

Contents entries found.part a: introduction

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contents entries found. PART A: INTRODUCTION 1. Rationale for choosing the topic: The ongoing process of regional and global integration in Vietnam has resulted in an increasing demand for English language teaching across the country. Learning English is currently not only an interest but also a practical thing for many people. Learning English means learning four related skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Vietnam, writing has always received a great deal of attention. This is understandable, English is learnt and taught in non-English environment, therefore writing is not only one of the four language skills that students of English need to acquire but also a means of further study. Carrell (1981) stated that " For many students, writing is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language, particularly in English as a second or foreign language" (p. 1). Writing in general is one of the most important skills for English learners, and academic writing in particular plays key role in helping learners to master the language. Learners of English language need to know how to write academically through the way they answer questions, discuss subjects or report research results. However, academic writing is never ever an easy task because it is the combinations of relation among audience, writer, organization and presentation (according to Swale, 1997). It can be understood that learners should keep in their mind to discover typical questions: " who are they going to write for? ", " what is the purpose of writing? " (What are the topic, position and argument?), how is the writing going to be organized and presented? It is also quite important to define " academic writing" to find which is necessary and sufficient. Academic writing normally starts from words, to phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, and then essay. This assignment concentrates on theory of academic paragraph

writing including the definition and structure of a paragraph, parts of paragraph, mistakes ESL often make in writing paragraph academically. It is tried to find out and to compare typical non-academic and academic words and phrases using in paragraph writing. As teachers of English, we ourselves think that it is essential to do a research on the topic “ Academic paragraph writing”. 2. Aims and objectives: 2. 1 Aims: This assignment concentrates on theory of academic paragraph writing. Findings will be studied to suggest appropriate instructional support to help learners improve their academic writing skill. 2. 2. Objectives: To be more specific, the objectives of this study are: - to investigate the theory towards academic paragraph writing. - to find out the common mistakes in academic writing - to suggest ways to reduce the difficulties and help learners improve their writing skill by giving out example academic words and phrases It is hoped that the findings from this study will be some benefits to teachers and students in universities. 3.

Methodology In order to carry out the writing of this paper, we ourselves have based on the following methods. * The combination of diachronic and synchronic approaches * The teacher’s advice * The book reference In short, it is hoped that the paper will provide an introduction to the ways how to write academic paragraph writing. We are grateful to any comments on the paper. PART B: DEVELOPMENT I/ Theory of paragraph: 1. Definition of a paragraph: It is quite easy for learners to find out what is a paragraph. There are many ways to define this basing on different viewpoints. Followings are some of popular paragraph definitions. A paragraph is: - a distinct section of a piece of writing, usually dealing with a single theme and indicated by a new line, indentation, or numbering (Oxford Advanced learner Dictionary) - is a group of related sentences that discuss one main idea. A paragraph can be <https://assignbuster.com/contents-entries-foundpart-a-introduction/>

as short as one sentence or as long as ten sentences. The number of sentences is unimportant; however, the paragraph should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly. (Writing academic English — Alice Oshima and Alice Hogue — Longman, third edition) - a distinct portion of written or printed matter dealing with a particular idea, usually beginning with an indentation on a new line. It is one of a series of subsections each usually devoted to one idea and each usually marked by the beginning of a new line, indentation, and increases interlinear space. (World English dictionary — Collins) It can be shortly understood that a paragraph is one part of a text which express one complete idea.

2. Structure of a paragraph: A paragraph normally includes a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. The topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph. It not only names the topic of the paragraph, but it also limits the topic to one specific area that can be discussed completely in the space of a single paragraph. Supporting sentences develop the topic sentence. That is, they explain or prove the topic sentence by giving more information about it. The concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the reader with important points to remember. Concluding sentence is customary for stand-alone paragraph. However, paragraphs that are parts of a longer piece of writing usually do not concluding sentences.

