EFL Students' Ability and Barriers in Report Text

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ABSTRACT

The research purposes were to determine the students' ability along with the barriers in writing report texts of the eleventh graders at MA NWDI Perian. This research adopted a mix method of sequential explanatory analysis (quantitative descriptive-qualitative). The Instruments were written tests and interviews. Students were first asked to write report texts to determine their ability and then they were asked a series of questions related to the data results. Based on the results, the mean score was 52.19 and the passing grade for English was 70. This indicates that the participants' ability in writing report texts is poor or below standard. There are five components that are assessed, and participants' ability levels in these five components are still relatively low. The percentages of each assessment were as follows: content 21%, organization 21%, vocabulary 18%, language 18%, and mechanic 22%. According to the results of qualitative data analysis, the barriers in writing report texts were content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics. In addition to those students barriers, there are other factors that should be considered in writing tasks, such as motivation, lexicogrammar features, paragraph elements, or three main factors that influence students' writing skill, namely psychological, sociocultural and linguistic. Furthermore, this study was conducted while the pandemic was still widespread and the interaction of teachers and students during the teaching and learning process were only conducted via virtual setting. This, of course, makes teachers less effective in delivering lessons, particularly in writing, which requires extensive practice, proofreading, discussion, and revision activities. In addition, factors such as space barriers and, in some cases, network restrictions and the use of unappropriate teaching methods or strategies, all have an impact on students' writing skills.

INTRODUCTION

Language is media of communication that helps humans get to know and understand each other, whether they are in the same or different environments. It means that, language is a communicator in which humans can transform their information with language in various ways to make it more easily understood among humans all over the world. In the current situation, we are accustomed to interacting with foreigners from various countries. With our native language, we cannot establish good communication, so now we all around the world are learning English, an international language (Pennycook & Candlin, 2017). Everyone uses it to communicate and connect with different relationships for a specific purpose. English can be used for a number of reasons, including business, tourism, international relations, and, importantly, education (Pratama & Arriyani, 2021).

There are many reasons when asked why English is so important for students to learn, including to get scholarships, find a job, invest, take a trip, build friendships, do research, compete, write (memos, essays, theses, reports, and whatever else) in English. English has certain skills to be mastered, each of which has its own set of difficulties. It is a very complex reasoning skills based on current experience and reality. However, those skills are badly needed in a variety of fields. As claimed by Pearson et al (2017), "writing is more than a medium of communication which means that writing is not just a procedure in which people simply communicate each other to share stories and exchange information but also as means to express feelings, emotions, and thoughts that want to show". By writing skill, we can also keep information for a longer period of time. As supported by Afriani (2018), "writing makes the words immortal, and thus enlarges the mutual reminiscence of an individual from the tiny store that we may recollect and convey face to face into a large number of information center".

Writing refers to the process of communicating ideas, purpose, and problems including in writing style. As Dimbleby & Burton (2020) state, "writing is defined as an effort of communication to convey ideas or to express insights through written form". This type of communication requires skill and precision (Pohma & Waeji, 2020). According to Giltrow, Gooding, & Burgoyne (2021) "to arrange a qualified text, a writer requires a lot of ideas which integrate various components covering an interesting, choice of words, organization, purpose, reader, acceptable meaning, flows of ideas, cohesion, and transcription". Based on the all factors mentioned, it appears that all of the previously discussed must be exist in writing.

Writing is, indeed, a hard activity. Writing requires a certain process that includes planning, drafting, writing, and revision (Hyland, 2019). These skills pay attention to such things as: choosing a title, writing objectives, text or sentence structure, word selection, word spelling, correct the use grammar, and others in all of its processes (Husna, 2017). This process can be passed by anyone who wants to start producing writing, especially students. According to Chafe (2015), writing is the transformation of spoken language into written language.

Furthermore, Hart (2018) claims that good writing is the key of successful idea, but not all writing is done correctly.

Referring to one of the skills discussed, the researcher focuses on material of writing reports text. Although in reality, there are certain text genres that the students at MA NWDI Perian have already learned, such as narrative, recount, anecdote, spoof, report, and soon, this study focuses spesifically on report text. Prasasty (2018) claims "report text refers to a text containing information that describe anything based on the fact, from natural sources like; natural, artificial, and social happening around us". It is explained that when writing the report text, the information presented must be relevant to the situation that happened at the time (Pestaria, Sinurat, & Napitupulu, 2014). As a result, a journalist must be well prepared and pay close attention to any information that will be conveyed. Thus a report text is a genre that describes something in general; it could be a location, an animal, an object, or a natural occurrence.

