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Fundamentals of English — and — Communication Skills

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Chapter Seven

Discourse Types, Letter Writing and Paragraphing

by

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Introduction

In this chapter, we shall attempt to discuss different types of essay writing and paragraphing. But before we do that, we shall begin with general discussions which apply to all forms of writing.

Out of all the four skills of language acquisition and learning, listening, speaking, reading and writing, writing appears to be more complex and laborious. The reason is that in writing, apart from handling with the correct use of language, one has to organize one's ideas in such an acceptable fashion as to be able to achieve the desired effect. The problem of writing is thus most complex in a second language situation such as ours, where one thinks in one's mother tongue but has to write in English.

However, these problems can be adequately taken care of if one painstakingly goes through the rules and regulations governing writing, understands them and tries to put them into practice.

General Considerations

There are different forms of writing, with these individual characteristics. But there are some more or less common writing styles. The aim of this chapter is to discuss these general considerations in regard to all forms of writing.

Stages in Writing

There are three basic stages, stages one has to pass through, irrespective of the form of writing one is involved in. These stages are:

1. Pre-writing stage,
2. Writing stage, and
3. Re-writing stage.

Pre-Writing Stage

At this stage the primary thing a writer does is to choose a topic. In doing so, a person should choose a topic that is familiar to him for which he has enough ideas to discuss. He should also consider the time duration so that he does not choose a topic he cannot finish within the time limit.

When the writer settles for a topic, he should go further to think out ideas that are relevant to the topic. Where time permits, he can carry out library research in order to supplement his own ideas. In such a situation, ideas borrowed from other sources must always be acknowledged.

Outline

There is always the need to organize the ideas already sourced from here and there. It is at this stage that *outlining* comes in.

An outline is the arrangement of the skeletal ideas that are relevant to a topic and the way they are related. An outline is very important to a writer because it does not only help him to arrange his ideas logically and sequentially, but also helps him to remember the ideas when the writing is in progress. Students are advised to always draw an outline for any topic they want to write before they commence writing.

For example, the topic: *Drug Abuse Among Youths* can have the following outline:

1. **Introduction**
 - a. What is drug abuse?
 - b. Examples of drug abuse
2. **Causes of drug abuse**
 - (a) Peer group influence
 - (b) Poor family upbringing
 - (c) Frustration
3. **Effects of drug abuse on the individual and society**
 - (a) Mental ill-health

- (b) Death
- (c) Reduction in workforce
- (d) Imprisonment

4. **Solution**

- (a) Counselling
- (b) Good up-bringing
- (c) Creation of job opportunities

5. **Conclusion**

Writing Stage

It is at this stage that the writing proper is carried out using the outline. One is expected at this stage to add flesh to the skeletal ideas listed on the outline. There are certain steps that should be taken to ensure that one's writing is not only effective but also achieves the desired objective. The steps include:

1. **Paragraph Development**

Paragraph, as we all know, is a collection of sentences on one idea. A good paragraph should be an embodiment of one central idea, which is usually expressed in the topic sentence, while other sentences go on to elaborate the main idea.

With the outline already on ground, all the writer needs to do is to pick the ideas one after another and develop them in paragraphs. In doing so, efforts should be made to ensure that the qualities of paragraph - *unity*, *coherence* and *emphasis* - are emphasized.

In addition, the individual paragraphs should not be left hanging. They should be made to link with one another in a chain-like manner. The coherence between the paragraphs could be achieved through the use of transitional words and paragraph linkers or connectives. The following paragraph linkers should be noted and put in use when necessary.

Function	Linkers
1. Addition	- moreover, furthermore, and also, in addition, etc.
2. Concession	- although, though, even though, etc.
3. Contrast	- however, but, on the other hand, on the contrary, etc.
4. Emphasis	- in fact, indeed, certainly, etc.
5. Explanation	- as I was saying, in other words, that is, etc.
6. Example	- for instance, for example, to illustrate, etc.
7. Order	- first, second, third, finally, next, etc.
8. Sequences	- moreover, also, furthermore, etc.
9. Similarity	- like the last, etc.
10. Clarification	- in other words, that is, in particular, etc.
11. Intensification	- particularly, most importantly, etc.

2. *Use of Appropriate Language Style*

For any writing to succeed, the language and style must be appropriate. There should be effective use of language. The level of vocabulary, the register and diction should be appropriate.

The choice of words should not only agree with the topic but also suit the audience and the occasion. Formal occasion should require formal language while informal language should be suitable for informal situation. Emphasis should be placed on sentence types. They should be varied and blended where necessary.

