves which design should be used to study a topic. Informing this decision should be the worldview assumptions the researcher brings to the study; procedures of inquiry (called strategies); and specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The selection of a research design is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researcher's personal experiences, and the audience for the study.

Three types of approaches are advanced: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Unquestionably, the three approaches are not as discrete as they first appeared. Churchill and Iacobucci (2005) define research design as the blueprint that is followed to complete the study and it ensures that the study is relevant to the problem and will use economical procedure. There are many frameworks of research designs and these can be classified into two major categories: Exploratory and Conclusive. The

conclusive research can be further divided into descriptive and casual research (Ginsburg, 2011).

Exploratory research is more to do with qualitative study while conclusive research is associated with quantitative study. The qualitative research provides insight and understanding of the problem setting, while quantitative research seeks to quantify the data and typically applies some form of statistical analysis. Whenever a new research problem is being addressed, quantitative research must be preceded by appropriate qualitative research.

Considering the above definitions, one would say that the research design is the detailed plan that the researcher uses to guide the research. It is why data are collected: the use of certain instruments and what data will help in answering the research question of the study.

The study adopts the qualitative research design. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in the context, specific settings such as real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002) uses qualitative research to mean "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived by means of quantification." Strass and Corbin (1990) asserts that the kind of research that produces findings arrived from real-world settings where the "phenomenon of interest unfold naturally." (Patton, 2000).

According to Mason (2010) qualitative research clearly explains how different theoretical approaches inform what you do in practice. This bridges the gap between cookbook and more abstract approaches to qualitative research by posing difficult

questions that researchers should be asking themselves. Qualitative research engages in a creative and critical practice in how they draw insights, interpret a range or types of data and craft knowledge from qualitative research.

According to Owu-Ewie (2012) qualitative research is defined as an inquiry process of understanding based on clear methodological process that uses a social or human problem by building on a complex holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of information and research conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 1998). Qualitative research involves deriving information from observation, interviews or verbal interactions and focuses on the meanings and interpretations.

The researcher used the qualitative research because it helped her to understand the research problem better from the perspective of the students. In this study, because the researcher used the qualitative design, she used certain instruments like interview and test to diagnose the real problem of students. When the researcher interviewed the students, she got to know the problem better and also from the perspective of the students. This is more naturalistic so realistic solutions would be sought.

Again, the use of qualitative research is more systematic .Qualitative design follows a particular pattern. Thus, one must diagnose the problem, collect data, analyze it, make hypothesis and come up with the findings. On the contrary, one cannot sit at his corner and guess a research problem and solve it. This design followed a particular system and its use in this research has helped the researcher to make scientific analysis and come up with the findings.

The researcher collected data on students' writing and she analysed them. In analyzing the data, she looked for the structure of paragraphing, patterns of paragraphing and pedagogies in teaching paragraph development.

Additionally, the use of qualitative design has helped the researcher to describe the data. In chapter four, the researcher would describe the data on thematic areas. The thematic areas would be:

The knowledge on paragraph structure by students and teachers Different patterns on paragraphing Ways of improving paragraph rising (students and teachers)

3.2.1 Why the use of qualitative design

Sofaer (2002) posits that qualitative research methods are valuable in providing rich descriptions of complex phenomena; tracking unique or unexpected events. This design illuminates the experience and interpretation of events by actors with widely differing stakes and roles. Again, the use of qualitative research gives voice to those whose views are rarely heard; conducting initial explorations to develop theories and to generate test hypothesis. Qualitative design also lends itself to the complementation of quantitative design used in sequence or in tandem. The best qualitative research is systematic and rigorous. It seeks to reduce bias, error and evidence that disconfirm initial or emergent hypotheses.

Additionally, it seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular population.

The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the human side of an issue – that is, the contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socio-economic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion.

3.3 Population

According to Best and Kahn (2006),"a population is a group of individuals that have characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher". Again, a research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics.

Welman (2005) posits that population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions. It is for the benefit of the population that researches are done.

Terre Blanche (2006) identifies population as the larger pool from which sampling elements are drawn and to which findings are generalized. This research was done in the Agona East District. The district has four Senior High Schools: Kwanyako Senior High, Swedru Senior High, Namanwora Senior High and Nsaba Senior High. The present form one class (2018/19) is made up green and gold. Kwanyako Senior High has form one population of one thousand and sixteen (1016). The school has four hundred and two (402) boys and six hundred and fourteen (614) girls. Form one students at Swedru Senior High are one thousand, two hundred and thirty (1230) students. The girls are seven hundred and five (705) in number and the boys are five hundred and twenty five (525). Nsaba Senior High has form one female population of

six hundred and ninety nine (699) and three hundred and ninety nine (399) are boys whilst Namanwora form one students are two hundred and eighteen (218). The girls are eighty (80) and one hundred and thirty-eight (138) boys respectively. In all, the form one students in the district in both stream are three thousand, five hundred and sixty two (3,562). With regard to teachers, Kwanyako Senior High has ninety eight (98) teachers of whom forty (40) are female and fifty eight (58) being male teachers whilst Swedru Secondary High has female teachers of thirty five (35) and hundred (100) male teachers. Nsaba Secondary High has twenty three (23) female teachers and sixty four (64) male teachers. Namanwora has three (3) female teachers and twenty-nine (29) male teachers. The total teachers in the second cycle schools in the District are three hundred and fifty two (352) in number. The present form one class is made up of green and gold stream. Since the researcher teaches in green stream, she randomly sampled forty (40) respondents from each school and two (2) teachers from each school for the study. In all, one hundred and sixty respondents (160) and eight (8) teachers were used for the study.

3.4   Sampling technique

Owu-Ewie (2012) explains sampling as "a selection of a smaller population within the lager population for observation and analysis". There are two major types of sampling. They are probability and non-probability sampling. These types have sub-type including simple random, systematic random, stratified random, and cluster sampling, all under probability sampling while non-probability has availability, quota, purposive, and snowball sampling.

According Owu-Ewie (2012), "a simple random sampling is obtained by choosing elementary units in such a way that each unit of the population has an equal chance of

being selected. This means that the probability of being selected for all members in the study group of population is the same". Individuals who are selected by this procedure have equal and independent chance of being selected. This approach is independent because the selection of individual will not affect the selection of the other.

One of the advantages of using the random sampling is that it is totally free from bias and prejudice. In selecting the respondents, everyone stands the chance of being selected. It is unbiased because the researcher does not influence the selection of the population and so those who are unlucky to be selected understand the procedure for the selection with no prejudice or bias intended. Again, it is easy and simple to use this approach because any researcher can follow the simple steps. In this method, numbers are assigned to every member in the study group of population, and then the sample would be selected from a table of random numbers or random selection.

Further, simple random sampling is representative of the population. The population one gets for the research is the true representative of the entire population. In getting the respondents, the researcher used the random sampling to select the respondents. All the second cycle schools in the Agona East District have twelve or thirteen form one classes except Namanwora Senior High which has five classes.

To get the respondents, the researcher used ballot papers with inscription yes or no. To select the classes for the research, two ballots papers were yes and the rest were no. The classes that picked yes were used for the research. In all, two classes were randomly selected. To get the forty respondents, another set of ballot papers were distributed to the students with yes or no inscription and students who had yes were selected for the research. In all, twenty students were randomly selected from each

class and the entire respondents numbered to forty from each school for the research. The researcher used this approach because she wanted to be fair with the students. Besides, it was an easy way for the researcher to assemble the respondents. Since the researcher used the ballot papers/ lottery approach, it was simple selecting the respondents and every member of the group was given equal opportunity to be selected. Again, students who picked no understood that luck eluded them so there was no quarrel among them.

Apart from the random sampling used, the researcher also used the purposive sampling in selecting the teachers. Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell). At Kwanyako Senior High where the researcher teaches, she purposely selected two Form one English teachers who were ready and available to give her information for the research. In the other three Senior High Schools, the researcher informed the H.O.D.s to get her form one English teachers because she would observe and interview them. In all, two teachers were purposely selected from each school and they were eight in number for the research. The researcher used this approach because the Form one English teachers possess the information that the researcher needed. Though there were some English teachers who equally teach the English Language, she thought that the Form one English teachers would give her all the necessary information on paragraph development since that topic is captured in the form syllabus.

Again, the use of purposeful sampling helped the researcher to reach the teachers quickly. The researcher had in mind that she was purposely selecting two Form One English teachers from each school for the study so when she got to the schools, she did not have much difficulty in getting the teachers.