Report text, as we all know, is one of the genres of text studied by high school students throughout Indonesia. Students will acquire the following benefits from studying the report text: they develop or enrich their imagination about the particular subject described, they learn to be a reporter continuing with the writing process, and they learn to create the report text in an organized and correct manner. Students also learn how to write report texts and how to visualize or illustrate. According to the findings of Pratiwi's research, there are some difficulties that students may face when learning writing skills in general, such as: inability to develop ideas or make mistakes about something to write, and a lack of vocabulary knowledge, difficulty using grammar, difficulty composing sentences, and a lack of motivation and interest in learning English (Pratiwi, 2016).

Teachers must be aware of the potential difficulties that students may face when writing, mainly in the pandemic situation, which has recently become less encouraging due to the corona virus (covid 19), which of course, makes the learning process less effective and problematic, especially in writing. Some students, for example, may have made mistakes in their writing, causing in ambiguous meanings in some texts when the teacher reads them. They are unable to fully understand what the authors or students are trying to convey. Most importantly, there are certain components of the paragraph must also be given much attention and understood.

According to Nurgiantoro's theory, there are five types of components in writing: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics (as cited in Toba, Noor, & Sanu, 2019). Content is something that leads to the selection of several points of view as proponents of a topic so that the authors can develop the main topic into a broader but more detailed and not out of the discussion. Organization means how a writer makes his ideas in the right order. The organization means a text should have meaningful ideas, proper organization, sensory sequences, and cohesive devices. The accuracy of the vocabulary used and selected in each sentence of the writing is also important.

Grammar is a linguistic rule that allows several words to be combined to have their own meaning. Grammar can be used with any sentence structure. Mechanics refers to a student's writing style.

An article, of course, starts with a sentence structure that develops into a paragraph, and the paragraph then develops into a passage. Proper spelling and punctuation are absolutely essential in preparing to write a paragraph or several paragraphs. If one of them is incorrect, the paragraph will not be correctly interpret. The five factors mentioned above are the fundamental components that determine the success of students' writing skills as well as the barriers they face if they do not understand the writing component well. Given the importance of improving students' writing skills and being able to minimize students' writing barriers, the purpose of this study was to determine students' ability in producing report text and their barriers in writing report text of the eleventh graders at MA NWDI Perian, NTB,Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is mixed method because it requires results in both numerically and descriptive. This method was chosen because the data used in this study required to be analyzed using a mixed sequential/phased model and three strategies, the closest or the most prominent is the sequential explanatory strategy. The first step is to collect and analyze quantitative data, which in this case answers the first purpose of study, that is students' ability to write a report text. After all completion, it is continued with the second stage, namely collecting and analyzing qualitative data that answer the second purpose of study, that is the problems of students in producing report text.

Participants involved in this study are students of the eleventh grade at MA NW Perian, East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The participant consisted of 20 Eleventh-grader that were divided into two groups of 8 boys and 12 girls, then fourteen active students were chosen to take part. Purposive or judgment sampling is used, with the purpose of gaining more accurate data in line with the previously expected research objectives.

Instruments play a significant role in bridging the stages of research implementation in order to obtain study results. In a brief, the study results can be obtained through collected data. The instruments of the recent study were test and interview. The test is a type of quantitative research instrument that is used to determine the study's main objective. Since the authors assessed the students' ability to write, an essay test was chosen. The essay test begins with a question, to which the student answers in the form of an explanation, description, response, and so on, using the same sentence or text from someone whose comprehension is relevant to the current context. Therefore, student accuracy is required to comprehend the next steps in producing a quality text Then, qualitative data was gathered through interviews. The authors chose structured interview in order to get a guided response because the function of the interview was to improve the data accuracy from the test result.

There are two goals that the authorss would like to reveal from this research: first, to determine the extent of students' ability; and second, to determine the extent of barriers in studying report. After defining study participants, the first stage of data collection can begin. The test conducted is a data collection technique that involves asking a series of questions with pre-defined rules, such as multiple choice or an essay, to be answered and completed, and then measuring one's ability based on the results of the test. The test is an essay with responses in the form of descriptive representations of the person who took the test.

In this essay test, only one question is asked. To draw the conclusion of the students ability in the report text, the research analyzed these from the mean score and then transcribed the result based on these standards, i.e excellent, good, average, poor or very poor. The table standard of writing score referenced by Arikunto (2013, p.245) as it could be seen in the table below.

Table 1. The interpretation range of students' writing achievement

Test Score	Probable Class Performance
91-100	Excellent
81-90	Very Good
71-80	Good
61-70	Fair
51-60	Poor
Less than 50	Very Poor

The second qualitative data was gathered using structured interview techniques. The data collection technique used is direct or face-to-face communication between the researcher and the participants where information is needed. The authorss asked the questions, and the interviewee responded to that as well. As explained previously, a mixed method research is the reason for using analytical data. The methods were taken in steps, beginning with quantitative data analysis, going to qualitative data analysis, and finally with the two sets of data findings being combined and concluded in the final session.

