



# The Analysis of Teachers' Difficulties in Teaching Writing at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong

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## Abstract

This research shed light on what are the difficulty faced by the English Teacher in teaching writing at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative approach. This study conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong which involved four participants from the teacher and the student. The participants were selected by using purposive sampling and choose the teacher who have a field in Teaching English educations. This researcher also used three techniques of data collection as observation, interview, and documentation. The researcher also used data analysis which divided into three main stages following the qualitative analysis framework developed by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. The result showed that there were four difficulties in teaching writting, the first, the English competencies were related to the lack of students in understanding the grammar and vocabulary. The second, the native language which reffered to the difficulties that caused by students' native language due to the several differences between *Bahasa* and English particularly the word orders and the meaning of words. The third, motivation was also an important aspect in writing class because it has ability to energize learners' behavior and also give direction to learners that can make the learning process became more interesting. The fourth, highlighted the different level of students might bring some difficulties to the teacher when conducting the writing class because it can assist teachers to find appropriate activities at class which suit with students' level writing ability.

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## INTRODUCTION

In learning English, four skills ideally should be mastered by students. The four skills are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These four are usually related to one another and support each other in learning English. Good listening skills will smoothen one's speaking ability, and good reading fluency will also foster mastery in writing. So far, teachers have focused more on speaking skills than writing. As far as we know, writing is one skill that encourages a student to speak in English. Writing skills have been highly required in many fields today. Such skills reflect one's personal quality since writing, for many people, is very difficult. For instance, during



their studies in universities, students often find it hard to express their thought in a good organization of writing. Furthermore, even more the problem arises when they are to start, it is difficult for them to generate an idea of what to write.

Writing has goals and expectations that will underlie a person's decision to learn writing skills in English, including self-actualization and inner satisfaction. Good writing skills will significantly affect our career and motor development in thinking. Many students can speak English but cannot write English with good grammar at school. So many know that writing is a picture of insight, knowledge, background, and who are. Therefore, many teachers confuse the importance of writing it, and the teacher also experiences difficulties in teaching writing following English language rules well. Difficulties of teaching the writing skills of the English language are reportedly one of the most challenging tasks which are not only experienced by native speakers but also the English Second Language teachers around the globe.

A significant number of students may have learned such writing skills in their education at the high school level. These students' writing proficiency and their weaknesses while undergoing their educational programs may only be revealed by assessing their coursework samples or final exams. Due to academic writing demands, students need to deliver an adequate English language writing sample. It is necessary to investigate whether or not the English Second Language teachers had to face difficulties in teaching writing skills. Good writing requires preparation and timely feedback, which teachers must never underestimate. Students with weaknesses in English language writing skills may lag in both their academic and career lives.

Based on the information obtained in the observation on the English teaching and learning process conducted in SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong, the researcher found that similar problems discussed previously also happen in this school. The ability of the first-year students of SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong in writing paragraphs is not satisfied yet. This happens because most students face some difficulties in composing sentences into good paragraphs. The difficulties are classified into four categories; difficulty in terms of content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary. In conclusion, writing is considered a complex skill that is difficult to master and understand. Nevertheless, writing also became one of the critical language skills that need to be mastered by students because it facilitates students to learn and communicate in written form. The finding of this research related to the teachers' difficulties in teaching writing.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definition of Writing**

Writing is one way to express ideas, experiences, and feeling written form. Writing is a form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. According to Fabrian and Wingersky (Hidayat et al., 2018) stated that writing refers to activities to convey meaning by combining a chosen word



and put it together in printed form in order to send information and express ideas. Grammar refers to a set of rules to assist one's constructed several sentences that have meaning and acceptable in English standard, while vocabulary refers to all words that students use to express their thought, and content is the substance of writing ideas, while organization referred to ability of students to organize or arrange their thought in logical cohesion and coherence to make well unified paragraph. A good paragraph normally focuses only on one idea that is expressed in the topic sentence. A topic sentence is important to express an idea which functioned to control the content of the paragraph.

### **Types of Writing Performance**

There are five major categories of classroom writing performance (Brown,2001). They are as follows:

- Imitative, this is types of writing are usually for the beginners, in which the simply write down English letters, word, and possibly sentences to learn the conventions of the orthographic code.
- Intensive, students produce language to display their competence in grammar, vocabulary, or sentence formation.
- Self-writing, it is a writer with only the self in mind as an audience. Diary or journal writing and note-taking can be categorized in this kind of writing in which they take a note for something for the purpose of later recall.
- Display writing, this is types of writing are more focused on task-based responses in which students are responding to a prompt or assignment.
- Real writing, the purpose of this type of writing is to exchange useful information.

