

Students' Ability and Difficulty In Writing Narrative Text : Case Study in Junior High School In Lombok, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the level of students' writing ability in narrative texts and to identify the specific challenges they face in the process. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method using a case study design. Data were collected through writing tests and questionnaires, which were analyzed to assess students' performance across five aspects of narrative writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The participants consisted of 30 students from Class IX.4 of SMPN 2 Sekotong, located in Sekotong District, West Lombok, Indonesia. The findings from the writing test indicated a moderate to good level of performance, with an average score of 76.76%, suggesting that students demonstrated basic proficiency in narrative composition. However, the questionnaire results, with an average response rate of 69.42%, revealed discrepancies in students' self-perceived abilities, particularly highlighting difficulties in grammar and vocabulary usage. Prior to administering the questionnaire during the second session, the researcher clearly explained its purpose to ensure informed participation. These findings suggest that while students may perform adequately in structured writing assessments, they still face underlying difficulties in linguistic aspects of narrative writing. Practically, the results imply the need for targeted instructional support focusing on grammar and vocabulary development to improve students' overall narrative writing skills.

Keywords: Writing Ability, Writing Difficulties, Narrative Text

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Introduction

(Bifuh-Ambe, 2013; Gopee & Deane, 2013; Izzatullakhon, 2024) report writing skills are widely recognized as crucial for students' academic success and professional development. Proficiency in writing enhances not only the ability to communicate ideas clearly and coherently but also supports the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. According to Sukreni et al. (2024), writing plays a significant role in enhancing students' academic performance and preparing them for future careers by fostering effective communication, critical thinking, and self-expression. Additionally, Setiawan et al. (2017) argue that while speaking enables immediate interaction, writing provides space for deeper expression and reflection, especially for learners who may struggle with oral communication. Writing, therefore,

serves not just as a tool for assessment but as a medium for thought construction and cognitive growth

Among the four core language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing writing is frequently cited as the most demanding. Heni et al. (2016) note that writing is a productive skill and often perceived by students as difficult to master due to its multifaceted nature. Particularly, narrative writing poses significant challenges, as it requires students to integrate creativity, accurate language use, and a deep understanding of narrative structures. Crafting a compelling narrative involves more than just imagination; it demands a structured approach to presenting ideas, managing sequence and coherence, and employing appropriate language features such as past tense, action verbs, and descriptive vocabulary (Ali, 2022; Burns & Siegel, 2018) .

According to Anderson & Anderson (2004) and Joyce & Feez (2000), a typical narrative text consists of five key elements: orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. These structural components must be internalized by students for them to effectively organize and present their ideas. Herman (2007) further defines narrative as a recounting of events—real or imagined—intended to entertain or emotionally engage the reader. Despite being commonly used in textbooks and classroom materials, many students fail to fully grasp this structure, resulting in disorganized and incomplete writing (Herdi & Abbas, 2018; Lott & Read, 2015).

Mira (2016) points out that writing difficulties are multidimensional, involving challenges in generating ideas, organizing content, and mastering technical aspects such as grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling. These findings are supported by Boardman and Frydenberg (2002), who emphasize that writing is a recursive process involving stages of planning, drafting, revising, and editing. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) reinforce the view that writing is a highly personal and cognitive act, requiring the writer to synthesize background knowledge, linguistic skills, and higher-order thinking (Marulanda Ángel & Martínez García, 2017).

In the context of Indonesian secondary education, the implementation of the Kurikulum 2013 (K-13) places significant emphasis on developing students' critical thinking and communication abilities. Narrative writing is embedded in this curriculum as a means to cultivate creativity and logical reasoning. However, in practice, students frequently fall short of achieving the expected competencies. A preliminary interview conducted by the researcher with an English teacher at SMPN 2 Sekotong revealed that many students exhibit low motivation and interest in writing activities. Common complaints included the perception that writing is boring and difficult, as well as a lack of vocabulary and grammar mastery. These findings are corroborated by classroom observations indicating widespread difficulties among students in composing coherent and structured narrative texts. Notably, many students failed to submit writing assignments or produced incomplete work, reflecting both skill-based and motivational deficiencies.