Finally, the use of this design saved the researcher's time, money and effort. Once the researcher had her targeted population in mind, teachers, she did not spend much time looking for them, and conducting interview wasquite effortless. At the end of its all, the use of purposeful sampling serves multiple needs and interests for the researcher.

3.5 Research site

The research site is the Agona East District which is in the Central Region of Ghana. It is located in the Agona land and shares border with Eastern The Agona East and West Municipal are in the Central Region. Its district capital is Agona Nsaba which is predominantly a farming community. The district has four secondary schools: Kwanyako Secondary School, Swedru Secondary School, Nsaba Senior High School and Namanwora Senior Technical School.

The researcher decided to extend the research to all the secondary schools in the district and analysize students' writings to see if they also have problems with paragraphing as she identified in the school that she teaches.

3.6 Data collection instruments

The data collection instruments the researcher used were observation, interview and test.

3.6.1 Observation

Observation is one of the approaches for gathering data. Spardley (1980) posits that observation is frequently used to collect data. Owu-Ewie (2012) speaks of observation as the primary technique of collecting data on non-verbal behavior. It involves getting to the field, getting the participants and organizing the participants to collect data based on their behavior. It is often referred to as field work because it takes place on the field. In qualitative research, it consists of detailed documentation of behavior, events and context surrounding the events and behaviors (Best & Kahu, 2006). The role of the participants in qualitative observation can be complete observation or participant observation. Non participant observation has no intervention by a researcher. It is simply studying behaviors that occur naturally in natural contexts, unlike the artificial environment of a controlled laboratory setting. Importantly, in non-participant observation, there is no attempt to manipulate variables. The researcher did the observation in two schools, Kwanyako Senior High and Swedru Senior High. The researcher used complete observation or participant observation. Through this, the necessary information needed for the study was achieved. In participant observation," the individual becomes a full member of the group and the role of observer is concealed". Borg and Gall (1998, p. 391). Borg and Gall emphasized that the participant observer by virtue of being actively involved in the situation being observed, often gained insights and developed interpersonal relationship that are virtually impossible to achieve through any other method. In these two schools the researcher observed four English teachers, two from each school. The observation at Kwanyako Senior High took place on 12 and 13thFebruary 2019 and that of Swedru Secondary High was done on 11 and 12th April, 2019. The researcher accompanied the teachers individually to the classrooms who taught the

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topic "paragraph development" within the period from 12th February to 12th April). In the teaching, the researcher observed the content knowledge of the teachers as well as the approaches used in teaching the topic. She also paid attention to students' participation in the lesson and their way of answering questions.

On the other hand, Gay (1987) and Best and Kahn (2006) opined that complete observer minimizes interactions with the subject being observed and attempts to obtain a record as possible of behavior relevant to the observer's interest. In the other two schools, after sampling the respondents, the researcher got hold of their exercise books and observed their exercise books and handwriting.

3.6.2 Test

Airasian (1991) posits that a test is the formals in research; test can be used to diagnose the extent of the problem and to determine the effectiveness of an intervention that has been designed to address the problem. In testing phase, we may have the manual and the automatic data collection. In administering the test, ten essay questions were given to the respondents to select one. In order to have a detailed and accurate work, the researcher varied the test items. At Kwanyako S.H.S and Namanwora S.H.S schools, the students were given fifty minutes (50) to write the essays and the essays were collected afterwards. In Nsaba Senior High and Swedru Senior High Schools, the compositions were given to the students to work on and were collected after three days. The total scripts the researcher received were one hundred and sixty (160**.** The essay questions were:

1. Explain to your friend in another school how you spend your leisure time.
2. Write a letter to a friend in another school describing your new school to him or her.

3. Your first day at secondary school.

4. Write a letter to a friend in another school describing an inter-school competition that was held recently in your school.

5. Your friend has a written a letter you to know your views on free education policy. Write a reply comparing the free education policy to the fee paying policy.

6. Write an article suitable for publication in a cultural magazine of your school. Compare and contrast the nuclear and extended family system.

7. Road accidents are claiming lives these days. Write a letter to an editor discussing three causes, solutions and its effects on the country.

8. Describe your favourite teacher.

9. Write an article for publication in one of the national newspaper on the topic "indiscipline among the youths".

10. Write an article for publication in a national newspaper on the topic "The problem of street children and how to solve it".

3.6.3 Interviews

Nworgu (1991) defines interviews as a means of eliciting information from the respondent through some verbal interaction between him or her and the researcher.

According to Owu-Ewie (2012) interviews are powerful conversation with subjects to obtain information to answer a research question. There are three forms of interviews namely structured (standardized) semi-structured (semi-standardized) and unstructured (unstandardized). The researcher used unstructured type of interview in the study to be able to solicit varied views comprehensive responds from students. With this approach, respondents were free to talk and clarify issues where there were

doubts. Respondents were at liberty to ask their own questions and gave detailed information. Again, this approach ensures flexibility. In using this approach, the respondents felt at ease to express their opinion on issues at hand. The researcher created a less tension environment for the respondents to operate as well as to express their views.

Finally, the use of this approach generates qualitative data through the use of open questions. In this approach, the respondents adapt their own questions, give detailed information for the subject as stake and free to choose their own words. With this, respondents tend to understand the issues at stake better and transcribing the data becomes easy.

Legard, Keegan, and Ward, (2003) describe the unstructured interview as a "conversation with a purpose", as it is intended to allow researchers to collect in-depth information. This is a view also shared by Corbin & Morse (2003) who describe the unstructured interview as a shared experience in which researchers and interviewees come together to create a context of conversational intimacy in which participants feel comfortable telling their story. In the view of Legard, Keegan, and Ward, (2003) one of the main advantages of the in-depth interview is the ability to combine structure with flexibility.

Again, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) view the unstructured interview in a slightly different mode and argue that the unstructured interview does "not reflect any preconceived theories or idea and are performed with little or no organization. In administering the interview, forty students and two English teachers from each school were sampled for this interview.

In Kwanyako Senior High, the interview date for the students was 12th February 2019 whilst the teachers had their turn on the 13th February, 2019. At Namanwora Senior High Schools, both teachers and students were interviewed on 14th March2019.After the respondents had finished with the essay test, the researcher proceeded with the interviews. Interviewing Swedru Secondary respondents was done on 11 and 12th April 2019 whilst that of Nsaba Senior High took place on 14and 15th March, 2019 respectively. Though I was with them for a while, the purpose of interviewing them was made known to them and few pleasantries were shared. The respondents were forty from each school so the researcher used the focus group discussion. Each group was made up of five members and she had eight groups for the interviews. The questions were on thematic areas. These were:

i.   Content or knowledge on paragraphing, paragraph structure

ii.   Different patterns of paragraphing difficulties among S.H.S. One students in

iii. Strategies for improving paragraph writing

The respondents were recorded for the researcher to transcribe later.With regard to time spent in administering the unstructured interviews, each group spent about twenty-five minutes (25) (See appendix A).The teachers at Kwanyako S.H.S. were interviewed on13th February, 2019 and that of Nsaba S.H.S. took place on the following day 14th February,2019. 15th March, 2019.Teachers at Namanwora were interviewed on 15th March 2019.

The researcher interviewed them individually and that of the teachers lasted for ten minutes (10) each. The questions were on the following thematic areas:

- Content on paragraph structure

- Methodology in teaching paragraph development different patterns of paragraphing

- Strategies or pedagogies in improving the teaching of paragraphing. (See Appendix B

3.7 Data analysis plan

Sampled written essays and recorded interviews by students and teachers were analysed thematically. The thematic areas were Content on paragraph structure (topic sentence, support sentence and concluding sentence)

- Paragraph development (unity, coherence and adequacy)

- Patterns of paragraphing

- Strategies of improving the teaching of paragraph development.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has provided a synopsis of the procedures and methods used in this study. It started with the description of the research design, population, sampling technique, research site, data collection instruments- test, observation, interviews and methods of analyzing the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present and discuss the results obtained from analyzing the data collected to answer the research questions underlying the study. The discussion is done based on the research questions and the framework for this study. The chapter is made up of three sections. The first section is deals with students' knowledge on paragraph structure; paragraph patterns difficulties are presented in the second section and finally the strategies in teaching paragraphing are discussed in the third section.

4.1 Research question one

What type of structures of the paragraph do students create in their writings?