### **Purpose of Writing**

There are three purposes of writing based on the types of writing English language learning (J. Micael,1997), as follows:

- Informative, it is represented by informative writing that is purposed to share knowledge or information, give directions, and state ideas to others. Informative writing involves describing events or experiences, analysing a concept, speculating on causes and effect, and developing new ideas that are purposed to inform something that may important to the readers.
- Expressive or Narrative, it is represented by expressive writing or narrative writing that is purposed to share a personal or imaginative expression. Commonly it is composed of the writer's story or essay. Expressive or narrative often used to perform a pleasant discovery, story, poems, or short play.
- Persuasive, it is represented by persuasive writing that is purposed to persuade the readers to do something. Its effort to influences others and initiate action or change. This type of writing includes the



evaluation of books, movies, consumer products, or controversial issues.

### **Factors influence EFL learners' Writing Ability**

There are three factors that influence EFL learners' ability on writing, (Hidayat,2018) the factors related to English Competence; Native Language Inference, and Motivation and Reading Habit.

### **Difficulties in Teaching Writing**

Difficulty in Writing English Like all learning problems, difficulty in writing can be detrimental to student education. According to Heaton (Susanti,2010) stated that writing is a complex skill and sometimes difficult to teach. It requires mastery of not only grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judgmental elements. As students' progress, they are increasingly expected to express what they know about various subjects through writing. And according to Byrne (Pratiwi,2016) has divided the problems that make writing into three categories such as Linguistic Difficulty, physiological Difficulty, and cognitive difficulties.

### **The Role of Teachers**

According to Brown (Hidayati, 2018), teachers' role in teaching writing has been widely discussed on the field of *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT). It is emphasized on learner-centered approach, strategies-based instruction, and students-negation that has led to students' success. Therefore, the role of teachers is being a facilitator as well as coach for its students, teachers need to offers students' a guidance that will help them engage on their thinking process to successful write their idea, but teachers' also need to respect students' opinion and not interfere students writing.

### **Teachers' Difficulties in Teaching Writing**

In learning English not all teachers have the ability to teach English well. But some teachers have difficulty in conveying English learning. As for the difficulty of the teacher in teaching writing (Nyanamoney et al.,2019) as follows:

- The teacher has difficulty motivating students. Not because of student delinquency, but students are not interested in learning to write.
- The lack of professional experience is another challenge faced by teachers.
- The lack of student interest is another challenge. Developing writing skills is always challenging, however, it is always an interesting task. Especially when it comes to writing, some students leave the zone. Students feel less interested in writing because they need to know many aspects to produce good work. Students need to know punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure to write good writing.



- Level differences of students, all students have their own level the it comes to writing, the level of students' ability, therefore bring some difficulties in teaching such as teacher can not the same assignment to students with low level ability with students who have high level of ability because it will pressure the other students. Hence, Hamilton stated that teachers might feeling hard to organize and found appropriate activities at class which appropriate with students' level due to some factor such as students' level of motivation.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The location of the research is SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong which located at Jalan Pendidikan Km.8, Kota Sorong Papua Barat. The research selected this school because as long as the researcher do the practical teaching in this school the teacher argued to have some difficulties when teach in the class particularly in writting subject. This research used qualitative method. According to Sugiyono (2010), qualitative research is the research in which the researcher is placed as a key instrument and the data collection techniques are carried out in combination and analyze inductively. The rationale used in this method is because this research wants to know more about phenomena that exist in natural and uncontrolled conditions. This research also used descriptive types which reffered to the involvelment of naturalistic data which can be used to study language learning and teaching in natural setting without any intervention and manipulation to the variable. Beside that, in qualitative the descriptive types aimed to provide a description or describe a condition or phenomena of interest. Therefore, the descriptive qualitative research are more appropriate with the purpose of this study which to found out what types of teachers' difficulties in teaching writing SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong.

Furthermore, the subjects of this study were students and teachers of SMK Negeri 1 Sorong City which involved two teachers and two students as participants. This study used purposive sampling technique which refers to kind of sampling technique that focused on selecting participant with certain considerations (Sugiyono,2016). Beside that, the researcher used three techniques of data collection. In qualitative research, data collection takes place in nature, primary data sources, and data collection techniques go beyond observation, interviews, and documentation. In addition, the researcher used to process of data analysis fell into three major phases following the framework of qualitative analysis developed by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

## **RESULT**

The researcher has been conducted an open-ended question to all the participants of the research. In this case, the researcher involved three teachers and two students because it can help the researcher to gain deeper information and opinion about phenomenon being studied. Besides that, the researcher has collected all information related to teachers' difficulties in teaching writing by using note and recording. After that, the data was



analyzed using the technique provided by Miles and Huberman such as data reduction, data display, drawing conclusion, and verification. The result of analyzing data, as follows:

