

STUDENTS DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING WRITING ABILITY AT STAIN BENGKALIS

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ABSTRACT

Writing is usually one of the things that must be mastered by everyone. Especially students, many of them face difficulties in writing. This study explores the challenges faced by students in acquiring writing comprehension skills. It delves into various factors contributing to these difficulties, including language barriers, lack of writing practice, and ineffective teaching methods. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and qualitative analyses to gather comprehensive insights. Findings reveal a need for targeted interventions, such as tailored instructional strategies and increased exposure to diverse writing genres, to enhance students' writing comprehension abilities. The study contributes valuable information for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers aiming to improve writing education outcomes. The latter suggests that some of the difficulties students face in learning to write are a lack of confidence that prevents them from writing, limited vocabulary, making it difficult for them to compose the words they want to write and often fear that others will criticize their writing. This research not only focuses on the complex challenges that hinder students' writing comprehension, but also provides a foundation for developing writing proficiency.

Keywords: Writing difficulties, Writing, Students

INTRODUCTION

Writing is the process of expressing ideas and thoughts in a comprehensible manner by employing symbols such alphabetic letters, punctuation, and spaces. According to Suyitno (1993) Writing can be seen as an attempt to put one's ideas, experiences, knowledge, and thoughts into written form. The writer must therefore write in a coherent, accessible, expressive, and understandable manner in order for their work to be both easy to read and capable of evoking strong feelings in the reader. Without written documentation, everything created for the advancement of science and technology will be meaningless. No matter how amazing a work of art someone creates, if it is not recorded in writing, it will merely be a fleeting linguistic

pleasure that will be quickly forgotten in the future. Writing proficiency is therefore crucial. The ability of readers to form mental constructs and make connections between the text's ideas and their own knowledge is what constitutes reading comprehension. It's a reading ability that relies on the interpretation of the text. To extract meaning from text, comprehension also necessitates the use of higher level language skills. This can be harder for kids with language impairments to do than for kids with better developed language skills.

Writing proficiency is crucial for academic achievement since it can help students succeed (Suarsa, 2020, p. 432). Consequently, the ability to write well is not just crucial for the pupils' educational journey but also for their long-term prospects. The requirement that examine the student's writing ability, focusing on more prevalent areas, to aid them who instruct writing must recognize any obstacles that can arise when imparting this delicate skill to the scholars. Writing is meant for a variety of goals, including learning resources, writing mastery, and many more. It is not just meant for academic purposes. Additionally, the student's writing challenges are noteworthy since the issues could cause pupils to become reluctant to learn how to write.

Writing challenges can also has that give a disastrous effect on a student's academic career. According to Heaton (1975), teaching writing can be challenging at times due to its complexity. Not only do grammatical and rhetorical methods need to be mastered, but intellectual and judging components as well. Students are expected to communicate what they know about as they advance in the subject. A wide range of topics via writing. Should a pupil neglect to acquire specific foundational abilities, he will be unable to write as quickly and fluidly as is necessary to succeed when these expectations rise. In fact, for a when students struggle with writing assignments, learning is hampered by the writing process itself. When faced with such overwhelming odds, students find it difficult to remain motivated.

There have been some researches about Student's difficulties in learning writing ability. Hermawan, Sada Rezeky, and Tuan conducted the first research with the aim of finding out whether journals could help students write more accurately or not. The use of experimental design differentiates research design from other research designs. According to Tuan's research, students' typical errors in the experimental group decreased by approximately 64.64% between the pretest and posttest, while the control group's posttest scores decreased roughly between the pretest and posttest, namely by 29.70%. This demonstrates that the pupils who were part of the experimental group who utilized journals had excellent writing skills. precision in contrast to the group under control. Iwan, Puspitasari, and further greetings (2017) as well. The WH-Question is a competency guide that helps students write better.

From previous researches we can see some difficulties in learning writing at senior high school, such as Researchers discovered a number of study subjects, specifically connected to his work, one of which comes from Yulianti (2014). In a similar vein, Yulianti suggests that pupils' spelling and vocabulary deficiencies can be addressed by keeping a journal as a means of support. Additionally, there are certain differences in data collecting between Yulianti's research and that of other researchers. He compared students' results before and after research was conducted using pre- and post-tests. Conversely, the researchers' sole tool for this investigation was an interview test. According to Yulianti's research, when students receive regular feedback and writing assignments, their grades improve with each cycle and they don't repeat the same error. The researcher used those earlier studies as a guide to conduct this current study. This research differs from the last one in that it uses a different methodology and also focuses on the challenges students face when learning to write. This is the reason the researcher's research title, **Student's difficulties in learning writing comprehension at Stain Bengkalis**, is based on the previously conducted research and the facts above.

