

AN ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH COMPOSITION PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: *An investigation of composition performance is important matter of contention to probe that one may achieve further compelling and authentic ending. Paragraph composition performance is one of the concerns. The target of the contemporary analysis is to inspect the extent to which the students' paragraph composition performance. Therefore, survey study was conceived to achieve the purpose. The third semester students of English Study Program of FKIP – UNISI Tembilahan were determined as the shareholders. They were required to compose two kinds of paragraph; process paragraph and comparison/contrast paragraph. There are five evaluation criterions; format, punctuation and mechanics, contents, organization, and sentence structure. Dealing the results of data analysis, it disclosed that their paragraph composition performance on each composition elements was diverse. It could be justified from the data which six participants (27.3%) worked out in the admirable grade, nine of them (40.9%) were recognized in competent level, and seven participants (31.8%) could achieve in sufficient category. As the final comment, it could be determined that their paragraph composition performance was in the sufficient to admirable level. Nevertheless, to gain better endings, more practice is brought to their mind.*

Keywords: *Paragraph, Composition, Performance*

INTRODUCTION

Having competent performance of composition in learning English is decisive. One allows exposing his sense through

written form. It is a constructive language performance to deliver message or issue in the form of inscribed way. Therefore, it enables to restate shortly composition

performance, one of the major skills in language learning, is a mean to convey writer's point of view to the readers.

Composition performance is considered as challenging steps. It causes in delivering message into written form an author ought to deal with considerable points as fluency, organization, diction, language use, and mechanics. Those points are paramount in writing skill. Myles (2002:1) argues the competence of composition performance does not simply acquire; it is enrolled as a practical package in the formal set-up and process instructional. Thus it has to take routine practices over experience.

The third semester students of English Study Program of FKIP – UNISI Tembilahan take Writing II course which focuses on writing paragraph. Therefore, in this investigation, it focuses on composing paragraph. Oshima and Hogue (2007:3) prescribe that a paragraph is a group of disclose assertion that a writer evolves a subject. The first sentence explains the specific point of the topic. Then the next sentences in the paragraph support the points.

There are some related findings which focus on paragraph composition performance. Firstly, Prananda (2016) conducted a study on the students' ability in writing paragraphs using structure of the paragraph in argumentative essay by the sixth semester of English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. The findings revealed that the students' mean score performance in composing paragraph using structure of the paragraph in argumentative essay was qualified very poor. Secondly, Asfah (2019) carried out an analysis of paragraph writing abilities of English Department Students at Universitas Negeri Makassar. This inquiry studies on writing skills as it is necessary for students to compose thesis in their final year. It purposes to determine the strengths and weaknesses of their paragraph composition seen from the elements of a paragraph. Dealing with findings, it found that their weaknesses were when composing an introductory paragraph, making their writing chronological, and writing a concluding sentence. Then their strengths were determined when composing the main sentences and the

use of transitional signals. Thirdly, McLaughlin. (2014) investigates the effects of training in paragraph performance on the writing of 43 8th and 9th graders. The data analysis shows that a significant improvement in the technique of organizing ideas into paragraphs and in the overall quality of the students' composition performance.

Those related theories and studies decide that investigating of the students' paragraph composition performance issue has been a debatable situation as research topic. Based on the curriculum for English Study Program of FKIP – UNISI Tembilahan, the students study how to compose compatible paragraph. Thus, the fundamental goal of this study was to extend previous researches on paragraph composition and to examine the students' paragraph composition performance.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Composition Performance

There are many experts who have delivered the notion related to the nature of composition performance as productive skill. Additionally, it is one of the skills that sustains to augment

and encourage students' language cognitive skill in learning a language.

Composition performance is the dispose of asserting ideas until obtain its product. A writer, in this process, hands over messages to the audiences. Moreover, Li (2000:1) argues that composition performance is an essential skill that assists the students be autonomous and productive ones. As results, they enable to explore their competence in any academic area which may assist them to reveal their creative capability, become aware of the beauty, and power of language.

Jain and Patel (2008) as quoted in Amri (2017:64) views that composition performance is principle point of language learning as a good way of expressing diction, spelling, and language use. In the same point of view, Hughes (2003: 101-102) explains paramount elements of composition that evolve developing ideas, organizing the composition, choosing words, forming language use, using compatible mechanics, being easy of communication, developing unity and coherence.

In addition, Oshima and Hogue (2007:8), Brown (2001:335), Myles

(2002:1) and Mumtaz (2007:15) bring a point of view that composition performance is intricate to be executed, since to construct stable composition they need consider some elements. In gaining the composition output, it allows the cycles determination of thinking, drafting, and revising. Moreover, it is not an instantly secured skill; it is gained through formal instructional settings and process practices.

To sum up, composition performance requires long systematic process (thinking, drafting, editing, revising, and submitting product). In doing those steps, the writer has to consider fundamental aspects of composition.