Despite the pedagogical importance of writing and its inclusion in national curricula, there remains a significant gap between instructional goals and students' actual performance. Prior studies have extensively documented general writing challenges (Heni et al., 2016; Mira, 2016), but few have focused specifically on narrative writing in the context of junior high school students in rural Indonesian settings. Moreover, while previous research has addressed difficulties in grammar

and vocabulary in general, limited attention has been given to how these challenges manifest within the structure of narrative texts and how they impact students' ability to meet curriculum standards. This study seeks to fill that gap by focusing explicitly on students' writing ability and difficulties in narrative texts, particularly in terms of language use and vocabulary mastery (Hattingh et al., 2020; Naghdipour, 2016).

This research builds upon the process writing theory (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002), which emphasizes writing as a cyclical and developmental process, rather than a linear task. It also draws on the communicative language teaching (CLT) framework, which supports learning through meaningful language use and interaction. The integration of these theories provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the cognitive and linguistic processes involved in writing. Furthermore, recent studies (Hyland, 2019; Nation, 2022) have emphasized the importance of genre-based pedagogy and vocabulary development as essential components of effective writing instruction. These contemporary insights underscore the urgency for pedagogical interventions that are context-specific and skill-oriented.

(Khudaverdiyeva, 2025; Sparks et al., 2014) reports given the strategic role of writing in educational assessment and its relevance in modern communication, addressing students' difficulties in narrative writing is a matter of educational urgency. The outcomes of this research have the potential to inform curriculum development, teacher training, and instructional design in English language teaching. Specifically, the findings can help educators identify targeted strategies for improving students' writing performance, such as scaffolded instruction in narrative structures, vocabulary enhancement activities, and personalized feedback mechanisms. By addressing the core challenges identified in this study, schools can better support students in achieving both academic standards and lifelong communication skills.

Despite the inclusion of narrative writing in the Indonesian K-13 curriculum, many students at SMPN 2 Sekotong struggle to write effectively. These difficulties stem from limited linguistic proficiency, lack of understanding of narrative structure, and low engagement in writing activities. The mismatch between curriculum expectations and students' actual performance signals the need for a deeper investigation into the specific nature of students' writing challenges in narrative texts.

Research Objectives to analyze the level of students' writing ability in narrative texts, to identify the specific linguistic and structural difficulties faced by students when writing narrative texts and to examine how students' writing abilities align with the competencies required by the K-13 curriculum.

Research Questions what is the current level of students' writing ability in narrative texts at SMPN 2 Sekotong?. What are the main linguistic and structural challenges students face in writing narrative texts? And how do students' narrative writing skills reflect the goals of the K-13 curriculum in terms of critical and logical thinking?

In conclusion, this study seeks to provide a nuanced and evidence-based understanding of students' narrative writing abilities and difficulties within a specific educational context. Through this inquiry, the researcher aims to contribute to the improvement of English writing pedagogy in Indonesian junior high schools by offering practical recommendations grounded in both theory and empirical data.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a Descriptive qualitative Method. The purpose is to analyze the students' ability and difficulty in writing narrative text. According to Creswell (2007) Descriptive qualitative method is a research approach that focuses on collecting detailed and accurate data about a phenomenon or situation, to describe and explain it in an objective and detailed manner. In this method, the researcher analyzed and identified the students' ability

Subject of The Research

The subject of this research is 1X grade of students' SMPN 2 SEKOTONG at class 1X.4 total number of students in this class consists of 27 students.

Research Instrument

Two instruments are used in this study: a written test and a questionnaire. The written test aimed to find out the students' ability to write narrative text. In implementing the written test, student was directed to perform their skills in writing a narrative based on the topic given by the researcher. The questionnaire was used to find out students' difficulty in writing a Narrative text. According to Sekaran (2003), a Questionnaire is a data collection tool consisting of a series of questions used to gather information from respondents. A questionnaire was used with closed questions, which contains 10 questions that assess students' understanding of writing a Narrative text.

