

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES IN
WRITING RESEARCH PAPER AT THE ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY
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Abstrak: Menulis adalah keterampilan berbahasa yang produktif yang memungkinkan individu untuk mengekspresikan ide, perasaan, pengalaman, opini, aspirasi, dan tujuan dalam bentuk tulisan yang terorganisir dan koheren. Sebagai komponen penting dalam pembelajaran Bahasa, menulis memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap pengembangan kemampuan intelektual dan kognitif siswa karena membutuhkan integrasi berbagai kompetensi Bahasa, termasuk kosakata, tata Bahasa, organisasi, dan berpikir kritis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis kesulitan mahasiswa dalam menulis makalah penelitian dan strategi mereka untuk mengatasi kesulitan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif sebagai desain penelitian. Lima belas mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Angkatan 2019 terpilih sebagai partisipan penelitian. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan kuesioner dan wawancara. Kemudian, data dianalisis dengan menggunakan beberapa langkah yang disarankan oleh (Creswell W, 2012). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan akademik dan nonakademik dalam menulis Skripsi. Kesulitan akademik termasuk aturan tata bahasa, kosakata terbatas, dan parafrase. Untuk kesulitan non akademik antara lain keterbatasan bimbingan dan masukan dosen serta kurangnya motivasi. Selain itu, siswa menggunakan beberapa strategi untuk mengatasi kesulitan dengan memanfaatkan alat untuk membantu dalam menulis, meminta bimbingan dan umpan balik teman, meminta bimbingan dan umpan balik dari dosen pembimbing, dan banyak latihan menulis.

Kata Kunci : Menulis, Kesulitan Mahasiswa, Strategi Mahasiswa

Abstract: Writing is a productive language skill that enables individuals to express ideas, feelings, experiences, opinions, aspirations, and goals in a well-organized and coherent written form. As an essential component of language learning, writing contributes significantly to the development of students' intellectual and cognitive abilities because it requires the integration of various language competencies, including vocabulary, grammar, organization, and critical thinking. This research is aimed to find out and analyze students' difficulties in writing Research paper and their strategies to overcome the difficulties. This research used qualitative research as the design of the research. Fifteen English Education Department students class of 2019 were selected as the research participants. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. Then, the data were analyzed by utilized some steps suggested by (Creswell W, 2012). The result showed that students encountered

difficulties in academic and non-academic difficulty in writing Research paper. The academic difficulty included grammatical rules, limited vocabulary, and paraphrasing. For non-academic difficulty included limited lecturer's guidance and feedback and lack of motivation. Besides, students used some strategies to overcome difficulties by utilizing tools to assist in the writing, asking friends' guidance and feedback, asking advisors' guidance and feedback, and doing a lot of practice in writing.

Keywords : *Writing Research Paper, Students' Difficulties, Students' Strategies*

I. INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most important foreign languages learned by students in Indonesia due to its significant role in international communication and education. Moreover, English has gained widespread recognition as a global language and is extensively used in academic and educational settings worldwide. Consequently, students enrolled in English Education programs are required to develop proficiency in the four fundamental language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as stipulated in the Standard Competence and Basic Competence curriculum. Kula & Tekkol (2019) stated that Writing is a productive language skill that enables individuals to express ideas, feelings, experiences, opinions, aspirations, and goals in a well-organized and coherent written form. As an essential component of language learning, writing contributes significantly to the development of students' intellectual and cognitive abilities

because it requires the integration of various language competencies, including vocabulary, grammar, organization, and critical thinking. Furthermore, writing serves as an indirect means of communication through which writers convey their messages to readers without face-to-face interaction. The ability to write effectively provides numerous academic and practical advantages. According to Durga and Rao (2018), students with strong writing skills are generally more capable of expressing their ideas clearly, communicating their thoughts effectively, and achieving their academic objectives. Therefore, students are expected to develop a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental aspects of writing, including coherence, grammatical accuracy, appropriate vocabulary use, and correct spelling. Mastering these elements enables students to produce meaningful and well-structured written texts while enhancing their overall ability to communicate ideas effectively through written language.

However, writing is viewed as a difficult skill to be mastered by some students, especially at the college level. Ananda et.al (2014) stated that in an EFL context, writing is the hardest of the essential skills. Further, even though the writing is a crucial competency that college students have to learn, they still have problems mastering it. Particularly for EFL students in Indonesia, there are some differences between Bahasa and English, including structural and grammatical terms and patterns. Ariyanti (2016) said that writing is one of the difficult skills that the EFL students should master. Some students have difficulties in comparing the structure between Indonesian and English languages. However, they have learned English for several years, it can happen because, in Indonesia, English is the foreign language. Despite the essential role of research paper writing in higher education, many students continue to encounter various challenges in producing a well-written research paper. These challenges may negatively affect the quality of their academic writing and hinder their ability to communicate ideas effectively. Fadda (2012) reported that students experience numerous difficulties in academic writing, including avoiding inappropriate or overused words and phrases, applying grammatical rules accurately, using pronouns correctly while

maintaining pronoun-antecedent agreement, ensuring subject-verb agreement, avoiding sentence fragments, and constructing coherent and well-organized sentences throughout their writing.