Paragraph

One of the selected materials for higher education is writing paragraph. This course focuses on how to compose a compatible paragraph by considering the components of paragraph in some kinds of paragraph such as descriptive paragraph, narrative paragraph, process paragraph, chronological order paragraph, comparison/contrast paragraph, argumentative paragraph,

and definition paragraph (Oshima and Hogue :2007).

According to Oshima and Hogue (2007:3) a paragraph is a group of disclose assertion that a writer evolves a topic. The first sentence conveys the particular point of the subject. Then the next sentences empower the points. In line with this notion, Zemach& Islam (2005:9) deliver that a paragraph is a group of about 6-12 sentences which is about one topic. All sentences in the paragraph discuss the same topic. They explain the writer's main idea about the topic. When the writers intents to compose a new main idea he/she needs to write in new paragraph.

A paragraph has three fundamental parts (Zemach& Rumisek, 2005:12; Oshima and Hogue, 2007: 38-47):

1. The topic sentence. It is the main of the paragraph. It is usually the first sentence of the paragraph, and it is the most general sentence of the paragraph. It has to part: a topic and a controlling idea. The topic names the topic of the paragraph. Then the controlling

idea tells us what the paragraph will say about the topic.

2. The supporting sentences. These are sentences that talk about the topic sentence. They more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.
3. The concluding sentence. It may be found as the last sentence of a paragraph. It can accomplish a paragraph by repeating the main idea or just giving a final comment about the topic.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Survey research design was chosen as research method. Gay, Mills & Airasian (2012:184) explain that survey research engages collecting data to test hypotheses or to answer questions about people’s opinions on some topic or issue. It is a procedure to gather data that describe one or more characteristics of a specific population. In this contemporary study, the researchers propose to investigate the students’ paragraph composition performance.

The samples of this study were 22 the third semester higher education students of English Study program. They have taken Writing I - II courses.

It means they have had competence in writing.

It used written test to gather the data by asking the students to compose two kinds of paragraph: process paragraph and comparison/contrast paragraph. They must choose one topic of each kind of paragraph.

The topic for process paragraph are how to register for classes at your college, how to get a job of your dreams, how to prepare for a job interview, how to make (food/drink). Then the topic for comparison/contrast paragraph are climate in two regions, homes in two regions, two restaurants in two areas, shopping habit of men and women, morning people and night people, and ways of rising children. In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive statistical analysis; which covered individual score, percentage, mean score, and level ability. In assessing the students’ work papers, the researcher used analytic scoring rubric of writing which taken from Oshima and Hogue (2007:196).

Table 1. Paragraph Scoring Rubric

No	Writing Components
1	Format–5 points: there is a title, title centered, first line is indented, margins on both sides, text double spaces.
2	Punctuation and Mechanics–5 points: there is period after every sentence, capital

	letter are used correctly, the spelling is correct, commas are used correctly.
3	Content–20 points: the paragraph fits the assignment, the paragraph is interesting to read, the paragraph shows that the writer used care and thought.
4	Organization–35 points: the paragraph begins with a topic sentence that has both a topic and controlling idea, the paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence, including at least one example, and the paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.
5	Grammar and Sentence Structure – 35 points Estimate a grammar and sentence structure score.
Grand Total = 100	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

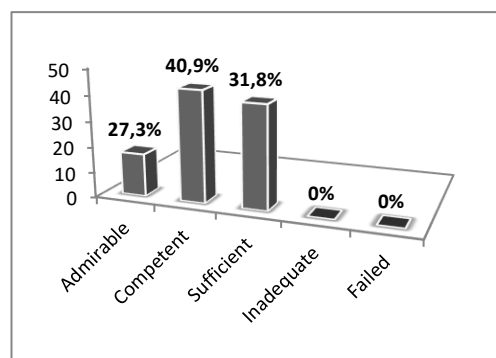
The study was done to determine the students’ paragraph composition performance. It was resolved from their composition points which were collected from the test. They were asked for composing paragraphs based on the topic chosen. The students’ composition performance as follow:

Table. 2. The Students’ ParagraphComposition Performance

No	Interval Score	Score	Level Ability	Frequency
1	80 – 100	A	Admirable	6
2	70 – 79	B	Competent	9
3	60 – 69	C	Sufficient	7
4	50 – 59	D	inadequate	0
5	00 – 49	E	Failed	0
Total				22 students

The data above presents the students’ paragraph composition performance. There were 22 participants. Of all students, six

students could achieve in the admirable level, which were placed in interval score 80 – 100. Then nine students who gained in competent level due to in interval score 70 – 79. Seven students were classified in sufficient category, in interval score 60 – 69. Furthermore, none of them were identified in inadequate and failed levels. It means that their composition performance was in sufficient to admirable levels.



