

4

The Developers

It has already been mentioned that every well-written paragraph should have a middle consisting of a number of supporting sentences. These supporting sentences which expand and develop the main idea (introduced in the topic sentence) of the paragraph are generally known as **the developers**. They present evidence or examples in support of the main idea.

We know that a paragraph is a unified and coherent piece of writing. The function of the developers is to bring about this unity and coherence. They give unity to the paragraph by dealing with the same subject and their logical arrangement brings the necessary coherence. The number of developers in a paragraph is not fixed. You can write as many of them as you think necessary for a complete development of the topic. But you must remember that all your developers should contribute to the development of the same idea. In other words, all of them should be about the same subject and they should also be logically linked with one another to give the paragraph unity and coherence.

Read the following two paragraphs carefully and notice the difference between them:

Problems in the Rainy Season

People get into several problems in the rainy season. The heavy downpour disrupts the normal course of life. There are many people who, on the other hand, enjoy the rainy days. Our farmers cannot work in the field. The crops go under water. These serious storms blow away their houses and trees. That great flood washed away their cattle and other valuables. The suffering of the people knows no bound in the rainy season.

If we analyse this paragraph, we will see that the topic sentence and the concluding sentence in it are good enough. The former introduces the idea of problems or sufferings, while the latter restates the same idea. But the developers in the paragraph have failed to adhere to this main idea. Although most of them are about suffering, they are not linked to each other. There is no logical order in their arrangement. We can, therefore, say that this paragraph has no cohesion. This is an example of a bad paragraph. Let us now look at an example of a well-written paragraph:-

Students coming into the high school for the first time face a few problems. Firstly, they often find themselves at a loss to see that their new school is much bigger than their previous primary school. Secondly, most of the students in the school are unknown to them and they sometimes tease them. Thirdly, they have often to change their classroom at the end of every subject. Moreover, they have also to encounter different teachers for different subjects instead of one for all. All these problems put the new high school students into a strange situation at first.

You may have noticed that this is a fairly short paragraph which consists of a total of six sentences. The first of them introduces the main idea and the last of them concludes it. The other four in the middle develop the main idea. In fact, all the six sentences in this paragraph deal with the problems faced by the students starting the high school. If you analyse the paragraph, you will see that the sentences in it are linked together. Here are the linkers used in the paragraph above:

Sentence 2: 'they' refers to 'students' in sentence 1.

'their new school' refers to 'high school' in sentence 1.

Sentence 3: 'the school' refers to 'high school' in sentence 1.

'them' refers to 'students' in sentence 1.

'they' refers to 'most of the students' in sentence 3.

Sentence 4: 'they' and 'their' refer to 'students' in sentence 1.

Sentence 5: 'they' refers to 'students' in sentence 1.

Sentence 6: 'All these problems' refers to the problems expressed in Sentences 2, 3, 4 & 5.

Besides, the words 'Firstly', 'Secondly', 'Thirdly' and 'Moreover' are sentence connectors. They express the sequence of the problems.

The words or expressions which link the sentences together in a paragraph generally belong to the following categories:

1. Pronouns: he, she, it, they, him, her, them, his, her, their, etc.

2. Repetitions: the same word/s used again and again.

3. Synonyms: Words having the same meaning. e.g. 'the capital' for 'Dhaka'.

4. Determiners: this, that, these, those, the, some, all, both, etc.

5. Connectors: Firstly, secondly, as well, and, moreover, however, therefore, so, finally, etc. They show the relationship between different ideas.

The linker is a kind of thread which binds the sentences in a paragraph together. It can also be compared with the plastering mixture used for coating walls and ceilings. As the bricks of a wall are joined together with the help of plaster, the sentences of a paragraph are also connected together with the help of the linkers.

The Destroyer

When you write a paragraph, you must remember that it must be unified, it must be about one subject and it must be about only one aspect of that subject. And your developers also should be designed accordingly. If any of your developers marks a departure from that subject, it will mar the purpose and organization of the entire paragraph and will be regarded as a destroyer. The developers of a paragraph are like the strings of

a stringed musical instrument. When you play a guitar, all its strings produce a harmonious musical sound. If any of them gives a discordant note, the harmony of the sound will be destroyed and the music will altogether be bad and unpleasant. In the same way, an irrelevant developer also will destroy the unity of a paragraph.

Read the paragraph below. It is about the first four general universities of Bangladesh. But one sentence in it does not fit in with the controlling idea.

The First Four General Universities of Bangladesh

There were once only four general universities in Bangladesh. The oldest and largest of them is the University of Dhaka which is situated in the capital city of the country. The second biggest general university is the Rajshahi University which is located some three or four miles east of the Rajshahi town on the western part of the country. I am a student of this very university. The University of Chittagong which is also distant from the town is the third general university. The fourth and last of these universities is the Jahangirnagar University at Savar about thirty miles away from the city of Dhaka.