Procedure of Data Collection

The procedure of data collection in this research was conducted through two instruments, namely a writing test and a questionnaire. In the writing test, the researcher first explained the aim of the test to the students and then asked them to write a narrative text based on the given topic. The students were given 50 minutes to complete the task, and exactly at the 50th minute, the researcher asked them to stop writing. After that, the students were asked to collect their writing.

Meanwhile, for the questionnaire, the researcher began by explaining the questionnaire to the students and clarifying its purpose. The questionnaire was then distributed, followed by an explanation of how to answer the questions. After the explanation, the students were asked to answer the questionnaire, and they were given approximately 10 minutes to complete it. Once the students finished, the researcher collected the questionnaire and expressed gratitude to the students for their time and effort in completing both the writing test and the questionnaire.

Technique of Data Analysis

After classifying the students' scores in analyzing their ability in writing, the researcher calculated the results of the writing test to obtain the total score. The analysis was carried out through several steps. First, the researcher scored the students' answers from the writing test. Next, the students' ability was determined

and analyzed by using the passing grade standard at SMPN 2 Sekotong, which was set at 75. After that, the researcher calculated the percentage of the students' ability to see how well they performed in the writing test. The mean score of the students was also computed in order to determine the overall achievement of the group.

Furthermore, to know the percentage of the students' writing test results, the researcher analyzed how many students achieved the passing grade and how many did not. This process was important to measure the level of students' success in writing narrative texts. By calculating the proportion of students who reached the minimum standard, the researcher was able to describe the overall ability of the students in relation to the expected competency level.

1. Score 84.01-100% is categorized excellent
2. Score 68.01-84% very good
3. Score 52.01-68% is categorized good
4. Score 36.01-52% is categorized fair

Table 1. Scoring students' ability in Writing Narrative text

Clasification	Score	Criteria
Excellent to very good	85-100	Effective complex constructions, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, preposition.
Good to average	70-84	Effective but simple construction, minor problem in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word/function, articles, preposition but meaning seldom obscured.
Fair to poor	55-69	Major problem in simple/complex constructions, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, preposition, and/or agreement, run-on, deletions, meaning confused or obscured.
Very poor	25-54	Virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, or not enough to evaluate.

(Jacob Et al, 1981)

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Students' Ability In Writing Narrative Text

To assess the students' ninth-grade writing ability in narrative text, the researcher administered a narrative writing test to the students of IX.4, which served as the sample for the Research. Class IX.4 consists of 27 students, but only one student was unable to participate in the test. So there were only 26 students in the current sample of the writing test.

In this test, students should be able to write a narrative text on a given topic provided by the writer on a paper sheet. There were three topics on the paper sheet from which they could choose. They can write about their experience. The researcher allocated 50 minutes for the students to write narrative texts on three different topics:

my holiday, my horror experience, and my special birthday. During the test, students were allowed to use a dictionary to help them find the correct words.

Table 2. Data Analysis Students' Ability in Writing Narrative Text

No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Abilities Categories
1	85-100	6	11.53 %	Excellent to Very good
2	70-84	18	69.23 %	Good to Average
3	55-69	2	7.6 %	Failure to Poor
4	54-25	-	0	Very Poor

The data in the table above shows that six students received excellent to perfect scores (11.53%), 18 students received good to average scores (69.23%), two students received fair to Poor scores (7.6%), and no students received abysmally low scores. The mean score was calculated by dividing the sum of all students' abilities in writing the Narrative text by the total number of students, which is 76.76%. It is more clearly shown in the diagram below :