Graph 1. Students’ Percentage of Paragraph Composition Performance

The graph above displays that 27.3% of the participants attained admirable classification. Then 40.9% of them were identified in competent level. There were 31.8% of the students who were insufficient category, and no one or 0% was both in inadequate and failed classifications. It signify that they have proficient performance in composing paragraph.

a. The students’ paragraph composition performance in composition indicators

1). Format

Format is one of the evaluation aspects of paragraph composition. It considers on some points there is a title, the title is centered, the first line is indented, there are margins on both sides, the paragraph is double spaces. The maximum score is 5. After analyzing the students’ papers, it could be determined results as below:

Table 3. The Students’ performance of composition aspect “Format”

No	Interval Score	Level Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Admirable	19	86.3
2	70 – 79	Competent	3	13.7
3	60 – 69	Sufficient	0	0
4	50 – 59	inadequate	0	0
5	00 – 49	Failed	0	0
Total			22	100%

The statistic above illustrates that the students’ competent in using appropriate paragraph format was satisfactory. It could be verified by seeing the data that nineteen participants (86.3%) gained superb point, then three participants (13.7%) obtained competent category. It may be implied that they enable to employ correct format of paragraph. Even though, they should provide much

attention to use acceptable spaces in composition (double-spaced).

2). Punctuations and Mechanics

This is other indicator for scoring composition performance. The criterions are there is period after every sentence, capital letters are used correctly, the spelling is correct, and commas are used correctly. After converting the score, it could be determined as follows:

Table 4. The Students’ performance of composition aspect “Punctuation and Mechanics”

No	Interval Score	Level Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Admirable	15	68.1
2	70 – 79	Competent	5	22.7
3	60 – 69	Sufficient	2	9.2
4	50 – 59	Inadequate	0	0
5	00 – 49	Failed	0	0
Total			22	100%

The data displays the students’ ability in using acceptable punctuations in composition. Fifteen participants (68.1 %) enabled to operate correct punctuations and spelling. They were categorized as admirable level. Then five participants (22.7%) were classified in the competent level. Meanwhile, only two participants (9.2%) achieved sufficient level. There was no participants who gained in the inadequate and failed levels. It indicates that they did not have serious problems in using correct punctuations

in their composition. However, they should take more attention to get better results.

3). Content

Content is the third indicator of composition performance scoring. It is extremely crucial in writing. It covers if the paragraph fits the assignment, the paragraph is interesting to read, and the paragraph shows that the writer used care and thought.

Table 5. The Students’ performance of composition aspect “Content”

No	Interval Score	Level Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Admirable	12	54.5
2	70 – 79	Competent	7	31.8
3	60 – 69	Sufficient	3	13.7
4	50 – 59	inadequate	0	0
5	00 – 49	Failed	0	0
<i>Total</i>			<i>22</i>	<i>100%</i>

The data above informs us how the students’ content performance of their paragraph composition. Their scores were ranged into three categories. There were twelve samples (54.5%) who found admirable category. It shows that more than half of the samples had very good content of their composition. Then there were seven samples (31.8%) who achieved competent category. Then only three samples (13.7%) were placed in sufficient category. None of them achieved low and failed categories. It

assumed that their composition content was satisfied enough.

4). Organization

Table 6. The Students’ performance of composition aspect “Organization”

No	Interval Score	Level Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Admirable	8	36.4
2	70 – 79	Competent	9	40.9
3	60 – 69	Sufficient	5	22.7
4	50 – 59	inadequate	0	0
5	00 – 49	Failed	0	0
<i>Total</i>			<i>22</i>	<i>100%</i>

The data shows the students’ performance in running composition structure of paragraph properly. It determines that eight students (36.4%) were classified in the admirable classification.

Nine students (40.9%) achieved competent classification. Then five students (22.7%) obtained sufficient classification. Then no one was classified into inadequate and failed classifications. The analysis results also inform that their problems in organizing their composition were in writing topic sentence. Some of them had unclear both topic and controlling idea.

5). Grammar and Sentence Structure

The last aspect in rating the composition was grammar and sentence structure. The analysis results were as following:

Table 7. The Students’ performance of composition aspect “Grammar and sentence structure”

No	Interval Score	Level Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Admirable	7	31.8
2	70 – 79	Competent	8	36.4
3	60 – 69	Sufficient	7	31.8
4	50 – 59	inadequate	0	0
5	00 – 49	Failed	0	0
Total			22	100%

This aspect concerns on how to employ proper sentence structure which may cover using correct tenses, dictions, sentence patters, subject-verb agreement, word classess and other components of grammar. The current data describes that they could enable to use sentence structure correctly. Seven students (31.8%) were placed in the very good (admirable) level. Eight students (36.4%) also achieved good level. Then seven students (31.8%) gained enough or sufficient level. It means that more that 50% of the samples had satisfactory performance in using correct grammatical rules.

CONCLUSION

This novel inquiry is a non-experimental study which is designed in survey method. Its primary goal is to ascertain to what extent the students’ paragraph composition performance. After analyzing the corpus, it verified that their performance in paragraph composition was distributed in sufficient to admirable levels. However, it is suggested that they enable to gain better results by turning over more composition practices.

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