You may have noticed that the sentence, "I am a student of this very University" does not fit in with the controlling idea of the paragraph. It is quite unwanted and unbecoming for the paragraph. Therefore, this kind of irrelevant sentences should always be avoided. Instead of adding anything, it has destroyed the unity of the paragraph.

THE MAIN POINTS

- i) The developers form the middle of the paragraph.
- ii) They are all controlled by the main idea stated in the topic sentence.
- iii) They are all logically linked together with the help of appropriate linkers.

- iv) Care should be taken lest any irrelevancy should destroy the paragraph.

VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT

(to) **adhere to**— support firmly; Stick fast (to)

at a loss— perplexed.

(to) **coat**— cover with a layer

cohesion— cohering; tendency to stick together

(to) **desig**— prepare a plan of something to be made

discordant— not harmonious

(to) **disrupt**— break up; split

downpour— heavy fall of rain

(to) **encounter**— meet somebody unexpectedly

evidence— anything that makes something clear

harmony— pleasing combination of notes sounded together to make chords

(to) **mar** — - spoil

note- single sound of a certain pitch and duration

plaster— soft mixture of lime, sand, water, etc.

sequence— connected line of events, ideas, etc.

(to) **tease**— annoy; make fun of somebody playfully or unkindly

EXERCISES

1. Develop the following topic sentences into paragraphs:-

- Mr. Karim is a successful teacher.
- Living on the University campus has three major advantages.
- There are several reasons behind the poor performance of the students of English.
- These are the drawbacks of the course system of Examinations.
- Many parents prefer boys to girls mainly for three reasons.

2. Fill in the gaps in the following paragraphs with appropriate developers:-

a) Here are the steps to be followed in writing a letter. First, you should write your address and date on the top right hand corner. Then you should address the person you are writing to. -----
After you have finished the body, you should say good-bye and then subscribe your name. Now the letter is complete.

b) In several respects, village life is better than town life. Firstly, unlike in the town the atmosphere in the village is calm and quiet. Secondly,-----
Thirdly, the air in the village is pure and unpolluted. For these reasons some people still prefer to live in the village.

3. Re-arrange the following jumbled sentences into a logical paragraph:-

- For one thing, it is a fairly cheap holiday.
— Many busy people think that camping outside is the most relaxing kind of holiday.
— In addition, sleeping and eating in the bush are more enjoyable than at home.
— There are several reasons why camping is very popular with a lot of people.
— Moreover, we can breathe in fresh air and enjoy nature.
- Then I had to go back to my chamber because I had forgot my umbrella.
— In the end it was six o'clock before I reached my house in the town.
— First, after my normal work I went to the Central Library to photocopy a book.
— At last I failed the 5 o'clock bus and hired a rickshaw.
— Yesterday I came home very late for these reasons.

4. In each paragraph below, find out the sentence which does not actually belong to it:-

a) House construction in different parts of the world mainly depends on the availability of building materials. For example, the Eskimos build their houses with blocks of ice, because in their region nothing except ice is available. On the other hand, people living in the deserts use mud or clay to protect them from the heat. Their food habit is also different from that of others. In the areas of woods and forests, people usually make their homes out of wood. Similarly, in some places houses are made of bamboo. So the construction of houses is subject to the materials available in the region concerned.

b) Biological science has two branches. One branch is Botany which deals with the life of all kinds of plants. Chemistry is concerned with matter in its different forms. The other branch is Zoology. It involves the study of animals. Both Botany and Zoology are concerned with the study of life but one's field is different from the other's.

5

The Context Modulator

The term 'modulator' is derived from its verb form 'modulate' which means 'to adapt or adjust'. So the function of a modulator is to adapt or adjust one thing to another. (In music, however, modulation means changing or passing from one key to another.) If you need to express two different sets of ideas in your paragraph, you will require a context modulator to adjust them. It is a sentence which provides a transition between the different sets of ideas. It is through this sentence that you will pass from one group of developers to the other. It is, therefore, a kind of bridge between two sets of ideas.

As far as its function is concerned, the context modulator does not appear in every paragraph. It occurs only in those paragraphs which contain more than one group of developers. It is, therefore, an additional element of a paragraph. You certainly know that the essential elements of a well written paragraph are its topic sentence, developers and terminator.

The very topic suggestion of a paragraph will tell you whether it will need a context modulator or not. For example, you are asked to write a paragraph on "The Amenities of Town Life". This obviously suggests that your paragraph will contain only one kind of developers. All of them will belong to one group only and they will describe the pleasant things of town life. So in writing this paragraph, you will not require any context modulator. On the other hand, if the topic suggestion is "Advantages and Disadvantages of a Joint Family", it is clear that some of your developers are to be about the advantages of a joint family and some about the disadvantages. Obviously, you have to incorporate two separate groups of developers. First, you will list some advantages in one group and then some disadvantages in another group and between these two groups