### 1. The Important of Writing Skill

To begin, the **Teacher 1** said that “In learning English, four components such as writing, reading, listening and speaking are inseparable unit. Therefore, writing skill is also important skill because it is not only for communication, but it can also be used for writing letters or other things that need to be mastered by students”. While, **Teacher 2** mentioned that “the important thing in learning English is speaking, However, the other three skills will follow it such as writing, reading and listening, they also important too”. Furthermore, **Teacher 3** stated that “In my perception, among the four English skills, speaking become the crucial one. But it does not mean that the other skills of English such as writing, reading, and listening are not important to be studied. Actually, the general fact shows that in learning English, students mostly spend their time in writing. It means that when the teacher gives an assignment for the students, it is commonly in writing form. I also teach writing based on the material that I have designed before. If there is a material related to the writing skills, I will teach the students about it”.

### 2. Difficulties in Teaching Writing

#### a. English Competency

Based on the interview, Teacher 1 said that “The most aspect that influence the writing skill is grammar; it is very influential in writing. If the students have known the vocabulary, but do not understand the grammar, it will be difficult for the student; therefore, the grammar is very important in writing English. However, the most difficult thing in writing is not mastering grammar and vocabulary, but it more about points or ideas that need to be written down in English writing subject”. While, **Teacher 2** mentioned that “a very influential aspect in writing is vocabulary, because if students want to write, then they have to look for words in English. If we write without being alert on the vocabulary, it means we cannot write. Therefore, the most difficult thing in writing during teaching English was, when students do not memorize or know much about vocabulary, because if students do not know vocabulary, students cannot organize the words properly. The teacher also cannot force students to understand grammar firstly. Thus, the most important thing is those teachers have to know the students' level of vocabulary in order to write a paragraph or text easily. Moreover, students do not have dictionaries or offline dictionaries on their mobile phones because the students themselves are not making an effort”.

Moreover, **Teacher 3** stated that “The aspect of language that influent in writing skill is vocabulary. If the students want to express their idea, firstly they must have sufficient vocabulary. After that, they have to look at the grammar of what they have written. The topic given to the students usually taken from material that previously designed or taken on the textbook. So, it can be said that we have no such difficulties in defining the topics”.





#### b. Native Language Interfere

To begin with, the **Teacher 1** said during interview that “*Bahasa* will influence students writing in English because the rules of English and Indonesian are very different for instance the structure of *Bahasa* and English was quite different on its meaning and writing. Besides that, in today's era English is influenced by British and American style both in written and spoken forms. Therefore, someone who has a different background and culture such as Indonesian will automatically influence their ability in English”.

In addition, the **Teacher 2** stated that “*Bahasa* influenced students in writing because we know that the rules in English and Indonesian are very different; so, it greatly affects students in writing. But I believe it is faster to learn English if students translated English into *Bahasa* so that the students will have better understanding to arrange the sentences. Therefore, the students can adjust the sentence in English too”. Furthermore, the **Teacher 3** said that “*Bahasa* is our mother language, so it has a big effect in students' writing skill.

#### c. Motivation and Reading Habit

The **Teacher 1** said that “Learning interest depends on the teacher itself when they teach in the class such as their personality and the way of teaching because if the teacher more attractive in teaching English, then the students' learning interest will be improved. While, the way to improve students' interest in learning English especially writing is giving the understanding of English and explaining based on the situation and circumstances of the student”. While, the **Teacher 2** mentioned that “The students' interest in learning was quite enthusiastic because basically most of the students after going to school prefer work rather than college. Then, to motivate students in writing, the teacher can call the students forward to write down the answer of the question on the whiteboard. In addition, to motivate the students, the teacher needs to understand situations and conditions on the students because if the teacher motivates students to write on inappropriate conditions and situations, then not all the students will be motivated to write”.

In addition, the **Teacher 3** stated that “the students' interest in learning English is very low, especially in writing. One way to fix the students who have a lack of motivation in writing is by asking them to participate when the learning English process occurs”.

#### d. Defining Topic

The **Teacher 1** stated that “In class, there are no difficulties in determining the topics because before teaching we had compared it with other literature in advance and learned the topics. Teachers also have to multiply a lot of knowledge about English and not be passive in learning English”. While, **Teacher 2** said that “The topic that have been taught for the students depended on the situation and material, so, we did not determine the topic because the topic has been provided on the textbook. So, we have no difficulties in defining for writing subject”. Moreover, the **Teacher 3** said that “the topic given to the students usually taken from material that



previously designed or taken on the textbook. So, it can be said that we have no such difficulties in defining the topics”.