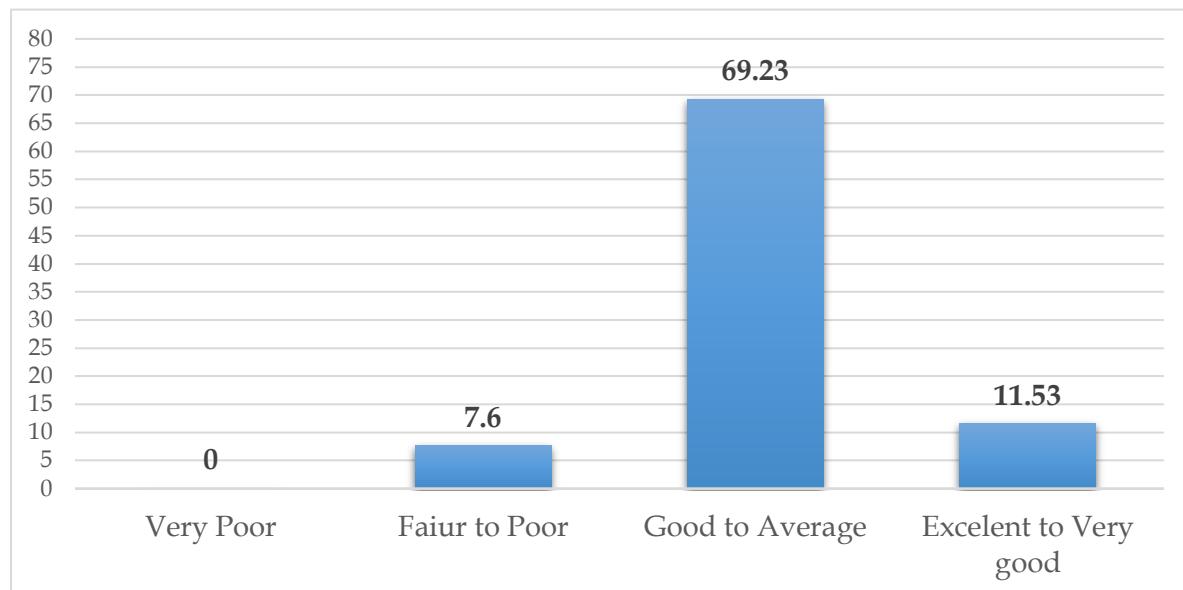


Figure 1. Data Analysis of Students Ability in Writing Narrative text

The chart shows that many students, especially third-year students at SMPN 2 Sekotong, achieved good scores in writing a Narrative text. Based on the range percentage above, it is found that six students got excellent to perfect scores (11.53%), 18 students got good to average scores (69.23%), and two students got fair to poor scores (7.6%). The mean score also indicates that it is good (76.76%). Referring to the previous classification of the score, the researcher notes that the students of SMPN 2 Sekotong demonstrated good competence in writing narrative texts in their English learning. It can be attributed to the fact that the students in SMPN 2 Sekotong demonstrated high competence and interest in English, particularly in writing narrative texts.

Students' Score On Questionnaire

In collecting the data of the questionnaire, the researcher uses the instruments, and respondents are asked to choose their retort to signify one of the numbers from 1 to 4 based on the explanation for the numbers, that are:

- Strongly Disagree, respondents got score (1)
- Disagree, respondents got score (2)
- Agree, respondents got score (3)
- Strongly Agree, respondents got score (4)

To answer the second research question in this research about " What are challenges and obstacles faced by the IX graders of SMPN 2 SEKOTONG in writing narrative text?" was presented clearly in the following table :

Table 3. Students Responses in Writing Narrative Text

No	Questions	Students Responses			
		Strongly Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree
1.	Q1	1 (3,8%)	10 (38,46%)	15 (57,69%)	-
2.	Q2	2 (7,6%)	12 (46,15%)	8 (30,76%)	4 (15,38%)
3.	Q3	3 (11,5%)	6 (23,07%)	12 (46,15%)	5 (19,23%)
4.	Q4	2 (7,6%)	5 (19,23%)	16 (61,53%)	3 (11,53%)
5.	Q5	6 (23,07%)	4 (15,38%)	13 (50%)	3 (11,53%)
6.	Q6	2 (7,6%)	5 (19,23%)	11 (42,30%)	8 (30,76%)
7.	Q7	5 (19,23%)	3 (11,53%)	12 (46,15%)	4 (15,38%)
8.	Q8	1 (3,8%)	8 (30,76%)	13 (50%)	4 (15,38%)
9.	Q9	2 (7,6%)	5 (19,23%)	10 (38,46%)	9 (34,61%)
10.	Q10	1 (3,8%)	3 (11,53%)	11 (42,30%)	11 (42,30%)
TOTAL		27	61	121	51
260					

Based on Table 4.3, it is evident that most students struggle with writing narrative texts, as indicated by their responses. Most of the students chose the Agree category with a total of 121 (46,69%) students' responses. Some students had no difficulty writing a narrative text. It can be seen from the students' responses that chose the Strongly Disagree category, with a total of 27 (10.38%), and the average value of the students' responses in writing narrative text is 69.42%, as indicated by the results of the completed questionnaire. It has been found that most students have difficulty writing narrative texts. It means that students struggle to organize their ideas.