3. *Effective Use of the Mechanics of the Language*

The mechanics of the language include punctuation, spelling, tense, agreement, etc. A writing is bound to fail where effective use of these mechanics is not made. Experience has shown that examination candidates lose marks in their essays because of poor application of the mechanics of the language. Therefore, students should endeavour to ensure that their writing is devoid of wrong punctuation, spelling, tense and agreement.

The Structure of Essay

A well written essay, no matter the type, usually has three parts.

They are:

1. The introduction
2. The body
3. The conclusion

The Introduction

The introduction of an essay usually sets the topic in motion and gives it a focus. In writing the introductory part of an essay, effort should be made to ensure that it is good enough to stimulate the interest and attention of the reader. First impression, they say, lasts long. Therefore the introduction should be devoid of all mistakes or misinformation which may discourage the reader. There is no one way of introducing an essay. Introduction varies from topic to topic or from writer to writer. While some writers may choose to commence their introduction with quotation, others may start with anecdote, definition or explanation. Notice that introducing an essay with definition is only appropriate when the topic is not a familiar one or when a writer wants to examine a topic from his own perspective other than the universal view of the topic.

The Body

The body of an essay contains all the discussions, explanations, facts and figures. The body of an essay should be developed in line with the outline earlier drawn. The ideas should be developed in paragraphs, and the paragraphs properly linked.

The Conclusion

The conclusion sums up the discussion. At times, some essays are concluded by reiterating the main ideas already stated in the body. A good conclusion naturally signals that the essay has come to an end, and after it, nothing more could be said on the topic in that dispensation. Students should ensure that the concluding part of their essay is sound enough because conclusions, just like introductions, hardly escape the critical eyes of the reader.

The Salutation

Any of the following salutations is suitable for semi-formal letter:

Dear Mr. Eze,

Dear Mrs. Obi,

The Body

The body of semi-formal letter usually has three parts, namely, *the introduction*, *the message* and *the conclusion*. The introduction states the theme of the letter, followed by the message which is developed in paragraphs. Finally, there is the conclusion, which is usually abrupt since there is no need for parting words.

The language of semi-formal letter is in between formality and informality. It is a combination of some features of formal and informal language. Whereas colloquial expressions such as contracted forms are permissible in semi-formal letter, the use of slangy expression is not allowed. The language should be framed to reflect the relationship between the writer and the recipient.

The Subscription

The subscription of semi-formal letter depends on the salutation. If the salutation is Dear Mr. or Dear Mrs., the subscription should be "Yours sincerely".

The Writer's Name

In semi-formal letter, the writer's full name (first name and surname) is required.

Informal Letter

Informal letter is also referred to as personal or private letter. This is the kind of letter written to a close relation or friend. This kind of letter is usually very common among students, because they are always writing to their relations (father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt etc) or friends.

as the aim is usually to present a true picture of what is being described.

According to Uzoma et al, the points to note for more effective description are:

1. Describe only what you know well and limit the scope of your topic.
2. Choose your words carefully and for the best effect. You require a wide vocabulary (i.e know many words) to be able to do this. And the only way to acquire this is to read widely (novels, essays, biographies, magazines, journals, etc.)
3. In describing events it is better to proceed orderly from what happened first to what happened last.
4. In describing persons, decide whether to start with simple external aspects such as dress, physical characteristics, etc. or with personality and character.
5. Involve all your senses in the description, shapes, colours, sound, smell, sizes, feelings, etc.
6. Use a lot of analogies, similes, examples, etc., to make your description clearer and richer. Also compare and contrast with what you think the reader already knows.
7. There should be variety in your description. Some description can be simple and straightforward; others can be more emotionally charged because of your involvement.

Narrative Essay

A narrative essay is the one that tells a story. For instance, an essay on the topic "My First Day as a Student in a University" or "The Most Interesting Journey I Made" or "The Most Memorable Day in My Life" is undoubtedly a narrative essay. A narrative essay just like a story can only succeed if it is capable of sustaining the interest of the reader. Therefore, in writing a narrative essay, one should try as much as possible to ensure that the story is good enough to sustain the interest of the reader. In doing so, it is not out of place to bring in element of exaggeration.