#### e. Students’ Different Level

To begin with, The **Teacher 1** said that “I believe, age do not affect English learning, in otherwise things that very influential in English learning were writing, speaking, reading and listening. At school, the important thing is the material that has already on the books”. Meanwhile, the **Teacher 2** stated that “Different ages or levels of understanding will certainly influence the class management. So, we need to decide and arrange students who have high and low level of understanding into several groups. Furthermore, the **Teacher 3** stated that “each student surely has different age, but it does not mean the different age has an affect towards the understanding of English”.

#### f. Teachers’ Opinion in Overcoming Difficulties in teaching English

**Teacher 1** said that “Usually, I give the assignments in the written form for students in various types which based on the abilities and situations of the students”. While, the **Teacher 2** mentioned that “Techniques for overcoming student writing difficulties are by asking them to download English dictionary on their mobile phones. Besides that, we need to force students to look up the unknown vocabulary on their phone or by borrowing a dictionary from the library if they do not have mobile phone”. Furthermore, the **Teacher 3** stated that “the students’ interest in learning English is very low, especially in writing. One way to fix the students who have a lack of motivation in writing is by asking them to participate when the learning English process occurs. The technique to overcome students’ difficulty in English is by asking them to provide an offline dictionary on their mobile phone or perhaps they need to borrow the dictionary from the library school”.

Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed the students in order to provide more information about the learning process of writing in the class, so that it can support the data from the teachers’ interview above. The findings as follows:

### 3. Students’ Difficulties in Learning Writing

#### a. Students’ Experience in Writing Class

**Student 1** mentioned that “I usually learn English three times a week at home, but since Covid-19 I only learn English online once a week. From my experienced, the teacher often teaches writing in English class, but I did not really like the way the teacher teaches us because he is more joking than learning. Besides that, occasionally the teachers teach something outside the learning context. However, the teacher also gave writing assignments and examples of how to use grammar and explaining the vocabulary and the pronunciation but sometimes I do not understand their explanation”. Meanwhile, **Student 2** said that “I usually learn English based on the schedule given by the school, it only once a week. The teacher also teaches writing more often, but sometimes I do not understand what the teacher





explains. So far, I was so excited about writing class and I love writing, because it was more positive and happier, moreover we can add insight and knowledge that has been or has not been previously studied”.

#### b. Students’ Difficulties in Writing

**Student 1** mentioned in his interviewed that “I often forget how to use vocabulary and grammar. I’m still confused the arrangement of sentences in English because the pattern of *Bahasa* and English are very different. Besides that, in writing there were many ideas so that we were confused in arranging the sentences. I also felt bored in writing class because most of the writing prefers to explain the theory rather than asking to practice writing in English”. While, **Students 2** said that “I have difficulties in writing class because there are many sentences and grammar that I did not understand. At school, the teacher usually explains it, but I have some difficulties in understanding what has been explained in front of the class. I also felt difficult in changing and using the verb form e.g., past and present. They also teach the basics of grammar in class and give assignments in the form of making sentences with the formula that previously described. Besides that, I also found many difficulties in changing the words in the sentence sections such as past, present, future”.

### DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this research was analyzed the teachers’ difficulties in teaching writing. To begin with, the first difficulty was the English competencies which related to the lack of students in understanding the grammar and vocabulary. The grammar refers to set of rules that can assist ones to arrange sentences and describe the situation when it is occurred, so that one can express their intention appropriately. While, the vocabulary referred to the word that can be used to convey their ideas. In this case, the teachers have already recognized the important of vocabulary by taking an action to ask their students download both online or book dictionary in order to improve students’ vocabulary’s ability.

Furthermore, the findings of this research showed that the teachers’ difficulties in teaching writing were related to their students’ English competency; the native language interference; motivation; and students’ different level. Therefore, it is important for teacher to look for difficulties from their students’ perspective and also tried to find an alternative way, so that the teachers can overcome writing difficulties both for the teachers and as well as for the students.

### CONCLUSION

The findings of this research showed that the teachers’ difficulties in teaching writing were related to their students’ English competency; the native language interference; motivation; and students’ different level. The English competencies were related to the lack of students in understanding the grammar and vocabulary. It is one of the influential aspects because the grammar and vocabulary can assist the students easily produces sentences or paragraph as well as avoid them to become frustrated in expressing their selves. While, the native language referred to the difficulties that caused by



students' native language due to the several differences between Bahasa and English particularly the word orders and the meaning of words. So, the native language might bring good impact which called as native transfer and bad impact which called as native interference.

The findings also showed that motivation was also an important aspect in writing class because it has ability to energize learners' behavior and also give direction to learners that can make the learning process became more interesting. The researcher highlighted the different level of students might bring some difficulties to the teacher when conducting the writing class because it can assist teachers to find appropriate activities at class which suit with to students' level writing ability.

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