II. METHOD

This research use qualitative descriptive research as the design of the research. The design is in line with the research purpose: to find out and analyze students' difficulties in writing research and their strategies to overcome the difficulties. As Lambert & Lambert (2013) stated that, qualitative descriptive research aims to provide a detailed description of past situations experienced by individuals or groups of individuals in everyday terms. Similarly, Kim et al. (2017) also pointed out that qualitative descriptive research has been recognized as essential and applicable for research questions aimed at determining the who, what, and where of experiences and gaining insights from informants about an incompletely understood phenomenon.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Result

This research identified the difficulties that students encountered while writing their research paper and the strategies that students used to overcome those difficulties by using the questionnaire and the interviews. The data collecting was conducted in one month, starting from May 26st, 2024 until July 20th, 2024. The researcher divided the explanation into two parts: first, students' difficulties in writing research paper, and second, students' strategies in overcoming the difficulties.

Discussion

In this section, the researcher discusses the data from the questionnaire and the interview that have been presented in the Findings. The discussion will be separated into two sections. First, the researcher explained the difficulties in writing research paper, followed by explaining the students' strategies for writing research paper. Further, it can be seen that grammatical rules have the highest of difficulties students face when writing research paper. It can be seen that grammatical rules have 6 respondents, then at the second position, there is a limited vocabulary with 4 respondents, at the third position, there is a paraphrasing with 3 respondents, and the fourth position there is

others with 2 respondents. According to the findings, students' difficulty in writing research paper is divided into academic and non-academic difficulty.

Firstly, in academic difficulty encountered by students in writing research paper is grammatical rules. Most of the students pointed out that they have difficulty in dealing with the use of tenses. They said that they were confused about choosing the right tenses for each chapter because there are some differences in the use of tenses of each chapter in writing research paper. On the other hand, tenses are essential in writing sentences because people will probably have misleading ideas by utilizing the wrong tenses. This is in line with a study conducted by Bukit (2020) that some students made tenses errors when producing sentences. She suggested that students should master the use of grammar because improper grammar use can lead to a misunderstanding of the written idea.

Similarly, Maili (2018) found the biggest reason students made mistakes in producing tenses was that they didn't know the pattern of the tenses. As a result, students must understand the pattern of tenses to produce correct tenses. Based on the statements above, it is possible to conclude that students should correctly master the use, function, and pattern of tenses in order to avoid misunderstandings of written language.

Secondly, students also have difficulty in limited vocabulary that affected sentence production, such as the repetition of words and the use of academic words. Students pointed out that they have difficulty choosing academic words that match the academic writing rules. Besides, because of the limitation of vocabulary, students made words repetition that actually can be made simpler. Therefore, students must master the vocabulary to help students in writing without repeating the same words and delivering clear ideas. This is in line with Amaniarsih, (2016) stated that vocabulary is a basic requirement that all students possess. They will find it difficult to speak up if they do not have a rich vocabulary because it is difficult to understand what others are saying.

Thirdly, students have difficulty in paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is one technique for preventing plagiarism. However, some students said it was difficult to make sentences from the sources without changing the meaning. This is in line to Brown, (2004) that paraphrasing is a difficult concept for ESL students to grasp. Paraphrasing is to express something in its own words to avoid plagiarism and provide some variety in expression. Therefore, students should learn how to paraphrase correctly in writing courses to prevent plagiarism and avoid changing the meaning from the original sources.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research is intended to find out and analyze students' difficulties in writing research paper and their strategies to overcome the difficulties by using questionnaire and interviewing graduated students from English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Kotabumi that have been graduated in 2024. The finding from the questionnaire showed that grammatical rules have the highest percentage of difficulties students face when writing research paper. It can be seen if grammatical rules have 6 respondents, then at the second position, there is a limited vocabulary with 4 respondents, at the third position, there is a paraphrasing with 3 respondents, and the fourth position there is others with 2 respondents.

Moreover, utilizing tools to assist in the writing has the highest percentage as a strategy used by students in dealing with difficulties when writing research paper. It can be seen if utilizing tools to assist in the writing has 6 respondents, in the second position, there is asking friends' guidance and feedback with 4 respondents. In the third position, there is asking advisors' guidance and feedback with 3 respondents. In the fourth position, there is doing a lot of practices in writing with 2 respondent.

Based on the interview, students convey their difficulties and their strategies

to overcome the difficulties. The result showed that students encountered difficulties in academic and non-academic difficulty in writing research paper. The academic difficulty includes grammatical rules, limited vocabulary, and paraphrasing. For non-academic difficulty includes limited lecturer's guidance and feedback and lack of motivation. In academic difficulty students conveyed the difficulty in the grammatical rules, most students said that their difficulties were in tenses. It was because of the different usage of tenses in each chapter and the use of tenses correctly according to the function of the tenses. In the limited vocabulary, students constantly repeat the same word and they did not know familiar with some academic words. In paraphrasing, students have difficulty in paraphrasing sentences from the sources without change the meaning. In non-academic difficulty students conveyed the difficulty in lack of motivation, students' motivation in writing research paper affected by two factors, there are internal

and external factors. For the internal factors, students pointed out that they were lazy and did not interest to the topic. For the external factors, students pointed out that they were not motivated because of their lecturer.

Furthermore, students also pointed out their strategies to overcome the difficulties, such as some students prefer to utilize tools to assist in the writing such as Grammarly, Quillbot, and paid to proofread. The tools can help users to paraphrase sentences, correct the grammatical errors, provide many synonyms of words, and correct the writing properly based on the language structure. Besides, students also prefer to ask friends' guidance and feedback, because it was helping them to get feedback of their writing and their understanding. Students also ask to their advisors' guidance and feedback to help them encounter their difficulties in writing research paper and doing a lot of practices in writing. Therefore, between the finding from the questionnaires and interview it yields the same findings and strengthen each other.

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