According to Uzoma et al, a narrative essay can be planned as follows:

1. *Follow a chronological order.* This is because in life, events take place one after the other. For example, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age or, seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks and years.
2. *Make our introduction simple and direct.*
3. *Each idea should contain one main idea.* There should be a topic sentence.
4. *Concentrate only on those details and facts that are important to your narrative.* Don't allow long winded explanations to destroy your essay. Give your narration a setting - locality and characters. Stories do not take place in a vacuum.
5. *Add dialogue and humour to your narration when necessary.* It makes it interesting and lively.
6. *Avoid repetition and vary your sentence structure.*
7. *Begin with an exciting incident (in an imaginary narrative).* And if you want to point out a lesson, state it simply and clearly at the end.

Although we have attempted to delineate descriptive and narrative essays, it should be pointed out that none of them is entirely exclusive. The reason is that in a descriptive essay, for instance, some situations may call for narration. On the other hand, it is also possible to have some elements of description in a narrative essay.

Argumentative Essay

This is the type of essay in which attempt is made to prove that one side of a thing is better than the other side. Argumentative essay is a debate in writing in the sense that an argumentative topic usually has two sides which can be argued for or against. The essence of argumentative essay is to assess one's ability to critically evaluate and pass judgement. Since this type of essay is argument or debate one can only succeed in writing it if one's argument is sound and convincing. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that one's stand or opinion is buttressed with concrete and convincing evidence. There should be no room for ambiguous statements as the presentation should be straightforward and clear.

In examination situation, argumentative essay could be presented in form of a debate. The writer should take note of this situation and present the essay in speech form. The essay should therefore begin with vocatives, where people present are formally recognized. For instance, we can have:

The Chairman,
Panel of Judges,
Moderator,
Fellow Debaters
Ladies and Gentlemen

The Vocatives should be followed by greeting and the statement of the stand of the writer, that is, whether he is proposing or opposing.

In the body of the essay, the writer should use expressions that would indicate the presence of an audience. This could be achieved through the use of rhetorical questions (questions that do not require answers). At the end of the essay, the writer should also indicate that the essay has come to an end by thanking the audience.

Expository Essay

This is the type of essay that attempts to expose, inform, interpret or explain with particular reference to a given topic. Take for instance, if a writer goes to explain the causes of road accident to the best of his knowledge, such a writer-up is said to be expository. The research projects written by students in fulfilment of the award of NCE, First Degree or Higher Degree are examples of expository writing.

Expository essay can be in the form of an article for publication, either in a newspaper, or a magazine. It can also be in the form of an address or lecture. Whichever one it is, students are advised to ensure that they keep to the format.

Letter Writing

Introduction

The skill of letter writing is one of the essential skills a student

should possess. The reason is that at one time or the other, one may be required to communicate through the channel of letter writing. It is therefore our aim in this section to discuss in full all aspects of letter writing and it is our hope that the readers would find it interesting and useful.

Types of Letters

Based on format, letters are traditionally classified into three. They are:

1. Formal Letter
2. Semi-formal Letter
3. Informal Letter

Formal Letter

Formal letter, otherwise referred to as business or official letter, is any letter written for official purposes. It includes such letters as:

1. Letters of applications for job
2. Letters to government establishments or departments
3. Letters from one institution to another
4. Letters to the editor, etc.

The Formal Features of Formal Letters

The formal features of formal letter include the following:

1. The addresser's address
2. The date
3. The addressee's address
4. The greeting
5. The subject matter of the letter
6. The body
7. The subscription
8. The signature
9. The writer's name:

The Addresser's Address

The addresser's address is the writer's address, which is

usually stated at the right hand corner of the writing paper. Note that it is wrong to write one's name on top of the address. Also, it is wrong to state the address all in capital letters. Conventionally, the address could be presented either in block form or indented form, depending on the writer's choice.

Example

a. **Block Form**

Department of Economics,
Alvan Ikoku College of Education,
Owerri.

Or

No. 10 Douglas Road,
Owerri,
Imo State.

b. **Indented Form**

Department of Economics,
School of Social Sciences,
Alvan Ikoku College of Education,
Owerri.

Or

No. 10 Douglas Road,
Owerri,
Imo State.

The inclusion of Local Government, State or even the country on the address depends on the destination of the letter in question. If a letter is meant to move from one Local Government to another, one State to another or one country to another, the addresser's address should include the Local Government, the state or the country. Take for instance, a letter meant for overseas ought to have the following address:

St. Peter's Church,
Umuozi Inyishi,
P.O. Box 38,
Ikeduru L.G.A.,
Imo State,
Nigeria.

In the above examples, you would notice that at the end of each line of the addresses, there is a comma; but one may decide to do away with the commas only to have a final full stop at the end of the address. This convention is also acceptable. Example:

P.O. Box 45,
Owerri West LGA
Imo State
Nigeria.