2. 1. The topic sentence: 2. 1. 1. What is topic sentence? Topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph which clearly states the topic and the controlling idea of a paragraph, and briefly indicates what the paragraph is going to discuss. For this reason, the topic sentence is a helpful guide to both the writer and the reader. The writer can see what information to include. The reader can see what the paragraph is going to be about and is therefore better prepared to

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understand it. 2. 1. 2. Position of topic sentences: The topic sentence is usually the first sentence in a paragraph. It can be placed in other locations depending on writers; however, the beginning of the paragraph seems to be the best spot. One of possible location for the topic sentence is at the end. 2. 1. 3. The two parts of a topic sentence As mentioned above, topic sentence has two essential parts: the topic and the controlling idea in which the topic names the subject of the paragraph, the controlling idea limits or controls the topic to a specific area to be discuss in the space of a single paragraph. Here is an example: Delicious foods are easy to prepare. TOPIC CONTROLLING IDEA Following notices are expected to somehow help learners write good topic sentence: Firstly, the topic sentence should control or guide the whole paragraph. Topic sentence is good if it meet the readers' need about what they expect to read in the paragraph. Secondly, a good topic sentence is not a general fact that everyone accepts as a true thing. An example illustrating this point can be seen through a bad topic like: " Libraries have books. " The information in this sentence is true; however, it is a general fact and is not a good choice for a topic sentence. Thirdly, a good topic sentence should be specific. For example, " Coffee is delicious. " is not a good topic sentence because the information in the sentence is too general. The reader does not know what to expect in the paragraph. The sentence can become better when it is written in a specific way, such as: " Black coffee has many benefits for your mentality. " However, it is important to know that topic sentence should not be too specific. Finally, a good topic sentence has controlling ideas which guide all the supporting sentences and give readers general expectation about what they are going to read about throughout the paragraph. 2. 2. Supporting sentences: 2. 2. 1. What is a <https://assignbuster.com/contents-entries-foundpart-a-introduction/>

good supporting sentence? Supporting sentences explain or prove the topic sentence. Good supporting sentences are related to the topic sentence and its controlling ideas. They give information that supports and explains the topic of the paragraph. They answer questions — who? what? when? why? and how?- and give details.

2. 2. 2. Kinds of supporting sentences: There are several different kinds of supporting sentences going as follows with suitable examples:

- explain: People move from village to big cities for economic reasons.
- describe: They live in a nice house surrounded by fields of flowers.
- give reasons: Tom finally drops from school because of bad results.
- give facts: About five percent of the A town's population is immigrant.
- give examples: Sugar cane and banana grow in South Africa.
- define: My mother has a samovar, which is a large cooper tea urn.

2. 3. The concluding sentence:

2. 3. 1. What is concluding sentence? Concluding sentence serves two purposes:

- It signals the end of the paragraph.
- It leaves the reader with the most important ideas to remember. It can do this in two ways: by summarizing the main points of the paragraph, or by repeating the topic sentence in different words. A paragraph does not always need a concluding sentence. For single paragraphs, especially long ones, a concluding sentence is helpful to the reader because it is a reminder of the important points. However, a concluding sentence is not needed for every paragraph in a multi-paragraph essay.

2. 3. 2. What are good concluding sentences? To come up with the idea of a good concluding sentence, it is necessary for writer to think about some questions:

 - What is a good concluding sentence?
 - How do the concluding sentences relate to the topic sentence and to the supporting sentences? The concluding sentence's job is to bring the paragraph to a logical conclusion. The paragraph can be brought to an end

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with some formal signals: Finally, In brief, In conclusion, Indeed, In short, To sum up, All in all, Lastly... It can end with some structures: The evidence suggests that..., There can be no doubt that..., These examples show that..., We can see that...

2. 3. 3. Kinds of concluding sentences There are many different types of concluding sentences: restatement, suggestion, opinion, prediction.

- Restate the main idea is one of the easiest ways to write concluding sentence. Writers restate the main idea or summarize the main point of the paragraph.
- Offer a suggestion, give an opinion, or make a prediction are some of ways to write a concluding sentences, sometimes writers can do a combination of these options.