This section presents the analysis to research question one. The instruments used were test, interview and observation. The researcher used five different sets of questions to interview the respondents and teachers. Compositions were given to the respondents to write. In all, one hundred and sixty respondents in the various Secondary Schools in the District were used. For the researcher to assess students' knowledge on paragraph structure, the interviews, observations and the test were grouped under thematic areas. These include: the knowledge on topic sentence, supporting sentences and the concluding sentence.

4.1.1 Topic sentence

From the data collected, it was discovered that out of the one hundred and sixty respondents, majority of the respondents do not have ideas of what topic sentences

are: some write paragraphs without topic sentences. Some of the compositions do not have topic sentences and this is evidenced in the extracts below.

Extract A (A paragraph from a student's composition. Describe your favourite teacher)

> *Also, my teacher teaches us to greet elderly persons in the community and also respect the other teachers in the school. He normally asks us to greet elderly persons when we meet them.*

In analyzing the above extract, the "also" used shows that an additional point or topic sentence is going to be introduced but that is not identifiable. It is clear that the above paragraph has no topic sentence. The two sentences are supporting sentences. With such a paragraph, the topic sentence could be "Also, my teacher advises us to be respectful". This style of writing paragraphs is not in line with what Bailey has said on the structure of a paragraphing. Bailey (2015) explains that the component of a paragraph should have topic sentence, supporting sentences and a conclusion. According to Warriner (1988), the topic sentence states the topic and the writer's assertion or view about it and restricts the entire paragraph in terms of content. He continues to explain that the topic sentences can occur anywhere in the paragraph (as the first sentence, the last sentence or somewhere in the middle.)

An extract B (A paragraph from a composition goes like this "You have noticed a general decline in the level of discipline in our country. Write an article for publication in a national newspaper, discuss some instances of this decline and its probable causes and suggest ways in which the trend can be reversed.

> *Again, because they are energetic and have potential manpower, the elderly are afraid to speak about their problems because the little mistake the elderly will make will attract beatings and insults from the youth. People watch the youth to go wayward because they are afraid to speak their matter.*

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In analyzing the extract B, the transitional word "again" denotes addition and this tells the readers that a topic sentence or a point has been raised up there and therefore another topic sentence is going to be introduced but we do not see that in the paragraph. It is clear that the paragraph has no topic sentence. The sentences are all supporting sentences. The researcher thinks that the topic sentence should have been "The youths are fearful to the elderly or the youth are strong." With such topic sentences, the respondent could use the above explanation to develop the paragraph. Students writing paragraphs without topic sentences deviate from the norm. The structure of the paragraph should be the topic sentence, supporting and the concluding sentence. Despain (1991) posits that the structure of a paragraph parallels the structure of an essay as well as the content. Both contain a coherent argument, supporting evidence /analysis, and a conclusion.

Apart from the test, the researcher used interviews to assess students' knowledge on paragraphing and topic sentence. The researcher wanted to know what students know about paragraphing and topic sentence. When the question on paragraphing was asked, these were some of the responses students gave.

> *"A paragraph is a space you leave before you write." A space before the paragraph," "A paragraph states a point". "A paragraph is the sentences you write, a paragraph is a margin you leave before you write", the paragraph is the main idea in the essay.*

When the question on topic sentence was posed, majority of the students said that they had no idea about what a topic sentence is and those who answered got it wrong, as illustrated in the following excerpts.

> *"A topic sentence is the paragraph; the topic sentence is the sentences in the essay, and the topic sentence sum up the essay, the topic sentence is*

> *the point. There were however, a few of them who got it right as the*
> *following illustrate:*

Extract: a topic sentence introduces a point; a topic sentence is the purpose of the purpose. Apart from the students, teachers were also interviewed as whether they teach the structure of the paragraph or on how they teach the paragraph and these are what they said.

> *"In fact, I teach them the paragraphing but it seems most of them have*
> *problems in writing good paragraphs". "I teach them how to develop the*
> *paragraphs but still……………," I try my best yet students have problems*
> *in writing good paragraphs".*

Another instrument the researcher used was observation. As the researcher indicated earlier in chapter three, she observed four teachers: two from Kwanyako Secondary School and Swedru Secondary who taught the topic "paragraph development". To her amazement, they did not mention the structure of the paragraph as topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences. The teachers taught the topic "paragraph development" all right but did not mention topic sentence but rather used the expression "introduce the point". They did not explain what a paragraph is.

From the findings, it was discovered that most of the students have problems in writing clear and explicit topic sentences, thus they lack the knowledge on topic sentence.

Again, some of the students' paragraphs had multiple topic sentences within the paragraphs. It was clear that some of the paragraphs had two or more topic sentences, making them difficult for the readers to understand. This is evidenced in students' essays.

An Extract C is a paragraph from students' composition: (Describe your favourite teacher)

> *Mr. Evans Mensah is my favourite teacher because he is kind, loving and hardworking. He is tall and fair in colour and his mouth is small, with big eyes and with a pointed nose. Mr. Evans Mensah likes learning and reading like me. He is very interesting so the students like him. Moreso, and the subject that he teaches is also interesting.*

Looking at the extract C, the researcher can say that the first sentence which is the topic sentence, has three varying topic sentences and developing a paragraph out of the three topic sentences will be difficult. These types of multiple topic sentences are not clear or open for development because the focuses are many. Developing all the three topic sentences cannot be under one paragraph. The sentence could be written separatelyas "Mr. Evans Mensah is my favourite teacher because he is kind. "Mr. Evans Mensah is my favourite teacher because heloves his students. "Mr. Evans Mensah is my favourite teacher because he is hardworking". Again, a construction like "Mr. Evans Mensah likes learning and reading like me could be simply written as "Mr. Evans Mensah likes learning. Mr. Evans Mensah likes reading like me.

An extract D (A letter to an editor about the causes, effects and solutions on road accidents in Ghana.)

> *The reasons why road accident is a major problem in Ghana are lack of good roads, reckless driving by drivers and unavailability of driving schools. In Ghana, the poor road condition is not helping and this has assisted in causing lots of road accidents. This has led to the loss of lives and properties. For example on Swedru Bawjiase road, the condition is so worst that it is only rickety vehicles that ply on the roads.*

Extract D also has multiple topic sentences. The topic sentences are: "*lack of good roads, reckless driving by drivers and unavailability of driving schools*". In developing the paragraph, the respondent ended up developing only one topic sentence leaving the rest. The respondent did not talk about the two topic sentences, "*reckless driving by drivers and unavailability of driving schools*". Such topic sentences make readers to lose focus of exactly what the paragraph is about. This type of writing topic sentences violates what Yankah, et al. (2017) have said. Yankah et al (2017) describe topic sentence as the controlling idea that the writer intends to develop and it must be one within the paragraph. It controls because it contains the focus of the paragraph.

4.1.2 Supporting sentences

Also, from the data, it was found that most of the paragraphs written by the respondents were underdeveloped.

Extract: E (A paragraph on student's work) A letter to an editor about the causes of road accidents in Ghana, its effects and solutions)

> *Again, an illiterate or uneducated driver on our roads is one of the causes of road accidents. They do not know the meaning and interpretations on our roads and this causes road accidents.*

In analyzing such a paragraph, one would say that the above topic sentence is right but the supporting sentences are inadequate. One could see that the above paragraph lacks minor supporting sentences and these include elaboration, examples, statistical information and facts. The respondent could have elaborated on "*the meaning and interpretations on our roads and the road signs*. The respondent could have also highlighted the importance of road signs and some examples of road signs. Further

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expansion could have been on interpretation of the road signs, and how wrong interpretation of the road sign can lead to road accidents. The absence of the above points that the respondent's failure to develop the paragraph makes extract E underdeveloped. Gould and Clifford (2001) maintain that each piece of writing must explain, expand and support its ideas. Boamah (2004) share the same view that depending on the purpose of the paragraph, the supporting details that will develop the paragraph may be in the form of anecdotes, examples, facts, statistics, sensory details or narrative details. All these details come together to enhance the development of the topic sentence.

Again, the researcher found that majority of the students' paragraphs lacked coherence. Ideas were not related to give proper meaning. Ideas were not well arranged in a proper way to ensure a proper order.

Extract F: Write a letter to a friend about the changes that have taken place in your school.