The Date

After the addresser's address, what follows is the date. There should be no gap between the addresser's address and date if the letter is handwritten. The date could be written in any of the following formats:

9th February, 1999
February 9, 1999
9 February, 1999

The Addressee's Address

The addressee's address is the address of the recipient which is written by the left hand margin of the writing paper, immediately after the date. It usually begins with the designation of the recipient, followed by the address. Example:

The Personnel Manager,
Shell Development Company,
P.M.B 1030,
Port-Harcourt,
Rivers State.

Or
The Registrar
Alvan Ikoku College of Education
Owerri
Imo state

There should be uniformity in stating the addresser's address and the addressee's address. That is, if the writer chooses to use block form, the two addresses should be written in block form.

Salutation

Any of the following salutation formats is suitable for an official letter:

Dear Sir,
Sir,
Dear Madam,
Madam,

Where it is not possible to know the sex of the recipient, it is better to write "Dear Sir".

The Subject Matter or Title

The subject of an official letter is usually summarized and stated immediately after the salutation. The title can either be capitalized or written with initial capital letters for the lexical words. The subject matter should not be written before the salutation, and it is usually underlined.

The Body

The body of official letter is usually made up of three parts, namely *the introduction*, *the message* and *the conclusion*. In the introduction, there is no room for exchange of pleasantries, instead the main aim of the letter is stated. Subsequently, the message of the letter is stated and developed in paragraphs. When the message is exhausted, the conclusion is drawn.

The language of business letter is strictly official. By this we mean there is no room for informal language. The use of slangy expression, colloquial expression, and contracted forms is strictly prohibited. The language should be polite as much as possible and should not degenerate into abuse, no matter the emotional state of the writer.

The Subscription

There is only one acceptable form of subscription in an official letter, and that is "Yours faithfully". The 'Y' of "Yours" is usually written in capital letter, while the 'f' of "faithfully" is written in small letter. There is a mandatory comma immediately after "faithfully".

The Writer's Name and Signature

The subscription is immediately followed by the writer's signature, full name and designation where applicable. Notice that the signature comes before the name and not the other way round. Note the following.

Yours faithfully,

Signature

Jonni Ade,

General Secretary.

Semi-Formal Letter

Semi-formal letter, just as the name implies, is partly formal and partly informal. A good example of semi-formal letter is a letter to an adult friend or one's parent's friends. It can also be a letter to one's boss or employer asking for recommendation.

The Formal Features of Semi-Formal Letter

The Addresser's Address and Date:

Unlike formal letter, there is only one address in semi-formal letter and that is the addresser's address. All that was said with regard to addresser's address and date also applies here.

Re-Writing Stage

One's writing may not be perfect at first attempt, hence the re-writing stage. Re-writing stage is a stage in writing when the writer goes through what he has written with the aim of effecting necessary corrections. The nature of the corrections depends on the situation. If it were examination situation, the much the writer can do at this stage is simply reading through the piece meticulously and making necessary corrections as much as time permits him. But if the situation is such that one is writing on his own and he has all the time, this stage may imply outright re-writing of the piece with the intention of producing a better write-up. In view of this explanation, students are advised to always carve out time to go through what they have written before submission or despatch, whether in examination situation or when they are writing on their own. It is a way of saving marks or saving oneself from embarrassment.

Types of Essay

There are basically four types of essay. They are:

1. Descriptive Essay
2. Narrative Essay
3. Argumentative Essay
4. Expository Essay.

Descriptive Essay

A descriptive essay is one that attempts to describe a person, place, object, event, scene, etc. Take for instance, if one's friend is missing, one can write a description of him and give to the police to enable them to locate one's friend. Also, one can describe one's father's compound to somebody else who does not know it. It is also possible to describe an accident scene or a market scene. All these are instances of descriptive essay. The import of descriptive essay is to create a true picture of a person, object or an event through description. To be able to achieve this goal, one should possess descriptive power as much as possible. There is also the need to possess a good mastery of vocabulary. A descriptive essay does not give room for exaggeration

Formal Features of Informal Letter

The Addresser's Address and Date These are as discussed previously under formal and semi-formal letters. Students should be reminded that *on no account should they write their name on top of their address*. Again the address can either be stated in block or indented form.