This research aims to explore factors that might cause difficulties in writing comprehension, such as differences in student ability levels, use of a foreign language, or problems in understanding the structure of written text. By understanding in more depth the difficulties faced by students in this aspect of writing, it is hoped that this research will provide valuable insights for improving teaching and learning approaches in advancing students' writing skills.

RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research methodologies will be employed in this study to investigate and comprehend the challenges faced by students in their writing education. Comprehensive understanding of student experiences, teacher perspectives, and contextual elements influencing students' writing skills can be obtained through qualitative approaches. We decided on a qualitative method because we wanted to gain a thorough understanding of the variables that affect students' challenges in learning to write as well as their perspectives and experiences with this problem.

RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

- **Interview**

- **Tell me what you know about writing. What is your reaction when you receive a writing assignment?**

The first interview question asked about how respondents reacted when given a writing assignment. Some respondents gave positive opinions by saying that they felt happy when given writing assignments, while there were also some respondents

who said that they were not so happy when given writing assignments, for several reasons.

" When receiving a writing assignment, I will try to present relevant and accurate information to the best of my ability." (Respondent 1)

Another respondent argued that writing is a process of communicating thoughts, ideas, or writing information. Respondents 2 and 4 stated that they were happy when given writing assignments.

" Writing is the process of communicating thoughts, ideas, or information in written form. I feel happy when I get a writing assignment, because it gives me the opportunity to share what I know and learn new things." (Respondent 2)

" Writing is one of the activities in learning. I like being given writing assignments." (Respondent 4)

Meanwhile, another respondent argued that when given a writing assignment he felt excited and joyful because it could allow him to express his views and opinions to others.

" Writing is the creative process of putting thoughts, feelings, and ideas into a piece of writing that other people can read. When assigned a writing project, I typically feel excited and joyful since it gives me a chance to express my views and opinions to other people." (Respondent 3)

The opinion expressed by respondent 5 is slightly different. he argues that when given a writing assignment he feels it is both fun and stressful. sometimes he feels scared when given a writing assignment..

" Writing can be exciting or stressful. Sometimes, getting a writing assignment feels a bit daunting." (Respondent 5)

➤ **What challenges do you think you face when writing that make you feel uneasy and afraid?**

The second question asked to the five respondents was about what challenges the respondents faced when writing that made the respondents feel uncomfortable and afraid. Respondents 1, 2, 3 and 5 have almost the same perceptions or opinions. where a lack of understanding of structure and grammar, a fairly short time limit, and fear of being criticized by others can be a challenge for them when writing.

" Common challenges that are often faced when writing are concerns about the quality of the writing, fear of not being able to convey the message well, uncertainty about correct structure and grammar, time constraints, and the need to meet other people's expectations." (Respondent 1)

" In my opinion, the challenge I face when writing is determining the purpose, audience and genre of my writing. I also have to choose an interesting topic, find relevant sources and organize my ideas logically. Sometimes I feel uncomfortable and afraid if I am not sure whether my writing meets the reader's criteria or expectations." (Respondent 2)

" I often feel uncomfortable and scared when I have to write about topics that I am not good at or lack basic knowledge about. In addition, I also feel very stressed when I have to write under time pressure or tight assignment deadlines." (Respondent 3)

" Figuring out what to write and organizing thoughts can be tough. Also, worrying about making mistakes can make it uneasy." (Respondent 5)

Another opinion was raised by respondent 4 who said that he could only write if he was provided with writing material. if he was told to think and then write it down it could make him feel burdened and afraid.

" I can only write something that has been provided, if I was told to think about it and then write it would be a challenge and I would be uncomfortable doing it." (Respondent 4)

➤ **How do you get ready to write and make word choices before you start?**

Respondents 1 and 2 argued that the preparation they do before writing is to read writings related to the topic they will choose.