> *To start with, our headmistress (Madam Kate Eduful) has retired from service. She used her personal money to hire good contractors who had just finished the contracts that were assigned to them. The contractors constructed a pedestrian lane where everyone including students uses the lane. We have basketball court. Meanwhile that is the largest basketball court in the Central Region and it was made by our headmistress.*

In the above extract, one can say that the first and second sentences are not related. Though the two sentences talk about the same person, the ideas are not related. The first sentence or the topic sentence of the paragraph could have been developed by stating why the headmistress has retired. Has there been any new headmistress that might account for the changes in the school?

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Again, there is wrong arrangement of ideas. The third sentence could have been introduced as a new topic sentence for development. For example, *"The contractors constructed a pedestrian lane where everyone including students uses the lane."* The second sentence should explain the pedestrian lane that has been constructed by the retired headmistress. The benefits of students or people using the pedestrian lane could have been outlined under this topic sentence.

Further, the basketball court can also be developed into a new paragraph. The last sentence in the paragraph can be a supporting sentence for the "basketball court". The size of the volleyball court, the volleyball players in the school and how vibrant the team is can all be developed under this paragraph. From the reviewed literature, Hassan (1984) defines coherence as the property of unity of hanging together. The idea of coherence in a text therefore suggests that all pieces of information should be connected together for readers to see easily and understand fully. Wyrick (1999) has a similar opinion to share, stating that coherence means "to stick together". In writing, it means that one's thought flows smoothly into the next but most of the students' did apply coherence.

Apart from the test, students and teachers were interviewed on how students develop their paragraphs.

Researcher: How many lines do you write to cover a paragraph?

Students: *About four or five lines because our teachers have not taught us how to write plenty." "In fact, we do not write enough". "At most, about six lines."*
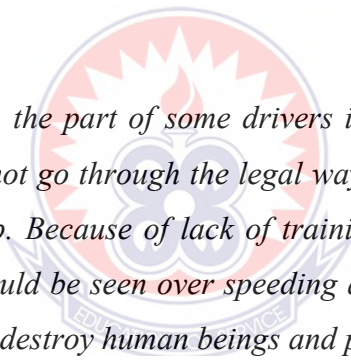
Researcher: Do students ensure adequacy in their writing?

Teachers: *No, only few students adequately develop their paragraph". "In fact, students are unpredictable, you teach them the right thing but they do not practice them." "Students write few sentences for a paragraph." "They do not write much".*

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Also, I observed that the teachers taught the "development of paragraphing" very well. For instance, a teacher taught "A letter to a District Chief Executive requesting for facilities needed by the school". With this letter, the teacher brainstormed students on the facilities needed by the school. She helped the students to develop the paragraph and highlighted on adequacy.

Further, some of the students' paragraphs lacked unity. A paragraph has unity when all the sentences talk about the main idea. There were intrusions of unrelated sentences to the main idea.

Extract G: A letter to an editor on the causes, effects and solutions to road accident.

> *Also, illiteracy on the part of some drivers is another cause of accident. Some drivers do not go through the legal way of training on how to drive and where to stop. Because of lack of training, where he is supposed to slow down, he would be seen over speeding and this may cause a serious accident and may destroy human beings and properties.*

The above paragraph does not show unity in the sense that, the supporting sentences do not lend support to the topic sentence. The sentences are not related to the topic sentence, *"illiteracy on the part of some drivers is another cause of accident"*. For instance, for such topic sentence, one expects the respondent to talk about uneducated drivers who cannot interpret basic writings or basic road signs on our roads. The second sentence does not relate to the topic sentence in any way and this violates the principle of unity since the information it carried was not in the topic sentence. From the third sentence, it is now clear that the respondent is talking about training and not illiteracy. This intrusion or unrelated sentences violate the principle of unity. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that the unity of a paragraph is associated with its purpose.

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In short, the unity of a paragraph is a response to a question: what is the purpose of this paragraph?

A paragraph shows unity when all the sentences, ideas and images are controlled by a single purpose or focus.

Extract H: (A paragraph from a student's work)You have noticed a general decline in the level of discipline in our country. Write an article for publication in a national newspaper, discuss some instances of this decline and its probable causes and suggest ways in which the trend can be reversed.

> *Moreover, broken homes bring about indiscipline. The youth copy the way their parents quarrel and exchange words where they also use them when they are with friends. It makes them exhibit indiscipline acts like using abusive words which is not approved by the society.*

In analyzing the above extract, one would say that the supporting sentences are not related to the topic sentence. The topic sentence talks of broken homes that lead to indiscipline, so we expect the respondent to explain that if couples break up their marriages, it affects the children and that leads to indiscipline. It is clear that there is intrusion of unrelated ideas and this violates the principle of unity. Crew (1987) indicates that the unified paragraph must have sentences working together in expressing an idea. The group of related sentences should have a link to the leading idea as any sentence that is not linked to the leading is a digression and enough to disrupt the effectiveness of the paragraph.

Teachers were interviewed on whether students ensure unity in their essays.

Researcher: Do students ensure unity in their essays?

Teachers: *"Not really, sometimes, you realize they are off or deviated. Some do whilst others do not exhibit unity. Sometimes, when they write their essays, you realize that what they have written is different from the topic sentence and this makes it difficult for the teacher to read. Hmm, at times, you become confused of what you are actually reading."*

4.1.3 Concluding sentences

There was evidence of lack of concluding sentences. The scripts that the researcher marked indicated that most of the compositions did not have concluding sentences. With the narrative essays, they did not restate the topic, where they have to suggest solutions to the problems; they did not nor reasons assigned for taking a particular stand and no summary of the points were stated.

Write a letter to a friend comparing the free education policy to the fee paying policy. Extract I (A paragraph from a student's work (concluding sentences)

Akwasi, so far these are the free education policy to fee paying policy for every student who has finished writing his/her B.E.C.E. and want to further to the secondary school to become future leader for the country.

In a concluding sentence, one may suggest solutions to already stated problems or summarize the points that have been stated in the preceding lines. In analyzing the above extract, one expects the respondent to summarize the points stated up there on the advantages of the free education policy to the disadvantages of fee paying policy. It is clear that the concluding sentence was not properly written. There is no summary of all the points stated up there and this contradicts what Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) says on

the concluding sentences that come at the end of the paragraph to sum up or reiterate the focus.

Extract J (A paragraph from student's work (concluding paragraph)

> *To conclude, even though road accidents in our country are termed as unavoidable, we can all come together and put serious measures to eliminate this impending problem. The solutions will help to solve road accidents in our country.*

One way of concluding a paragraph is to suggest solutions to above stated problems. In analyzing the extract K, the respondent mentioned that "solutions" would help to solve road accidents in our country but she refused to suggest a single practical way of solving the problem of road accidents. Such concluding paragraph is incomplete. The above writing deviates from what Reid said on concluding sentence. Reid (1994) says that the concluding sentence summarizes the material, offers a solution to the problem, predicts a situation, makes a recommendation or states a conclusion.

Apart from the data gathered, the researcher interviewed students and teachers on how they conclude their essays.

Researcher: How do you conclude your compositions?

Some respondents: *When I am writing* composition*, I leave it like that, I exchange greetings with my friends, I state my points to conclude my essay, and some did not answer it at all.*

Researcher: How do your students conclude their essays?

Some response from teachers: *As for letter writings, they exchange greetings but most students do not summarize their essays at the concluding stage." Some students leave their essays like that when they are concluding them." As for argumentative*

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essays, some do not make their stands clear but would suggest solutions when the questions demand for causes and solutions".

Again, during the observation, the researcher saw that three of the teachers did not conclude the compositions. Two of the teachers did not finish teaching the topic whilst the other one did not talk about concluding sentence.

With my observation, I will conclude that though some of the teachers expressed better ways of teaching paragraphing, thus, process writing, teaching grammar effectively, paragraph structure, they did not apply them in their teaching and these accounts for students inability to write good paragraphs.

From the findings, it was discovered that most of the students have problems in writing clear and explicit paragraph structure, topic sentences, supporting sentences and concluding sentences. What the teachers said when they were interviewed are not different from what the researcher discovered from the test and the interviews. This finding is different from what Rustipa (2016) discovered at the Stikubank University. Rustipa (2016) did a similar research at Stikubank University and she discovered that 63% of the students employed definite format of paragraph structure. She indicated that (UNISBANK) University students have fair knowledge of paragraph structure. The researcher may conclude that the differences in these two research works may be due to their academic backgrounds.

4.2 Research question 2

What difficulties do students have in the construction of different paragraph patterns?