The Salutation or Greeting This takes various forms, depending on the recipient. The following should be noted:

Parents:	My dear father, My dear mother,
Siblings:	My dear brother, Dear brother, Dear Brother Mike, Dear Chidi, My dear sister, Dear sister, Dear Sister Mary, Dear Chinyere,
Other relations:	Dear uncle, Dear aunt, Dear cousin, Dear Uncle John,
Friends:	Dear Ben, Dear Joy, etc.

In an informal letter, it is wrong to write "Dear friend" when writing to a friend. The above examples should be strictly adhered to as there is no alternative to them.

The Body

The body of an informal letter, just like other forms of letter, is made up of three parts, namely, *the introduction, the message and the conclusion*.

The introduction is devoted for exchange of pleasantries. In some cases it could be a forum for the writer to acknowledge the

receipt of a previous letter from the addressee. Whenever is the situation, the introduction is meant to establish the close relationship that exists between the writer and the recipient. Students should ensure that their letters are well introduced to stimulate the interest of the reader.

For every letter, there is always a message or messages the writer wants to pass across. After the introduction the message follows. The message should be developed in paragraphs, keeping the rules of paragraph development.

The conclusion sums up the letter. However, there is not one way of concluding a letter. The conclusion depends on the writer's intentions. A writer may conclude his letter by wishing his recipient well. Whatever the case may be, the conclusion should be written to ensure that the letter has come to a conclusion.

The Language of Informal Letter

The language is strictly informal. There is no room for formal usages. Thus, the use of colloquial expressions such as contracted forms and slangy expressions are permissible. Note that where slang is used, it must be enclosed in quotation marks. The language of informal letter should also be chatty, hence some of the sentences are likely to be short.

The Subscription

The subscription of an informal letter can take any form provided it is not "Yours faithfully" or "Yours truly". Therefore, any of the following can be suitable:

Yours ever,

Yours affectionately,

Yours affectionate son/daughter,

Yours, etc.

Note that in the examples above, the "Y" for "Yours" is written in capital letter, while the subsequent words are written in small letter. It should also be pointed out that the word "Yours" has no apostrophe before or after 's'. It is therefore wrong to write:

Yours sincerely

Amara

The Writer's Name

In informal letter, only the first name of the writer is required. The surname is not necessary. Thus, for a writer, whose name is Emeka Njoku, only *Emeka* should be written.

Let us at this juncture examine briefly paragraphing as an essential component in writing skills. We shall consider paragraph structure and development.

Paragraphing - Structure and Development

What is a Paragraph?

The grammatical units, morpheme, word, phrase and clause culminate in the formation of sentence, which is the largest grammatical unit used to express thought. Higher than a sentence in expressing thought is paragraph, as the lower grammatical units combine to form a sentence, so also sentences combine to form paragraph. Hence a paragraph is defined as *a combination of related sentences that expresses one given idea*.

In writing, paragraph is indicated by indentation from the margin of the first line. Introduction of a paragraph in a write up usually signals the introduction of a new idea or a turn in the thought process. Besides, paragraph serves as a kind of punctuation mark in that it indicates a pause which is longer than a full stop.

Paragraph Structure and Development

The nucleus of a paragraph is a *topic sentence*. The topic sentence is a sentence in a paragraph that contains the main idea. Other sentences that help in building the paragraph are called *supporting sentences*. There are three positions, where the topic sentence can be found in a paragraph. The positions are *the beginning*, *the middle* and *the end*.

However, the most common paragraphs are those that have their topic sentences at the beginning.

Paragraph has no specific length as the length varies according to the writer and the ideas being expressed. However, there are one sentence paragraphs, as can be seen in newspaper reporting and dialogues in novels. Also, long paragraphs, which can consist of about ten sentences, exist. Be that as it may, students are advised to vary the length of their paragraphs and ensure that the paragraphs are proportionate to the ideas and thought they express.

The Qualities of Paragraph

The three basic qualities of a paragraph are *unity*, *coherence* and *emphasis*.

Unity

A well written paragraph should have unity. The unity can only be achieved if there is only *one central idea* which is expressed in the topic sentence, followed by other elaborating sentences, which illustrate the topic sentence. The principle of unity of a paragraph is violated if the writer in the course of his writing includes material that are not relevant to the central idea.

Coherence

Any paragraph, *whose sentences are not logically and sequentially arranged, lacks coherence. A coherent paragraph should be an embodiment of sentences that have causal relationship.* Coherence in a paragraph is usually a function of the logical sequence of ideas which are achieved through the following stylistic devices.