" Determine the purpose of writing, Limiting the topic, Do research, Know your audience, Make an outline, Collect relevant words, and Read and study related writings." (Respondent 1)

" To prepare myself to write and make word choices, I usually read lots of examples of writing related to the topic or genre I choose, to get inspiration and insight." (Respondent 2)

The other respondents did some research on the topic, then created an outline to make it easier to write and choose the right words.

"Before I start writing, I will do some research on the topic so that I have a strong knowledge base. After that, I will create an outline to make it easier for me to write and make the right word choices." (Respondent 3)

Other respondents thought that using a cellphone could help their writing process.

" Before writing, I have to prepare my cellphone so that it can be used to help me in the writing process." (Respondent 4)

Another respondent argued that thinking about the main idea and planning what to say as well as choosing appropriate words and expressing her thoughts well are actions she takes before writing.

" Before starting to write, I think about the main ideas and plan what I want to say. I choose words that fit and express my thoughts well." (Respondent 5)

➤ **Could you describe a time when you found writing challenging and how you conquered it?**

There are several strategies that the first respondent uses when she faces challenges in writing. Some strategies to overcome these challenges are: Making a Plan, Practicing Writing Skills, Using Effective Writing Techniques, Seeking Feedback and Criticism, and Taking a Break.

"in general, writing can be a challenge for many people. I think there are several challenges for me in writing, namely: Writer's Block, Time Limitations. And there are several strategies for conquering these challenges, namely: Make a Plan, Practicing Writing Skills, Using Effective Writing Techniques, Seek Feedback and Criticism, and Take breaks." (Respondent 1)

Other respondents usually seek help or feedback from others, such as friends, teachers, or tutors, to get a different perspective or advice on their writing.

" I find writing challenging when I have difficulty starting, developing, or ending my writing. I usually ask for help or input from other people, such as friends, teachers, or tutors, to get different perspectives or suggestions about my writing." (Respondent 2)

Respondent then tried to rest and do something different to stimulate her brain. He also tries to discuss with friends or writing teachers to get feedback and suggestions.

" When writing is challenging, I try to take a break and do something different to stimulate my brain. I also try to discuss with friends or writing teachers to get input and suggestions."(Respondent 3)

This respondent would usually use her cell phone to help her write things down.

" Writing becomes a challenge for me if I am forced to think and write a lot. Usually if I find it difficult, I will use my cellphone to be more helpful in writing something." (Respondent 4)

The last respondent usually uses brainstorming where she writes down ideas or makes an outline before writing. This helps organize thoughts better.

" I've used brainstorming where I jot down ideas or made outlines before writing. It helps organize thoughts better." (Respondent 5)

➤ **Have you ever employed a technique to facilitate writing? If yes, what tactic did you employ?**

The first respondent said that she used freewriting techniques to help her overcome writer's block.

" Yes, I often use freewriting techniques to help me overcome writer's block. I also like to create mind maps or concept maps to organize my ideas." (Respondent 1)

Another respondent stated that he usually uses the quotation mark technique to make writing easier.

" Yes, a, I have used several techniques to make writing easier. Usually I use quotes to make writing easier." (Respondent 2)

Respondent 3 and 5 said that she usually uses brainstorming and mind map techniques to develop new ideas.

" Yes, I often use brainstorming and mind mapping techniques to develop ideas and find strong narrative paths." (Respondent 3)

" Sure, I've used brainstorming where I jot down ideas or made outlines before writing. It helps organize thoughts better." (Respondent 5)

Respondent 4 stated that she did not have any technique in writing.

" I don't have a writing technique." (Respondent 4)

➤ **What is the status of your relationship with the writing instructor at your school? Do you feel at ease asking for assistance and making inquiries?**

Respondents 1, 2 and 3 had some positive responses regarding their relationship with their lecturers. Many of them said that they have a good relationship with lecturers who are experts in writing. Besides being friendly, they also help students who are struggling in writing and do not feel burdened.

" I feel comfortable asking for help and asking questions to my writing teachers at school because they are experts in the field and can give good advice to improve my writing." (Respondent 1)

" My relationship with the writing teacher at my school is quite good. I felt comfortable asking them for help and asking them questions, as they were always friendly, patient and helpful." (Respondent 2)

This respondent said that she had a good relationship with the writing teacher at her school and felt comfortable asking for help and asking questions.

