

MAIN IDEA AND TOPIC SENTENCE

Reading I : Week 4
Lecturer: Eko Rujito, M.Hum

JURUSAN PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI YOGYAKARTA

E-mail: eko_rujito@uny.ac.id

PARAGRAPH

A paragraph a group of sentences that consist of one topic and one main idea.

TOPIC

- A topic is what being discussed
- Usually a noun, a noun phrase, or a noun clause

Main Idea

- ▣ A Main idea is what is said about the topic
- ▣ Both topic and main idea of a paragraph can be found in the topic sentence.

Topic sentence

- ▣ Topic sentence is a sentence in a paragraph which carries the main idea of the paragraph.
- ▣ It can be at the beginning, at the end, or somewhere between the paragraph.

Periodic Paragraph

- ▣ A paragraph that begins with a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences
- ▣ **Example:**
 - (1) New studies have shown that non-smokers can be affected by being around people who smoke.
 - (2) For example, the studies show that there is an increased incidence of lung problems in children of smokers.
 - (3) There is also an increase in the incidence of lung-cancer in non-smokers who live with smokers.
 - (4) The studies also show a thirty percent higher lung cancer incidence in non-smoking spouses of smokers than in non-smoking couples

- ▣ Sentence 1 contains the topic and main ideas of the paragraph
- ▣ Sentence 2 continues what is stated in Sentence 1 by giving example
- ▣ Sentence 3 and 4 support what is stated before by giving more example

Topic : The effect of smoking on non-smokers

Main idea: non-smokers can be effected by being around people who smoke

Loose Paragraph

- ▣ Topic sentence is written at the end of the paragraph
- ▣ Usually begins with an introduction followed by examples or illustration
- ▣ The last sentence is the conclusion

Example

(1) When a honeybee finds flowers, it flies back to its hive to communicate the location to the other bees. (2) As soon as it arrives at the beehive, the bee will wiggle its body and buzz loudly. (3) The speed and direction of the bee's dance tell the other bees where the flowers are. (4) If the flowers are near, the bee dances very fast in a circle. (5) If the flowers are far away, it dances slowly in a strange figure eight. (6) So, it is clear that honeybees communicate with each other by dancing

- ▣ Sentence 1 is not a topic sentence because it is a kind of sequence that is continued in sentence 2
- ▣ Sentence 3,4,5 tell about the bee's dancing in relation with the distance and direction of the flowers
- ▣ Sentence 6 is the topic sentence since it concludes everything that has stated before.

Topic: how bees communicate

Main idea: bees communicate to each other by dancing

Spread

Example:

(1) An election year is one in which all four numbers are evenly divisible by four (1944, 1948, etc.) (2) Since 1840, American presidents elected in years ending in zero have been destined to die in office. (3) William H. Harrison, the man who served the shortest term, died of pneumonia several weeks after his inauguration. (4) Abraham Lincoln was one of four presidents who were assassinated. (5) He was elected in 1860. (6) James A. Garfield, a former Union army general from Ohio, was shot during his first year in office (1881) by a man to whom he wouldn't give a job

- ▣ Sentence 1 is not a topic sentence, it only gives an information that is not directly connected to events discussed in the paragraph.
- ▣ The last Sentence is not a topic sentence since it is merely another example of the president died in office
- ▣ Sentence 3,4,5 give example of what stated in Sentence 2. So, we can conclude that Sentence 2 is the topic sentence

Topic: US presidents who died in office

Main Idea: Since 1840, American presidents elected in years ending in zero have been destined to die in office.