3. How to write a good paragraph academically? Academic paragraph writing needs good unity and coherence.

- Unity: " A paragraph is a group of sentences which relate to the topic and develop the controlling idea. If a sentence does not relate to or develop that idea, it is irrelevant of place and should be omitted. A good paragraph must be unified. "; " A paragraph has unity when all of its sentences, including the topic sentence support, and conclusion, relate to the same main idea. (Cited from " Let's write 2" by Dang Ngoc Huong, 2007)

It is clear to see that an important element of a good paragraph is unity. Unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end. The second part of unity is that every supporting sentence must directly explain or prove the main idea.

- Coherence: " A paragraph must have unity: all its ideas must refer to the topic (as above presented), moreover, another element of a good paragraph is coherence; coherence is an important quality of writing: all the ideas are presented logically and smoothly so that it is easy for the reader to follow the writer's progression of ideas. In other words, a coherent paragraph contains sentences that are

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logically ordered and that flow smoothly. In order to achieve coherence of a paragraph, writers can use several ways in writing. " (According to Dang Ngoc Huong, Let's write 2, 2007) For coherence in writing, the sentences must hold together; that is, the movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth. There must be no sudden jumps. Each sentence should flow smoothly into the next one. There are four ways to achieve coherence: 1. Repeat key nouns. 2. Use consistent pronouns. 3. Use transition signals to link ideas. 4. Arrange ideas in logical order. II/ Findings on academic paragraph writing There are many necessary things to form a good academic writing. English learners sometimes find it difficult to write in English, especially in academic style. It is our try to find out the three common mistakes in paragraph writing: run-on sentence, fragment and parallel structure; and academic equivalents of words or phrases to be helpful for learners to write academically. 1. Learners' common mistakes in paragraph writing: As mentioned in the introduction, writing is always a not-easy task with most of English learners. It is due to the need for combining various skills and background knowledge when they do writing. This part is going to show common mistakes that learners often have in academic writing in general, and in paragraph writing in particular. 1. 1. Run-on sentence: A run-on sentence is a sentence in which two or more independent clauses (i. e., complete sentences) are joined without appropriate punctuation or conjunction. This is one of the most common mistakes appeared in academic writing. Following are suggested approaches to avoid the error: - Use separate sentences. However, this may disconnect related independent clauses and cause some of the meaning to be lost: o It is nearly half past five. We cannot reach town before dark. - Use a semicolon. This

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maintains the connection between the clauses while ensuring a pause between the two ideas: o It is nearly half past five; we cannot reach town before dark. - Use a coordinating conjunction. o It is nearly half past five, so we cannot reach town before dark. 1. 2. Fragment: Fragment is a sentence which does not contain a subject or a predicate. A sentence fragment fails to be a sentence in the sense that it cannot stand by itself. It does not contain even one independent clause. There are several reasons why a group of words may seem to act like a sentence but not have the wherewithal to make it as a complete thought. - It may locate something in time and place with a prepositional phrase or a series of such phrases, but it's still lacking a proper subject-verb relationship within an independent clause: - It describes something, but there is no subject-verb relationship: Example: In Japan, during the last war and just before the armistice. This sentence accomplishes a great deal in terms of placing the reader in time and place, but there is no subject, no verb. Example: Working far into the night in an effort to salvage her little boat. This is a verbal phrase that wants to modify something, the real subject of the sentence (about to come up), probably the she who was working so hard. - It may have most of the makings of a sentence but still be missing an important part of a verb string: Example: Some of the students working in Professor Espinoza's laboratory last semester. - It may even have a subject-verb relationship, but it has been subordinated to another idea by a dependent word and so cannot stand by itself: Example: Even though he had the better arguments and was by far the more powerful speaker. This sentence fragment has a subject, he, and two verbs, had and was, but it cannot stand by itself because of the dependent word (subordinating conjunction) even though. We need an independent clause to follow up this