The purpose of the second research question is to find out some of the difficulties students have in constructing different paragraph patterns **i**n Agona East District. The
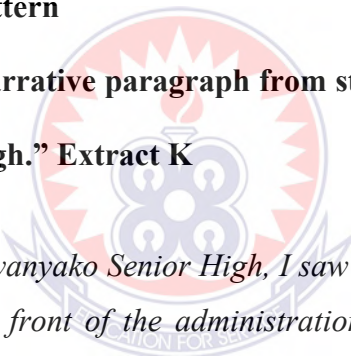
researcher used test to ascertain patterns of paragraphing difficulties among S.H.S one students. In order to identify patterns of paragraphing difficulties among S.H.S.one students in Agona East District, various essays were given to respondents to write...

PARAGRAPH PATTERNS

Opoku-Agyeman (2008) explains that there are different ways in which a paragraph can be developed. Paragraph pattern may be seen to be the various models used or forms applied to develop the paragraph. Some of the patterns that posed difficulties to students were space and time pattern, definition pattern, compare and contrast pattern, process pattern.

4.2.1 Space and time pattern

An extract below is a narrative paragraph from student's work on "My first day at Kwanyako Senior High." Extract K

> *My first day in Kwanyako Senior High, I saw many students , I mean first years standing in front of the administration block.. I ask one of them what is happening there and he said the man there is taking some broom so it was my turn so I gave my broom. A certain man directed me to House Four. At that time, I have no idea of where my class is. I ask a senior, "please, where is the Visual Arts class?" He does not know where the Visual Arts class was so he asks a friend to direct me. In fact, I was not happy because I did not have any friend. I put my head on the table and slept. A teacher came and sends us to our own classroom but no teacher taught us that day. It was then assembly time then a teacher told us to obey the school rules and regulations.*

> *It was break, I was excited when I saw a senior from my hometown and said "I should follow him and we went to the canteen and ate. I went back to class. This is what I experienced on my first day at Kwanyako Senior High.*

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In analyzing the above extract, one would say that there are violations in relation to time and space pattern. In the first place, the respondent did not tell the day and the time that he got to the school. Again, ideas expressed in the writing lacked essential details. For instance, what happened when he got there? The admission process, which house was he assigned to, how did the seniors receive him, was he sent to his classroom, the next thing he did, how did he close from school and was the day auspicious or sad? The respondent did not arrange the ideas, therefore this write up deviates from the time and space pattern. Looking at the extract above one can say that this write up deviates from what Forlini and Bauer (1990) say about time and space pattern. Forlini and Bauer (1990) say the ideas in a paragraph should be arranged according to time when information flow is based on physical location in space. In this sense, ideas are arranged from former to latter. In telling a story, the chronology of events happening is important. It is important to note that in the narrative paragraph, there should also be corresponding sequence of tense as well as chronology. Again, there was no use of transitional patterns like to start with, before, during, after, next, afterward, later, last, at last, now, then, when, soon, thereafter, after a short time, a minute later, in the meantime, meanwhile, later on, eventually, till, afterwards

Extract L (An extract below is a narrative paragraph from student's work on "A visit to a place of interest.")

I have visited a lot of places around the world but there is one place that I will never forget.

Firstly, I have seen and known places. A visit to a place of historical interest is really interesting and attractive. If you take a visit to any place of historical events, it becomes enjoyable and very educative.

Secondary, during the first semester, we planned going on an excursion to Kakum National Park. We started the journey from Agona Swedru to Cape Coast. We went to Kakum and climbed the ladder to the seventh one. From there we eat our food and came back. The visit was interesting.

Extract L has its own deviations. The introduction looks quite okay but there was wrong use of transitional words. It would have been more appropriate   for   the respondent to use transitions like first of all, to start with, next, during, afterwards, later rather than firstly, secondary, thirdly and so on. Also, we were not told of the date and time when the journey was made. Again, there is no logical presentation of ideas. What happened on their way to Kakum National Park, any admirable scenes on the way? Was there any stop over or any misfortune? Things that happened at Kakum National Park, information on the ladder they climbed, the experience over there, when they left Kakum and when they finally got home. Was the visit an interesting one or hectic? Extract L deviates from what Forlini and Bauer (1990) said on narrative paragraphs. They explain that in a narrative paragraph, the arrangement of sentences in a paragraph should be such that a preceding sentence in a paragraph gives a clue to the succeeding.

4.2.2 Cause and effect pattern

Cause and effect ordering is where a situation can be discussed by addressing the causes or reasons for the situation, the effects or results for the situation separately, or both causes and effects of the situation at the same time. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that cause and effect is generally used when writing on important social issues.

Extract M (An extract below is a letter to an editor on road accident. (causes, effects and solutions).

I am pleased with much delight to be given the opportunity to write to you this letter to discuss the causes, effects, and solutions of road accidents. The causes of road accident in our country have reached a very high rate and if serious measures are not taken to curb it, it will reduce the country's population. Accidents are inevitable part in our everyday lives and as stated earlier and this letter hopes to outline the causes and solutions.

To begin with, corruption is one of the causes of road accidents. The Drivers and Vehicle Licensed Authority (DVLA) which is responsible for road safety in our country allows faulty cars on our roads. Cars with engine faults, broken brakes are allowed to cruise freely on our roads all because of money and as a result of this ends up causing an accidents for which innocent souls may be lost. The effect of this is that most people lose their lives and properties. I suggest that the law should be enforced so that any faulty car which is found on our roads will attract the prosecution of the driver.

Also, poor road network is one of the causes of road accident in our country these days. Some of the roads in our country are full of potholes and these potholes cause the road accident. Just a month ago, a pregnant woman from Bawjiase was coming to give birth at Swedru

Government Hospital but due to the nature of the road, the baby died before she got to the government hospital. As a result of bad roads, many people die and properties are destroyed. To deal with this problem, government should construct new roads for the people or employ people to fill the potholes and this will reduce the accident in the country.

From the above extract, one can say that the cause to road accident has clearly been outlined "corruption is one of the causes of road accidents". Again, the effects are clearly stated with its solutions. "The effect of this is that most people lose their lives and properties. The second paragraph has similar pattern as the first paragraphs "Poor road network is one of the causes of road accidents in our country these days. The effect is that many people die and properties are destroyed". At the tail end, she suggested solution as ". To deal with this problem, government should construct new roads for the people or employ people to fill the potholes and this will reduce the accident in the country.

On the contrary, transitional words like so, therefore, thus, as a result, since, hence, because, for the reason that were not identified from the passage. The extract M deviates from what Sekyi-Baidoo says on cause and effect pattern. He explains that when transitional words which show cause and effect pattern are used effectively, they help in linking the subject: cause and effect.

Extract N (Extract from a student's work) "Write a letter to the District Chief Executive outlining the causes of teenage pregnancy and its effects on the District."

Teenage pregnancy refers to the pregnancy which occurs among teenage girls between the ages of 10 to 19 years. The main objective behind this letter is to inform you about the sharp increase of teenage pregnancy in our district. Some causes and effects of teenage pregnancy

are as follows: lack of sex education, poor parental control, peer pressure and many more.

Firstly, lack of sex education is the cause of teenage pregnancy. Teenage girls become pregnant because they do not receive enough education on issues relating to sex therefore when the teenage gets pregnant, the girl will stop his education.

Secondary, another cause of teenage pregnancy is peer pressure. Teenage girls become pregnant due to pressure from their bad friends. These bad friends force them to have sexual intercourse with elderly men or boyfriends. The effect is that they leave the school.

In analyzing the second extract N on cause and effect pattern, the respondent clearly stated the cause of teenage pregnancy in the district as *"lack of sex education is the cause of teenage pregnancy" "Another cause of teenage pregnancy is peer pressure"*.

With the effects, the respondent did not state it clearly. The respondent could have linked it up with good transitional devices as "in effect, therefore, consequently, because, before stating the effect.

4.2.3 Definition pattern

Extract O (Extract from a student's work) "Write an article for publication in one of the national newspaper on the topic "Indiscipline among the youths".

Indiscipline among the youths comes when the youths do what contradict from the rules and regulations given to them in any institution they find themselves like school, church, and workshops and even in their various homes as there is a saying that "charity begins at home". There is much indiscipline among youth that they exhibit everywhere.