Discussion

Students' Ability in Writing Narrative Text

The analysis of students' writing ability, as summarized in Table 4.1, indicates a generally positive outcome. The data shows that out of the total students assessed, a significant majority (69.23%, or 18 students) achieved a "Good to Average" score (70-84). Furthermore, 11.53% (6 students) demonstrated "Excellent to Very Good" ability (85-100). Only a small minority (7.6%, or 2 students) fell into the "Fair to Poor" category (55-69), and notably, no students scored in the "Very Poor" range.

The calculated mean score of 76.76% further reinforces the finding that the students at SMPN 2 SEKOTONG possess a "good" competence in writing narrative texts. This overall positive assessment suggests that the students have a foundational understanding and practical ability in constructing narrative pieces. The researcher's conclusion that students demonstrated "good competence" and potentially high competence and interest in English, particularly in writing Narrative text" is supported by these quantitative results. This could be attributed to effective teaching methodologies, student engagement, or prior exposure to narrative writing.

Based on the results of the written test, the majority of students were categorized in the good to average level. As shown in the table, 18 out of 26 students (69.23%) achieved scores within the range of 70–84, which indicates that most students demonstrated adequate ability in writing narrative texts. In addition, 6 students (11.53%) reached the excellent to very good category with scores between 85–100, showing that a small group of students were able to produce well-structured and coherent narrative texts with minimal errors. On the other hand, 2 students (7.6%) were categorized as fair to poor (scores 55–69), suggesting that they still experienced difficulties in aspects such as organization, grammar, or vocabulary use.

Overall, these findings suggest that while the majority of students have achieved a satisfactory ability in writing narrative texts, only a small portion reached the highest level, and some still struggled to meet the minimum requirements. This indicates that further pedagogical efforts are needed to enhance students' performance, especially in improving weaker students' writing skills and supporting average students to progress toward the higher category. Teachers may provide additional practice in organizing ideas, expanding vocabulary, and applying narrative conventions more effectively so that students can improve their writing ability in future task.