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dependent clause: . . . the more powerful speaker, he lost the case because he didn't understand the jury. 1. 3. Parallel structure: This principle of parallel construction requires that expressions of similar content and function should be outwardly similar. The likeness of form enables the reader to recognize more readily the likeness of content and function. Unskillful writers often violate this principle, from a mistaken belief that they should constantly vary the form of their expressions. It is true that in repeating a statement in order to emphasize it writers may need to vary its form. But apart from this, writers should follow carefully the principle of parallel construction. | Faulty Parallelism | Corrected Version | | Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method, while now the | Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method; now it is | | laboratory method is employed. | taught by the laboratory method. | The left-hand version gives the impression that the writer is undecided or timid; he seems unable or afraid to choose one form of expression and hold to it. The right-hand version shows that the writer has at least made his choice and abided by it. By this principle, an article or a preposition applying to all the members of a series must either be used only before the first term or else be repeated before each term. | Faulty Parallelism | Corrected Version | | The French, the Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese | The French, the Italians, the Spanish, and the Portuguese | | In spring, summer, or in winter | In spring, summer, or winter (In spring, in summer, or in winter) | Correlative expressions (both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third; and the like) should be followed by the same grammatical construction. Many violations of this rule can be corrected by rearranging the sentence. | Faulty Parallelism | Corrected Version | | It was both a long ceremony and very tedious. | The

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ceremony was both long and tedious. | | A time not for words, but action | A time not for words, but for action | | Either you must grant his request or incur his ill will. | You must either grant his request or incur his ill will. | | My objections are, first, the injustice of the measure; second, that | My objections are, first, that the measure is unjust; second, that | | it is unconstitutional. | it is unconstitutional. | When making comparisons, the things which are compared should be couched in parallel structures whenever that is possible and appropriate. | Faulty Parallelism | Corrected Version | | My income is smaller than my wife. | My income is smaller than my wife's. | 2. Non-academic words and academic equivalents: It is necessary for learners to use academic words in academic paragraph writing. Because of limited space and time, our group just suggests example words and phrases in their simple form and academic equivalents as below. |

Meaning	Simple word	Academic word		Ã tÆ°á» Ỗng / khÃi niá»m	
idea	Concept / notion		Ã á»§	enough	Sufficient / adequate
PhÆ°Æing phÃip	way	Approach		Thu Ä' Æ°á»c	get obtain
Ká°t quá°	result	Consequence / outcomes		Duy trÃ / giá»	keep retain
mua	buy	Purchase		Duy nhá°t	only
	Unique / solely		Cá°fi thiá»n		improve enhance
Bá°t Ä' á°su	start	commence		Dá»± Ä' oÃin	
	predict anticipate		Tá°p trung	focus concentrate	
	Cuá»' i cÃ1ng	final		Ultimately / eventually	
	Dá»« ng	Stop / end / finish	Terminate / cease		
TrÃ hoÃn	Postpone / delay	Suspend		Rá»i bá»i	Quit / give up
Abandon		Phá°n	Part	Portion	

PART C: CONCLUSION It is of the importance for English learners to discover definition of a paragraph, paragraph structure (topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence) in academic style along with the way of writing paragraph

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academically. Due to limited space, time and the limitation of writers' knowledge, this assignment concentrates on theory of paragraph and discovers popular mistakes (run-on sentence, fragment, and parallel structure) which learners normally make in writing paragraph academically. In addition, it is our try to take example and compare words in both non-academic and academic style with the hope that learners have awareness of using correct writing style. REFERENCES 1. Arnaudet, M. L. & Barrett, M. E. (1984). Approaches to Academic Writing. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. 2. Brook, A. & Grunby, P. (1990). Writing for study purposes: a teacher's guide to developing individual writing skills. CUP. 3. Campbell D. Better Sentence-Writing in 30 minutes a Day. Career Press 4. Doff, A. (1988). Teaching: a training course for teachers. Cambridge : CUP 5. Fries, C. (1945). Teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 6. Hennessy, B. (1994). How to write an essay. Plimbridge House. 7. Henry, J. & Pender, J. (1997). English for academic purposes: writing. Toowoomba, Qld: USQ Press for the Centre for Language Learning and Teaching 8. Huong, D. N (2007). Let's write: HOU 9. Murray, R. (2003). How to write a thesis. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press. 10. White, R. & McGovern, D. (1994). Writing. New York: Prentice Hall. 11. Grammar. ccc. commnet. edu/grammar/parallelism. htm