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> *To begin with, one act that shows that a youth is indiscipline is drug abuse. Some of the youth engage in this indiscipline act as they take drugs on their own, thus, leaving the physicians' prescription. Some of the hard drinks they take are: akpeteshie, bitters, adonko, atadwe ginger, kasapreko and just to mention a few.*

Critically analyzing the above extract, one would say that, extract O is appropriate for the definition pattern. The respondent is supposed to define the key word and that is indiscipline. The definition must also be an acceptable definition so the definition by the respondent is incorrect. As a result of the poor definition, the understanding of the word "Indiscipline" is also not clear. The above extract on definition pattern deviates with what Sekyi-Baidoo said on definition pattern. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) says that definition pattern is "useful when you are introducing new or specialized terms to your readers or when you need to define a key concept in your thesis. A paragraph of definition aims to give a complete working definition of a term, concept or idea in your paper. One of the central features of this pattern is that it tells both what the term is and what is not, that is, it defines the boundaries of a term so the readers can better understand".

Extract P (Extract from a student's work) "Write an article for publication in one of the national newspaper on the topic "Indiscipline among the youths".

> *Indiscipline among the youth has of late become an insurmountable problem in the society and I wish to express my view on this topic for publication in one of the national newspaper. Indiscipline refers to when the youth go wayward of the rules and regulations that govern the community or society.*
> *Indiscipline among the youth include leaving work premises without permission, going to school late, not attending church gatherings or school gathering and so on.*

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Firstly, leaving work premises without permission is one of the major indiscipline among the youth because a youth may be a head of some office and because some of the workers may be older than the boss, they leave the office without permission.

With the extract P, the respondent used explanatory approach at the beginning but failed woefully to define indiscipline. In the definition pattern, the writer is supposed to give an acceptable or recognized definition. In this extract, the respondent gave his own definition that is not the accepted definition of indiscipline. For instance, *"Indiscipline refers to when the youth go wayward of the rules and regulations that govern the community or society. "*The example he cited was right to elaborate the point, indiscipline.

4.2.4 Compare and contrast pattern

EXTRACT Q (Extract from a student's work) Your friend has written a letter to you know your view on free education policy. Write a reply comparing the free education to fee paying education.

It is a great pleasure for me to write you this letter. Hope everything is well. The motive for writing you this letter is to tell you my views on free education policy to the fee paying policy.

In the first place, the free education policy was implemented by the current government to enable all students to school freely, both the rich and the poor. The free education policy has reduced the burden of parents. If not the help of the current government, in fact, many students may not get money to further their education but because of the free educational policy, many students have had the opportunity to further their education at the Secondary School.

To conclude, the free education policy will help students to be equipped with the modern skills and technology which will help students to be

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equipped with the modern skills and technology which will enable them work in this competitive global economy. In the global economy, it is only those with good certificate who are employed.

In analyzing Extract Q on comparison pattern, one would say that the comparison of free education policy to fee paying policy was not properly done by the respondent.

For instance, "The free education policy has reduced the burden of parents. (Unlike the fee paying that parents have to purchase everything for their wards.) With this, it is clear that there is no comparison at all. The second paragraph which is the conclusion is also the same with the first paragraph. No comparison was made by the writer. The topic sentence was only introduced with its explanation. The above extract violates with what some scholars have said concerning comparison pattern. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that a comparison pattern occurs when a speech or writing puts two or more items side by side, assessing them comparatively. It could show similarity or difference or familiar terms.
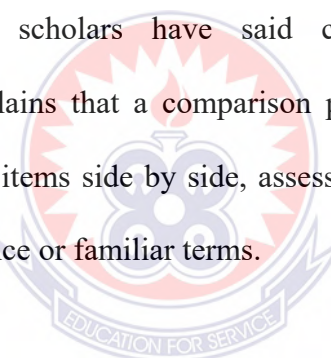
4.2.5 Process pattern

EXTRACT R (Extract from a student's work) Describe how your favourite food is prepared)

The name of my favourite food is rice and tomato stew. To prepare the food, I will go to the market to buy my ingredients to prepare the food. The ingredients are: oil, rice, meat, tomato paste.
I put my saucepan on fire and pour water and salts. After five minutes, the water will boil for some time and pour my rice into the water and cover the rice with napkin.

Also, I put another saucepan and pour my oil and cutting my onions into pieces and pour them unto the oil. I put my tomatoes, fish and pepper in the stew and wait for some time.

In analyzing extract R, the ingredients listed there are not enough to prepare rice and stew as the respondent claim to be. In process writing, the writer is supposed to describe how something is done, thus, the vivid processes of doing something or proposes specific hypothetical steps to fix an issue but the writer did not follow step by step processes of cooking rice and stew. Again, whoever wants to prepare rice and stew and has no idea of preparing rice and stew cannot prepare because there is no time allocated for the cooking of rice so this makes the writing incomplete.

Smith (2005) explains that in process writing, one has to make list of all the steps in the process   before going into details. Steps must be organized in sequence, thus, classifying major and minor steps if necessary.

EXTRACT S (Extract from a student's work) Describe how your favourite food is prepared)

> *There are many meals on this earth that Africans loved to eat and they also know how to prepare. Anita Bondzie is my name. The food I really loved so much is fufu with light soup. This food is my favourite meal.*
> *First of all, when you are about to prepare fufu with light soup, you first need the ingredients and equipment to prepare the meal. The ingredients are: cassava, garden eggs, salmon, tomato paste, onion, pepper, spices, silver, coal pot and charcoal.*
> *You will first peel the cassava into a bowl and rinse it with clean water after that you will pour the cassava into silver and add water and boil it with a silver cover nicely. When the cassava is ready, you take it from fire and dry the cassava for some time. You pound the fufu and put the fufu there.*
>
> *Now, it is time to prepare the soup so you put your garden eggs and pepper on fire. Rinse your fish with clean water and arrange it nicely in the saucepan to avoid being broken. Slice some onion on it and add salt, pepper and some spices to make the soup delicious. Put it on fire and*

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cover it for the fish to steam. Take the garden eggs from fire and blend.
Use strainer to strain it to avoid substances. Now add tomatoes and allow
the soup to cook. After some time, take the soup from fire and add the fufu
to serve.

In the process writing, the processes must be described well with the ideas written in sequential order. In analyzing extract S, the respondent did not arrange the ideas chronologically. For instance, how can the fufu be cooked before the soup. With this, one could say that this writing deviates from what Smith (2005) has said on process writing. He maintains that a process essay emphasizes how something is done and steps must be organized in sequence, thus, classifying major and minor steps if necessary.

Again, in the process writing, transitions are crucial to this pattern because readers need guidance throughout the essay. In the extract S, the respondent did not make use of transitions such as afterwards, immediately, then, at the same time, in the end, before, during, currently, finally and others.

4.2.6 Order of importance pattern

EXTRACT T (Extract from a student's work) Describe how your favourite food is prepared)

The name of my favourite food is palm nut soup and fufu. It is the major food for the Akans.
Firstly, I want to go to market and buy these ingredients likepalm nut, pepper, salt, tomato, tomato paste, ,fish or meat, water, plantain, onion, spices and cassava. You peel your cassava and plantain. Put them on fire. When it is cook, you take them from fire. You put your mortar and pestle there and wash them. Dry the cassava for ten minutes and start pounding the cassava. When the fufu is ready, you put it in a bowl and put it there. Also, you will wash and cook your palm nut fruit for about

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thirty minutes. You then remove it from fire and pour out the hot water from it and start pounding it until the fruit separates.. You then pour a bit of cold and warm water on it and remove the palm kernel from the fibre. After that you should use a strainer and strain the fibre away from it. You then get your soup so you will then put it on fire and wash your tomatoes, pepper, onion, garden eggs and garlic. Put them in the soup and allow the soup to boil for about fifteen minutes. You then remove your vegetables and grind them and pour them in the soup. You then add salt, spices and tomato paste and fish or meat. Allow the soup to boil for about twenty minutes and the soup is ready. Serve the food.

In the order of importance pattern, ideas or steps are prioritized by the writer or speaker according to a hierarchy of value. In analyzing extract T, the respondent did not arrange ideas in their hierarchy of value. In the preparation of palm nut soup and fufu, the palm nut soup is prepared before the fufu because much importance is placed on the soup rather than fufu. With this, it is unusual and abnormal to prepare your fufu there before you think of your soup. This writing deviates from McWhorte said on order of importance pattern. McWhorte (2005) explains that in the order of importance pattern, ideas or steps are prioritized by the writer or speaker according to a hierarchy of value. When using the order of importance pattern of organization, information can be structured from most important to least important.