"I have a good relationship with the writing teacher at my school and feel comfortable asking for help and asking questions. I believe that the writing teacher is a valuable resource and can help improve my writing skills." (Respondent 3)

While other respondents stated that they would feel comfortable if the lecturers who are experts in the field of writing really helped them.

"Good. I feel comfortable if the teacher really helps." (Respondent 4)

This respondent said that he did not have a specific lecturer to ask. but sometimes he would ask the lecturer if it was urgent.

" I don't have a writing instructor, but feeling comfortable asking for help is important when needed." (Respondent 5)

➤ **Do you believe that Stain Bengkalis offers high-quality writing instruction? And what qualifies as effective instruction and what does not?**

The first respondent believes that Stain Bengkalis offers quality writing instruction because it has lecturers and teachers who are experienced in writing.

" I believe that Stain Bengkalis offers high-quality writing instruction because it has lecturers and teachers who are experienced in writing. Effective teaching is one that can help students improve their writing skills with the right techniques and methods, as well as provide constructive feedback to improve the quality of writing. Ineffective teaching is that

which simply tells students to write without providing clear direction or guidance to improve their writing skills.” (Respondent 1)

Other respondents also said that they believe Stain Bengkalis offers quality writing instruction, as it has a curriculum, facilities and staff that support the learning of writing.

“ I am confident that Stain Bengkalis offers high quality writing teaching, because they have a curriculum, facilities and staff that support learning to write. Effective teaching is teaching that can meet students’ needs, interests and goals. Ineffective teaching is teaching that is inappropriate and boring.” (Respondent 2)

The third respondent argued that he could not give a definite answer because he had never attended a writing class at Stain Bengkalis. However, effective teaching should provide an understanding of the basic concepts of writing, provide plenty of practice and provide constructive feedback.

“ I can’t give a definite answer because I have never taken a writing class at Stain Bengkalis. However, effective teaching must provide an understanding of basic writing concepts, provide lots of practice and provide constructive feedback.” (Respondent 3)

The respondent went on to say that the lecturers at Stain bengkalis are not very effective in teaching writing, but she believes that the lecturers must have tried their best.

“ Not too high, but they have helped as much as possible in helping us to write.” (Respondent 4)

According to Respondentini, effective writing instruction means clear guidance, useful feedback, and encouragement. Ineffective teaching may lack support or clarity in instruction.

“ In my opinion effective writing instruction means clear guidance, helpful feedback, and encouragement. Ineffective instruction might lack support or clarity in teaching.” (Respondent 5)

➤ **How do you overcome difficulties in learning vocabulary and using appropriate words in writing?**

The respondent stated that the way to overcome difficulties in learning vocabulary and using the right words in writing is by practicing consistently and using the right resources, her ability to learn grammar and complex sentence structure will improve.

“ By practicing consistently and using the right resources, my ability to learn grammar and complex sentence structures will improve.” (Respondent 1)

Another respondent used ways to overcome difficulties in learning vocabulary and using the right words in writing, she used a dictionary or other tools, made notes or flashcards, and repeated new vocabulary.

"To overcome difficulties in learning vocabulary and using appropriate words in writing, I use a dictionary or other tools, make notes or flashcards, and repeat new vocabulary." (Respondent 2)

Respondents 3 and 5 will usually look for references from books or online sources that can explain the concept more clearly and easily. In addition, he or she will often practice and take notes to get used to the use of the language.

"To overcome difficulties in learning grammar and complex sentence structures, I will usually look for references from books or online sources that can explain these concepts more clearly and easily understood. Apart from that, I also often practice and take notes to familiarize myself with the use of the language." (Respondent 3)

"To overcome difficulties in learning complex grammar and sentence structures, I break them down into smaller parts, practice regularly, and seek resources like grammar guides or online tutorials to reinforce my understanding." (Respondent 5)

While this respondent usually uses his cell phone to check whether the vocabulary he has written is correct or not.

"Usually I use my cellphone to check whether the vocabulary I write is correct or not." (Respondent 4)

➤ **How do you measure your progress in learning writing comprehension and overcoming difficulties that arise?**

To measure Respondent 1's progress in learning writing comprehension, if there is an unfamiliar word, make sure to look up the meaning and write it down.

"Read a lot of diverse material, such as books, articles and news. While reading, pay attention to the vocabulary and word usage used in the writing. If there are any unfamiliar words, be sure to look up the meaning and note it down. By continuing to read and practice your vocabulary, you will become more familiar with the use of these words." (Respondent 1)

This respondent in measuring his reading skills is by reading a lot of other people's writings. So that he can know the advantages and disadvantages of the writing she writes.