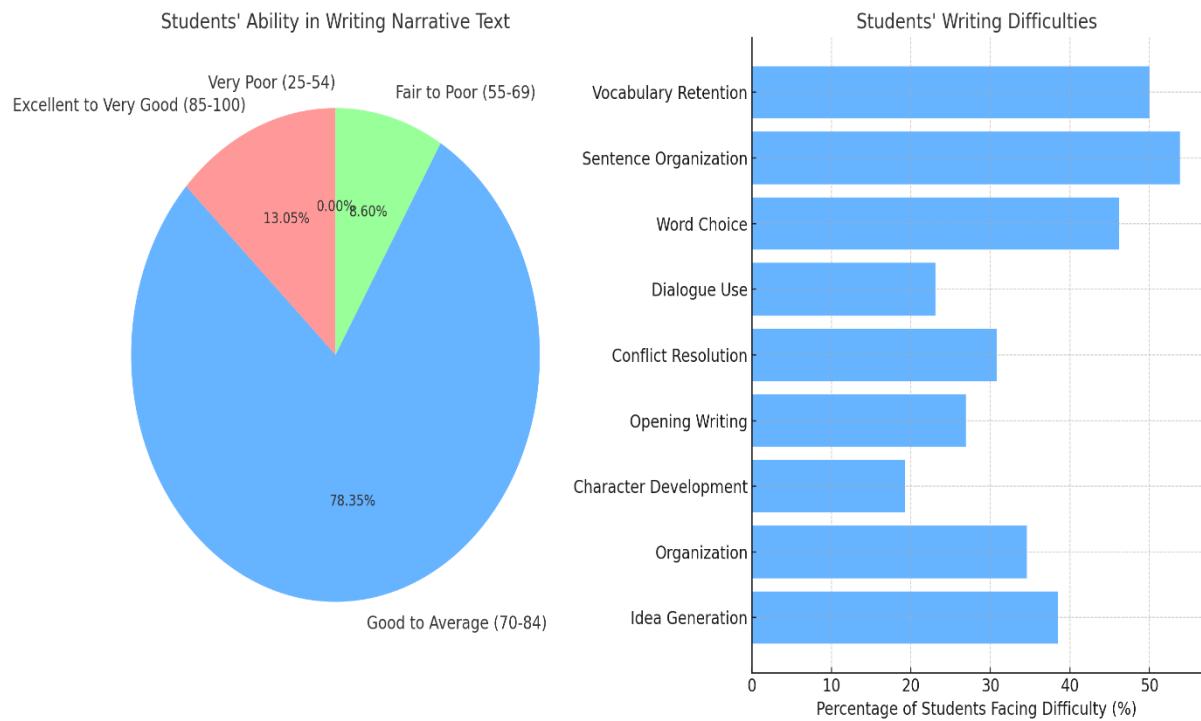


Figure 2. Students Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text

Specific points of discussion (question by question analysis)

1. *"I enjoy writing narrative text."*

10 students agreed, and 1 disagreed. Only 15 disagreed, and no students chose strongly agree. the findings show that most students did not express strong enjoyment in this activity. Out of 26 respondents, 15 students (57.69%) disagreed and 1 student (3.85%) strongly disagreed, indicating that the majority did not perceive narrative writing as enjoyable. Meanwhile, 10 students (38.46%) agreed, and none selected strongly agree, suggesting that a smaller group of students showed a positive attitude toward writing narratives. These results imply that students' motivation toward narrative writing is relatively low, and therefore, teachers may need to apply more engaging strategies, such as incorporating creative activities, providing interesting prompts, or connecting writing tasks to students' personal experiences, to increase their interest and enjoyment.

2. *"I find it easy to come up with ideas for narrative text."*

12 students agreed, and 5 strongly agreed, totaling 17 students who struggle. Only 8 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The majority of students expressed positive responses. Out of 26 respondents, 12 students (46.15%) agreed and 5 students (19.23%) strongly agreed, indicating that most students were confident in generating ideas for narrative writing. In contrast, 8 students (30.77%) disagreed and 2 students (7.69%) strongly disagreed, showing that a smaller group still faced difficulties in this aspect. These findings suggest that while idea generation is generally not a significant problem for most students, instructional support such as brainstorming activities and guided prompts can be beneficial for those who struggle.

3. "I struggle to organize my ideas when writing narrative text"

6 students agreed, and 3 strongly agreed, totaling 9 students. Only 12 disagreed, and 5 strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that the students' ability to arrange storylines and develop ideas is generally good. However, the fact that around 9 respondents (34.6%) still admitted to having difficulties should not be overlooked. This may be caused by a lack of vocabulary mastery, limited ideas, or insufficient understanding of narrative text structure. Thus, teachers need to provide additional practice, apply brainstorming strategies, or introduce mind mapping techniques to help students who still struggle so they can express their ideas more clearly and systematically

4. I have difficulty developing believable characters in my narrative text"

5 students agreed, and 3 strongly agreed, totaling 5 students. Only 16 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. This finding suggests that while most students demonstrate adequate ability in character development, a considerable minority still struggles in this aspect. Such difficulties may stem from limited vocabulary, insufficient exposure to narrative models, or challenges in imagining and elaborating character traits. Therefore, pedagogical interventions, such as character mapping, role-playing activities, and the analysis of model texts, are recommended to support students in enhancing their skills in developing believable characters within narrative writing.