4.3 Research question 3

The third research question was "What are the strategies that can be used to improve paragraphing among the first year students in Agona East District?) Students and teachers were interviewed to find out ways that can be used to improve the teaching of paragraph writing.

4.3.2 Students' interviews

When students were interviewed, some of them suggested that teachers should expose them to more writing. In the interview on how frequent students write essays, students outlined that they scarcely write essays and therefore they do not have the skills in writing.

Some students suggested that teachers should take them through a better way of writing paragraphs. Some students lamented that some of the teachers refuse to take them through the steps of writing paragraphs. "At times too, we write the essays before the teachers correct us so if the right thing is done, we will do well when it comes to paragraph writing" and few of such comment.

4.3.3 Process approach

Some students talked of process approach of teaching the paragraph development. Some suggested that in teaching paragraphing, teachers can do well to take them through the process. These include taking the students through:

The topic sentence/ introductory

Supporting sentences/ body

Concluding sentences/concluding paragraph.

According to the teachers involved in this work, taking the students through such process will let them master all the structures in writing good paragraphs.

4.3.4 Reading comprehension passages

According to a teacher, reading comprehension is an important tool in teaching paragraphing. He maintained that reading comprehensions are written in paragraphs so teachers should use reading comprehension to teach good paragraph development.

Using comprehension to teach paragraph development will help students to understand all the structures within the paragraph.

4.3.5 Product approach

Some of the teachers suggested that teachers should desist from product approach of teaching paragraph development. In this approach, teachers assign essays to students to write and afterwards identify their difficulties and address them. According to some of the teachers, this approach is not helpful to students.

4.4 Other strategies

Apart from interviewing the teachers and the students, other strategies were also identified to be of help in teaching paragraphing.

4.4.1 Paragraph hamburger

Richards (2008) suggests that paragraph development can be taught through paragraph hamburger approach. Paragraph hamburger is a writing that visually outlines the key components of a paragraph. These are:

a. The introduction (top bun)

b. The internal or supporting information (the filling)

c. The conclusion (bottom bun)

When one wants to use this approach in teaching paragraph development, the first thing the teacher must do is to explain paragraph and its components to students. If students get to know that there is a structure for a paragraph, and then the teacher should help the students to master the structure. In the learning process, the teacher will teach the students to master writing only topic sentences. The students will then learn writing both the simple topic sentence and the complex topic sentence.

In another lesson or session, the concentration will be on developing the paragraph or the supporting sentences. Various patterns of writing essays could be used. The pattern include: definition pattern, cause and effects, compare and contrast pattern just to mention a few.

The mastery of writing of a concluding paragraph would be the last component to be treated. The teacher will let the students practise writing a concluding paragraph and those who will be in difficulty would be corrected. Using this approach would let the students acquire the skills in writing a good paragraph. This is similar to the process approach in terms of its application.

4.4.2 Collaborative writing

Lunsford (1991) explains the term collaborative writing refers to projects or written works that are created by multiple people rather than the individual. In using this method, the teacher has to group the students. Each member in the group should have equal ability to add, edit, and remove. Successful collaboration occurs when each participant is able to make a unique contribution toward the writing process. The teacher then gives the compositions to the various groups and asks them to brainstorm: strategies for content, organization and the expression. After the brainstorm, they then draft the composition. The drafted paper goes through responding and critiquing. The individual members in the group then get a better access to critique the work. Areas for critiquing include: the points stated, concord, spellings and punctuations. After critiquing, proofreading, and editing is done to ensure quality of work. Advantages about the use of this method are that: it promotes unity and the weak ones are also supported. This approach gives the students the

opportunity to learn easily on developing good paragraphs from one another as they work together.

4.4.3 Pattern arrangement

The pattern arrangement is when scattered sentences are given to students to rearrange in the order of a particular pattern. In this pattern the teacher gives misarranged passages to students. He then asks them to arrange the passages based on particular patterns. The patterns may be cause and effect pattern, definition pattern, process pattern, description pattern, summary pattern, spatial order or order of importance pattern. When students finished arranging them, the teacher takes the work and marks them. He then takes the students through the passages and teaches them the right way of arranging the patterns. This approach provides a simple guide to put together scattered sentences for easy identification of the pattern the teacher wants to teach.

4.4.4 Model writing

In using the model approach, the teacher gives models of some of the patterns. The model patterns may be definition pattern, effect pattern, order of importance pattern, process pattern, description pattern, summary pattern, spatial order. Teacher asks students to study the model carefully and ask them to write similar ones. He then takes the essays and marks them. Right feedbacks are given to students as the best ways of writing the patterns. This approach offers students the opportunity to use a variety of patterns which help them in developing good paragraph depending on the question type.

4.4.5 Paragraph inner structure

According to Rasheed et al (2013), paragraph inner structure provides a rather rational account of the inner structure of a paragraph. More concisely, it links the sentences

contained in the paragraph and their order with supra-paragraph elements such as discourse markers. All sentences in a paragraph, except for the topic sentence, have peripheral or even marginal roles in terms of serving the idea involved. What this basically means is that, whereas the topic sentence marks the topic of the paragraph, the other sentences explain this topic sentence involuntarily. Any explaining sentence shifting its orientation against that topic processed will end up in one of two fates:

1. To be removed from the paragraph involving that topic sentence; hence the coherence and cohesion of the paragraph would break down Haliday and Hasan, (1976).

2. To mark the end of the paragraph and, thus become a topic sentence of another paragraph on its own; hence it disconnects the flow of thoughts and explanation process geared by the previously established topic sentence.

In using this approach, the teacher must consider two things: a topic sentence that expresses the main thrust of the paragraph and the accompanying sentences that explain or account for the topic sentence. They call the accompanying sentences explaining sentences, and the complexity of the topic sentence determines the number of explaining sentences in the paragraph. In the Step Model approach, each step represents one level of maturity and the topic sentence is the first step towards the maturity of the idea. For instance, if the topic sentence is simple, the explaining sentences or the supporting sentences may be at most four.(the topic sentence, the major supporting sentence explains the topic sentence, then the third and the fourth sentences explain the major supporting sentence. On the other hand, if the topic sentence is heavy or complex, the explaining sentences may go beyond four. This approach provides both teachers and students the ease to associate each topic sentence

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with related explaining sentence and in situations of using complex topic sentence, link explanations in sequence.

4.5 Summary of chapter four

The chapter has interpreted and analyzed data collected for this research work. The test, observation and the interviews were analysed bringing to light the knowledge S.H.S. one student in Agona East have on paragraph structure. The work also identified the patterns of paragraphing that posed difficulties for S.H.S. one students like time and space pattern, definition pattern, comparison pattern, process pattern, order of importance pattern just to mention a few. It also considers strategies in improving the teaching of paragraphing. It is evident from the presentation and discussion in this chapter that majority of the students do not have explicit knowledge on paragraph structure, and this affects them developing paragraphs adequately. This chapter prepares the ground for the discussion on the outcome of the study and the way forward for the teaching and learning in the second cycle schools.
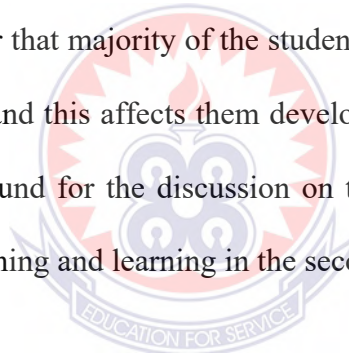
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the summary, findings, summary of the findings, recommendations, implications, suggestions for further research and conclusions.

5.1 Summary

This study sought out to examine students' knowledge on paragraph structure, the pattern of paragraphing difficulties among students and strategies that can be used to improve the teaching of paragraphing. Scholars prove that a good paragraph structure should have topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences. A well-developed paragraph possesses unity, coherence and adequacy. One hundred and sixty students were used for this study. It was evident that some of the students have difficulties in writing the topic sentences. The major problem lies with the developing the supporting and the concluding sentences. The researcher also identified that students had patterns of paragraph difficulties and this made writing certain patterns difficult for them. The study outlines violations in students' writings based on (Bain's principle of paragraph structure). Strategies that can be adopted in teaching paragraphing or paragraph structure have been outlined.

The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What type of structures of the paragraph do students create in their writings?