"Read a lot of other people's writings. So that I can know the strengths and weaknesses of my own writing." (Respondent 2)

Respondent 3 overcame difficulties in learning vocabulary and correct word usage by reading a lot of literature, including novels and articles with good and correct language.

" I overcome difficulties in learning vocabulary and the correct use of words by reading a lot of literature, including novels and articles with good and correct language. Additionally, I also check online dictionaries and thesauruses to find new and varied words that can improve my writing skills." (Respondent 3)

Respondent 4 said that he had never measured his writing skills.

" I have never measured my progress." (Respondent 4)

Respondents further measured their writing skills with context-based learning (reading in different contexts), and actively engaged in conversations or writing exercises to practice using the words correctly.

" When faced with challenges in learning vocabulary and using words accurately, I utilize flashcards, context-based learning (reading in different contexts), and actively engage in conversations or writing exercises to practice using those words correctly." (Respondent 5)

➤ **How do you handle when someone criticizes your writing, and does it affect your motivation to write?**

The first respondent said that if someone criticizes her writing, she will continue to introspect by practicing consistently, attending training or writing courses, and reading quality writing guidebooks.

" continue to practice consistently, take writing training or courses, and read quality writing guidebooks. By doing all this, I can measure my progress and continually improve my writing skills." (Respondent 1)

The next respondent thinks that if someone criticizes my writing, it will motivate me to improve my writing in the future.

" The way I handle it if someone criticizes my writing is by trying to write better than before. Of course, the criticism will motivate me so that my writing will be better in the future." (Respondent 2)

This respondent considers that if the criticism given is positive then he will accept it gracefully.

" As long as the person's criticism is still positive, I will gladly accept the criticism. Of course it will affect my motivation to be more enthusiastic in writing." (Respondent 3)

Another respondent had no problem with criticism, it would motivate him to continue learning and writing well.

" No, I will actually use this as a lesson for the future to be better." (Respondent 4)

This respondent is very accepting of criticism from others. if it is constructive then he is very motivated to be good in the future.

" I accept other people's criticism, because it is needed in the writing process to make my writing better in the future. If the criticism is constructive, of course it will boost my writing spirit." (Respondent 5)

The purpose of this study is to find out the extent of students' knowledge in writing, then what difficulties students face in writing and help students overcome the difficulties they face. According to the results, the language use and vocabulary components of the students' writing are the most challenging, whereas they had no trouble with the organization, mechanics, or topic of their writing. It makes sense if the children are having the most trouble using language. Because English is a foreign language, linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, language use, and sentence structure in writing need to be closely monitored. As foreign-born pupils, language use is a constant source of difficulty (Bryne, 1988).

Not only is it commonly known that not all Indonesian students are proficient in Indonesian Language, but also in the English language.

CONCLUSION

From the research results mentioned, Students' Difficulties in Learning Writing Comprehension at STAIN Bengkalis may include the finding that students at STAIN Bengkalis face challenges in understanding writing concepts. Factors such as a lack of resources, less effective teaching methods, or unmet individual student needs may be the cause of these difficulties. The importance of improvements in teaching development strategies and more personalized support to facilitate students' writing comprehension at STAIN Bengkalis could be the focus of improvements.

Helping students learn writing comprehension can be summarized as a challenge that involves several aspects, including a lack of understanding of concepts, limited comprehension, and weaknesses in organizing ideas in a structured manner. These factors can affect students' ability to effectively channel their thoughts into writing. A holistic and diverse learning approach is needed to help students overcome these obstacles and improve their writing skills.

In this study, students' difficulties in writing were explored. The results of this study showed that lack of self-confidence and fears of others' judgment as well as lack of vocabulary knowledge became the most difficult problems during the writing process. The findings showed that some respondents experienced difficulties in writing due to lack of vocabulary. They faced problems during generating ideas, their lack of vocabulary made them feel confused to pour their ideas. They also feel hesitant in choosing words and have to open the dictionary when they write in English.

In addition, based on the data collection, the majority of the respondents said that they usually face some difficulties when constructing sentences, due to their lack of

ability in grammar. grammar them felt confused when making the order of sentences in each paragraph.

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