5. I struggle to write engaging opening for my narrative texts

4 students agreed, and 3 strongly agreed, totaling 7 students. 13 students disagreed, and 6 strongly disagreed. suggesting that a smaller proportion of students still experienced challenges in constructing engaging openings. These challenges may be related to limited creative ideas, insufficient exposure to narrative models, or a lack of strategies in capturing the reader's interest at the beginning of a text. Therefore, although the overall ability of students in writing openings can be considered adequate, pedagogical support is still needed. Teachers may incorporate techniques such as analyzing effective narrative openings, using prompts to stimulate creativity, and practicing various strategies like asking rhetorical questions or starting with vivid descriptions to help students who continue to struggle in this area.

6. I have difficulty resolving conflicts in my narrative text"

5 students agreed, and 8 strongly agreed, totaling 13 students. 11 students disagreed, and only 2 strongly disagreed. The data reveal that most students did not face significant difficulties in this aspect. Out of 26 respondents, 8 students (30.77%) chose disagree and 11 students (42.31%) selected strongly disagree, indicating that a majority of students were confident in their ability to resolve conflicts in narrative writing. In contrast, 5 students (19.23%) agreed and 2 students (7.69%) strongly agreed, showing that a smaller proportion still experienced challenges in this area. These difficulties may stem from a limited understanding of narrative structure, lack of ideas to develop logical resolutions, or insufficient practice in writing complete stories. Overall, the findings suggest that while most students are able to construct appropriate conflict resolutions, teachers should still provide support for those who struggle. Suggested pedagogical strategies include analyzing examples of well-

structured narrative resolutions, practicing guided writing activities, and using story-mapping techniques to help students organize and resolve conflicts more effectively.

7. I struggle to use dialogue effectively in my narrative texts"

3 students agreed, and 5 strongly agreed, totaling 8 students. 12 disagreed, and 4 strongly disagreed. the findings indicate that most students did not encounter significant difficulties in this aspect. Out of 26 respondents, 12 students (46.15%) answered disagree and 4 students (15.38%) answered strongly disagree, which suggests that a majority of students are relatively confident in incorporating dialogue appropriately into their narratives. However, 3 students (11.54%) agreed and 5 students (19.23%) strongly agreed, showing that a considerable minority still experienced challenges in using dialogue effectively. These challenges may be associated with limited knowledge of punctuation and conventions in writing dialogue, difficulties in making conversations sound natural, or lack of practice in integrating dialogue smoothly within the narrative structure. Overall, while the ability of most students in applying dialogue can be considered sufficient, targeted instructional support is still necessary. Teachers may provide explicit instruction on dialogue rules, exposure to examples of effective dialogue in literary texts, and guided writing activities to help students improve their skills in this area.

8. I struggle in determining the choice of words to write narrative text

8 students agreed, and 4 strongly agreed, totaling 12 students. Only 13 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed. The findings show that students' responses were somewhat divided, although the majority did not perceive this as a major difficulty. Out of 26 respondents, 13 students (50%) selected disagree and 1 student (3.85%) chose strongly disagree, suggesting that more than half of the participants were confident in their ability to choose appropriate vocabulary in narrative writing. However, a considerable number of students still faced challenges, as 8 students (30.77%) agreed and 4 students (15.38%) strongly agreed with the statement. This indicates that around 46% of the respondents experienced difficulties in selecting suitable words, which may be attributed to limited vocabulary mastery, lack of exposure to reading materials, or difficulties in expressing ideas with precise diction. Overall, while most students demonstrated adequate ability in choosing words, the relatively high percentage of those who struggled suggests that teachers should place greater emphasis on vocabulary development. Pedagogical interventions such as vocabulary enrichment activities, contextualized practice, and exposure to model texts are recommended to help students improve their word choice in narrative writing.

9. I have difficulty arranging sentence so that they become a complete paragraph to be come a story

5 students agreed, and 9 strongly agreed, totaling 14 students. Only 10 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The data reveal that a considerable proportion of students experienced challenges in this aspect. Out of 26 respondents, 5 students (19.23%) agreed and 9 students (34.62%) strongly agreed, indicating that nearly half of the participants struggled to organize sentences into coherent paragraphs that could develop into a complete narrative. In contrast, 10 students (38.46%) disagreed and 2 students (7.69%) strongly disagreed, suggesting that a slightly larger portion of the respondents did not encounter major difficulties in this area. These findings imply that sentence organization and paragraph development remain problematic for a

significant number of students, which may be due to limited understanding of narrative structure, lack of practice in coherence and cohesion, or difficulties in connecting ideas logically. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to provide targeted support through activities such as paragraph writing exercises, the use of graphic organizers, and guided practice in sequencing ideas, so that students can improve their ability to arrange sentences into well-structured narratives.