2. What difficulties do students have in the construction of different paragraph patterns?

3. What are the strategies that can be used to improve paragraphing among the first year students in Agona East District?

5.2 Findings: research question 1 (What type of structures of the paragraph do students create in their writings?)

The instruments used were: observation, interview and test. The interviews conducted by the researcher proved that, majority of the students have wrong notions about paragraphing, indentation and topic sentences. With regard to question on paragraph structure, handfuls of the students were able to answer. The impression here is that students do not have explicit knowledge on paragraph structure, thus, topic sentence, supporting and concluding sentences

In analyzing the test, the researcher found that some of the students have knowledge on topic sentence whilst others do not. In the essays, it was clear that some of the paragraphs had multiple topic sentences within the paragraph; the supporting sentences did not exhibit unity, coherence, adequacy and the concluding paragraphs were poorly done. There was an evidence of lack of concluding sentences. With the narrative, they did not restate the topic, where they have to suggest solutions to the problems; they did not do that or assigning a reason for taking a particular stand. At the end of the analysis, it was clear that majority of the students do not have explicit knowledge on paragraph structure.

5.3. Research question 2: What difficulties do students have in the construction of different paragraph patterns?

With regard to the second research question, the research has shown that students have problems in writing paragraph patterns. In order to identify the problems, the researcher gave the respondents essays to write comprising the compare and contrast patterning, problems and solutions patterning, cause and effect patterning, definition

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patterning just to mention a few. The essays were analyzed and the findings are as follows: After the analysis, the researcher found the following:

5.3.1 Time and space pattern

Students who chose that essay had problems with providing important details in the sequence of narration. Scholars add that it is necessary to present information in a chronological order especially in a recounting of events as they unfold. There was problem of sequence of tense as well as chronology. No transitional words were used as well as the day and time of events.

5.3.2. Definition pattern

Most students did not give an acceptable definitions and this made the understanding of keywords difficult for the researcher. Students used definition pattern wrongly for certain questions that they could have used explanatory approach.

5.3.3 Compare and contrast pattern

The compare and contrast pattern was wrongly done by students. The topic sentence was only introduced with its explanation. Students only explained the topic sentences without making any comparison. They were to compare free education policy to fee paying policy and this was poorly done.

5.3.4 Process pattern

Students did not describe how their favourite foods are prepared to show a step by step process of cooking the foods. Those who were able to describe some steps did not arrange them in sequential order. For example, some respondents prepared their fufu before the soups were prepared. Again, the respondents did not make use of

transitions such as afterwards, immediately, then, at the same time, in the end, before, during, currently, finally and others.

5.4. Research question 3 (What are the strategies that can be used to improve paragraphing among the first year students in Agona East District?)

With regard to the third research question, the researcher interviewed both the students and the teachers. Some of the students suggested that teachers should expose them to more writing. In the earlier interview, students complained that they scarcely write essays and therefore do not have the skills in writing essays. Some students suggested that teachers should take them through a better way of writing paragraphs. Some students lamented that some of the teachers refuse to take them through the steps of writing paragraphs. "At times too, we write the essays before the teachers correct us so if the right thing is done, we will do well when it comes to paragraph writing. According to the students, some teachers refuse to mark the exercises when they write the essays so teachers marking their exercises will motivate them to write essays all the time.

5.4.1 Teachers

Some teachers talked of process approach of teaching the paragraph development. Some suggested that in teaching paragraphing, teachers can do well to take students through the process.

5.4.2 Other findings

Richards (2008) explains that paragraph hamburger is a writing that visually outlines the key components of a paragraph. These are:

a. The introduction (top bun)

b. The internal or supporting information (the filling)

c. The conclusion (bottom bun)

Lunsford (1991) mentions that collaborative writing helps the individual to learn from several people writing. In a true collaborative environment, each contributor has an almost equal ability to add, edit, and remove text. It is easier to do if the group has a specific end goal in mind.

5.4.3 Summary of findings

Findings from this study have shown that:

- Majority of the students do not have knowledge on topic sentence whilst few of the students do.

- Some of the paragraphs had lot of mixed ideas.

- Most of the students' compositions lack adequate development.

- Students' compositions lack coherence.

- Some of the students' composition did not ensure unity.

- There was an evidence of lack of concluding sentences.

Students have difficulties in constructing patterns of paragraphs especially compare and contrast pattern, definition pattern and process pattern and time and space pattern.

5.4.4. Recommendations

This section talks of the pedagogical implications that the findings of this research has on the teaching and learning of paragraph development and English Language in general. The implications are of significance policy makers, syllabus designers, text books writers and English Language teachers.

5.4.5 Syllabus designers

The researcher found from the Senior High English Language Syllabus that, paragraph development is a topic that is only treated in the year one (form one syllabus). Since writing a good paragraph is a problem to students, I recommend that in reviewing subsequent English Language Syllabus for Senior High Schools, the topic "paragraph development" should be captured or treated in all the year groups. (Senior High1-3).

Also, the researcher appeals that paragraph structure should be treated as a sub- topic under paragraph development.

5.4.7 Textbooks writers

Writing skill is considered to play a major role in the learner's academic achievement, yet users and textbooks writers overlook that. Most textbooks writers write to cover only paragraphing, that is, definitions, importance of paragraphing and sometimes samples of well written paragraphs. The researcher recommends that writers should properly outline the structure of a paragraph and also treat paragraph structure as a sub-topic.

5.4.8 Teachers

Teachers of English at the various second cycle institutions should conduct research on their students from time to time in the various aspects of the language to find out their students' difficulties in order to organize remedial teaching geared towards finding solutions to the difficulties and weaknesses they may identify.

1. In composition writing, teachers must use process writing approach. This involves prewriting, writing, revision, editing and publishing.

2. Writing good paragraphs involves good grammar, so teachers should do well to teach grammar effectively especially tenses.

3. In teaching paragraph development, teachers should draw students' attention to paragraph structure.

4. Teachers must endeavour to modify their teaching methods and move away from traditional teacher centered approach to student centered approach.

5. Teachers should develop some sort of intrinsic motivation to encourage students and push them to higher institutions of the educational ladder.

6. In-service training in form of seminars and workshops should be organized to stimulate healthy debates, discussions and sharing of ideas on the teaching and learning of English Language.

7. In teaching paragraph development, teachers should highlight on elements of paragraphing. (Unity, coherence, and adequacy).

8. Educational institutions responsible for training teachers should put in place measures aimed at producing enough teachers teaching in the Senior High Schools.

9. Once there are enough teachers specialized in the teaching of English, educational authorities should make it a policy that only teachers of English are made to teach English. It would be good practice if experienced, trained and qualified teachers are put in the K.G and the Senior High Schools to help students to develop interest in the teaching and learning of compositions.

10. Finally, the researcher recommends that in teaching paragraph structure like paragraph hamburger, collaborative writing, paragraph pattern and process approach should be used.

5.5. Suggestions for further research

This study has outlined that most of the S.H.S. one students in Agona East do not have explicit knowledge on paragraph structure. It is my hope that other researchers would take a critical look at students' knowledge on paragraph structure in a different district or school. Researchers can conduct research on how students develop their paragraphs or paragraph pattern difficulties students have.

5.6 Conclusion

The reason that brought about the conduct of this research was the poor paragraphing work by the students of Kwanyako S.H.S. The researcher identified the problem when she gave form one students a diagnostic test. The problem was serious that the researcher decided to conduct a study to know students' knowledge on paragraph structure and how S.H.S. one students in her District (Agona East District) develop their paragraphs. Literature related to paragraph structure, paragraph development were reviewed and linked to the research. The findings proved that most of the S.H.S. one students in the district do not have explicit knowledge on paragraph structure and students have difficulties in constructing paragraph patterns. Various strategies in teaching paragraphing have been outlined in this research including process approach, paragraph pattern.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

   i.   What is paragraphing?

  ii.   What do you know about topic sentence?

 iii.   Do you make use of supporting sentences when you write your essays?

 iv.   What are some of the problems you have in relation to paragraph development?

  v.   In your point of view, what do you think can be done to improve these paragraph writings challenges you have enumerated?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS.

   i.   Do you teach your students paragraph structure?

  ii.   What are some of the methods you employ in teaching paragraph development?

 iii.   Are your students able to develop their paragraphs adequately?

 iv.   Are your students able to exhibit unity, adequacy and coherence in their essays?

  v.   What are some of the problems you encounter in teaching paragraph development?

 vi.   How can these problems be minimized?