- I. *The use of transitional words or expressions and linkers:*
 - a. Transitional words or expressions, which help to link sentences in a paragraph, abound but they perform different functions, such as:
 - a. Addition - moreover, furthermore, in addition, next, finally, etc.
 - b. Contrast - yet, however, nevertheless, but, in contrast, on the other hand.

- c. Comparison - similarly, likewise, in like manner, by way of comparison, etc.
- d. Time - meanwhile, afterward, immediately, presently, etc.
- e. Result - consequently, as a result, accordingly, thus, therefore, etc.
- f. Illustration - for example, for instance, to illustrate, etc.
- g. Purpose - for this purpose, to this end, etc.

It should be pointed out that although the above transitional words and expressions are used within paragraphs in order to achieve coherence, they are also used to link up paragraphs in the body of an essay.

2. *The Use of Pronouns:* Coherence is also achieved in the body of a paragraph through the precise use of pronouns to reiterate their antecedents and link one sentence or idea to another.

3. *Coherence in the body of a paragraph can be achieved through the repetition of specific ideas, but not necessarily the same word or phrase.*

Emphasis A well development paragraph should have emphasis as one of its qualities. Granted, a paragraph, ideally, should deal with one main idea, the idea should be articulated in such a way that the reader is not left in doubt as regards what the paragraph is all about. The main idea could be foregrounded through the use of repetition or expression, such as *mainly, in the main, especially, most importantly, chiefly*, etc.

Types of Paragraph

1. **Loose paragraph** A paragraph is said to be a loose one if the topic sentence is positioned at the beginning of the paragraph. Consider the following:

Paragraph 1

Give some words head The cost of living has tremendously gone up now, the result of an ageing man. There is no employment opportunities, even for the ones who are working hardly received their salaries just and when needed. Where the salaries are paid, the money hardly buy anything because of high rate of inflation. It is a sorry situation which has affected the masses, the very old and the young. Some have "sold" their house and property too, to save the situation.

Comment The above paragraph is a good example of a "topic sentence" paragraph. The paragraph is made up of six sentences with the first sentences the topic sentence. The topic sentence sums up the message of the paragraph, while other sentences more "active" is doing things to achieve.

3. *Mixed paragraph* A mixed paragraph is one that has its topic sentence somewhere in the middle of the paragraph. Example: See below.

Paragraph 11

Yahweh has a plan for the people of Israel, which is to conquer the land of Canaan. While every Jew wants to be successful with success, nobody wants to follow the way of the Lord. Yet, some people succeed while others fail. The question arises: *Why were people victorious or victims of the Lord's plan?* *Why did some succeed while others failed?* The answer is: because, first, one may be born in a holy because one has been blessed since birth. Second, family may be said to be blessed and other view appears to be "more religious" because many were the victims of the Lord's plan. The Lord's plan is to bless the people who have been blessed since birth, but could not be blessed since birth.

Comment The above paragraph is undoubtedly a "mixed paragraph" because the topic sentence is neither at the beginning nor the end. The topic sentence of the paragraph is the "sentence that begins." The question arises: why have people not been blessed since birth? The answer is: because they have not been blessed since birth.

3. **Periodic Paragraph** A periodic paragraph has its main sentence at the end. A periodic paragraph usually contains only one or two sentences, which often mean the climax of the paragraph. We can also apply it to consider the following:

Paragraph III

I have always regarded him with keen interest. He 'surprised' me by being remarkably generous and never giving any reason. He does his assignments when necessary and occasionally 'helps' me submitted on time. I had expected this of course. He is always a model student. Apart from academic success, he participates actively in school extra-curricular activities. After all, a well-rounded education should include these things. *For, no doubt, some people do*

4. **Comment** On the above paragraph, the last sentence is the main sentence which summarizes the main idea of the paragraph. Periodic paragraph is a useful device for this purpose.

It should be pointed out that here and in other types of paragraph *flow* is maintained *paraphratically* (discussed above) to separate one from other. The one to be adopted depends on one's style and purpose. However, content should be well selected, the type required to present an effective flow instead of sticking to only one paragraph type so that we do not see then writing monotonous.

The three modern types stated above should be recognized as *basic* as before to encompass the paragraph. Attempts should be made to keep to the standards of clarity and coherence that are then enabled of paragraph *unity*, *coherence* and *effectiveness* so that paragraph can match on the paragraphs *discussing* *open* *argument* which is capable of being summarized in one sentence.

Exercises

1. What are discourse types?
2. Mention and explain features of a letter.
3. List the types of letter there are.
4. What is a paragraph?
5. Discuss the qualities of a good paragraph.
6. Mention and discuss types of paragraphs.