10. I have difficulty remembering words in English

3 students agreed, and 11 strongly agreed, totaling 14 students. Only 11 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed. The findings show that students were divided in their responses. Out of 26 respondents, 3 students (11.54%) agreed and 11 students (42.31%) strongly agreed, indicating that nearly half of the participants experienced difficulties in retaining vocabulary. On the other hand, 11 students (42.31%) disagreed and 1 student (3.85%) strongly disagreed, suggesting that an almost equal proportion of students did not face such problems. These results imply that vocabulary retention remains a challenge for a significant number of students, and thus vocabulary-building strategies such as repetition, contextual learning, and extensive reading are necessary to support their writing development.

Based on the overall discussion of the questionnaire results, it can be concluded that students demonstrated varied abilities and challenges in writing narrative texts. The findings revealed that while many students were relatively confident in organizing ideas, developing believable characters, creating openings, resolving conflicts, and using dialogue effectively, a considerable number of them still experienced difficulties in these aspects. Vocabulary mastery and word choice were also identified as significant challenges for some students, which affected their ability to express ideas clearly and coherently. Moreover, although some students reported that they found it easy to generate ideas for narratives, the level of enjoyment and motivation toward narrative writing remained relatively low among the majority of respondents. These results suggest that students generally possess a basic ability to write narrative texts but require further support to strengthen specific skills. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to implement various pedagogical strategies, such as vocabulary enrichment, brainstorming, character and story mapping, guided writing, and the use of engaging prompts, in order to enhance students' competence and foster greater motivation in writing narrative texts

Conclusion

The analysis of students' narrative writing ability revealed that the average score was 69,23, with 76% of students meeting or exceeding the KKM of 75. This indicates a generally satisfactory level of narrative writing ability among the students. However, a detailed examination of individual writing components highlighted specific strengths and persistent challenges.

Students generally demonstrated strengths in initiating clear topics for their narratives and possessing a foundational grasp of basic grammar, particularly in the use of the past tense. Conversely, the most common difficulties were observed in providing sufficient and relevant details for content development, maintaining coherent organization through proper use of connectives, employing a rich and accurate vocabulary, and consistently adhering to mechanical conventions (spelling,

punctuation, and capitalization). These difficulties often led to narratives that, while understandable, lacked depth, flow, descriptive power, or overall polish.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance students' narrative writing skills:

1. For English Teachers
 - Provide more guided writing practices focusing on narrative structure (orientation, complication, resolution).
 - Integrate vocabulary-building activities, such as storytelling games, word walls, and contextualized reading, to help students choose appropriate words in writing.
 - Use creative teaching methods (e.g., project-based storytelling, digital storytelling, or peer review) to increase students' interest and motivation in writing.
 - Offer explicit instruction on grammar and sentence organization using examples from students' own writing to make feedback more meaningful.
2. For Students
 - Engage in extensive reading of narrative texts to improve vocabulary, grammar awareness, and understanding of text structure.
 - Practice writing regularly through journals, blogs, or short stories to enhance confidence and fluency.
 - Collaborate in peer editing activities to learn from classmates' writing and exchange feedback constructively.
3. For Schools
 - Provide writing workshops or clubs that encourage students to write creatively and publish their work in school magazines or online platforms.
 - Ensure adequate learning resources, such as English storybooks, dictionaries, and digital writing tools, to support language learning.
 - Facilitate teacher training on effective writing pedagogy and assessment strategies.
4. For Future Researchers
 - Conduct similar studies in different schools or regions to compare writing abilities across contexts.
 - Explore the impact of specific teaching strategies (such as mind mapping, collaborative writing, or process writing approach) on improving narrative writing.
 - Include interviews or classroom observations to gain deeper insights into factors influencing students' writing performance.

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