To analyze quantitative data, we must use numbers and a formula to do so. Before proceeding on to the next step, the researchers analyze the content or ideas given, including the flow of ideas, the vocabulary mastery, grammar rules, writing mechanisms, and finally the generic structure of the report text. The research focused were assessed based on Burhan Nurgiyantoro's evaluation rubric. once all of the student's written text assessments have been completed, The author then used statistical descriptive analysis to review and revise the student report text according to the standard of writing value in order to determine the average score. The mean score is then compared to the MA NWDI Perian's English minimum passing grade of 70. The author then looks for students problems in each of the five aspects of writing, such as content, organization, vocabulary, and so on. Finally, the percentage of errors for each element is calculated by dividing the error frequency of each writing element by the total error and multiplying by one hundread.

For qualitative data analysis, Miles Huberman's method (cited in Hersulastuti, Setiyadi, & Riyadi, 2019) is

used as a reference, including data condensation, data display, drawing and verifying conclusions. The researcher then used descriptive techniques to interpret the results of data analysis after gathering data from the field. Finally, the researcher draws conclusions from the study's findings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

To determine the level of students' capacity in writing report text, the data was analyzed using a writing assessment rubric created by Burhan Nurgiyantoro and a structured interview to determine their detail barriers in producing report text. The results of the data analysis are shown below.

Students' Ability in Writing Report Text

To analyze the learners' ability in writing, a writing assessment rubric was used and covers five components of assessment: content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics. To make the percentage results of each component easier to understand, the authors presented the data in the form of a table with explanations of bar charts.

Table 3. Students' Ability in Writing Report Text

Aspects of Writing	Mean Score	Percentage
Content	35	21%
Organization	35	21%
Vocabulary	30	18%
Grammar	30	18%
Mechanics	37	22%
t Total	16167	10100%

After analyzing the result from the students' report text, the authors found that the students' had barriers in each of the writing elements. The most dominant problems were found in vocabulary (18%) and grammar element (18%), succeeded by content (21%) and organization of text (21%) and finally in mechanic aspect (22%). Regarding an analysis of each of the following elements, the students' abilities in each component can be categorized as being very low. The majority of students have difficulties with each element of writing, The standard value from each element of writing is in the second criterion, that is fair.

From the statistical descriptive data analysis, students have a minimum score of 30 and a maximum score of 85, with an average score of 52.19. When it was compared to the standard value of the English minimum passing grade in general is 70, it was concluded that the ability of students at MA NW Perian is still have a low level of ability. Thus, the mean score is lower than the passing grade 70 .

Students' Problem in Writing Report Text

The interview consisted of fourteen questions that were only given to students who had difficulty with report text, there were fourteen students from sixteen students. After having several stages to compile data, from data condensation stage to data display stage, students said that learning writing in English was difficult. They also said that they had a lot of difficulties in writing report texts. These difficulties include lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of understanding, and knowing grammar, composing sentences, compiling

paragraphs, ideas, unable to speak English as well as expressing their ideas in writing. Students' problem in writing report texts are content, organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics. Students have problems in all components of writing assessment.

The reasons why they had problems were: first, the teacher does not use strategies, techniques, or methods; instead they only learn through students' worksheet, and do not assist the students in understanding the lesson. Second, learning during pandemic is ineffective because they rarely learn face to face in class, or learn in a short amount of time, and have a lot of assignments, all of which cause them to not fully comprehend the lesson. Third, the students were reluctance to repeat the lesson conveyed by the teachers , so the main reason of students' difficulties is ineffective learning or less than optimal during covid then students ignore to learn their lesson optimally. Finally, it can be concluded that the second data analysis strengthen the previous data, where the student's capability in writing report text was low and they face barriers in every element of the process, including content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics.

The purpose of this study was to determine the ability of students in producing report text and the barriers they faced while writing report text in the eleventh grade at MA NW Perian (an Islamic boarding high school) in Nusa Tenggara Barat province. The authors go through the discussion in great detail as it is in line with the findings. The result revealed that the mean score of vocabulary aspect was 30 (18%),

grammar aspect 30 (18%), content 35 (21%), organization 35 (21%), and mechanics 37 (22%). In general, the students got low scores in each of writing elements because they did not gain the minimum passing grade in English, that is 70.

The conclusion was the students' ability in writing report text did not meet the passing grade. It was relevant to research conducted by Azizah (2019) entitled students' ability in writing report text at the eleventh grade students in SMK Negeri 1 Painan. The students' ability in writing report text was low because most students did not reach score 70 as the minimum English passing grade. According to the writing rubric, the majority of the students scored in the "fair" range, which is the second highest level after "very good".

There are five types of writing elements in writing skill, namely content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. The participants, on the other hand, had the most difficulty with vocabulary, grammar, content, organization, and finally mechanics. All aspects of writing have a specific role and concept, but they are all interconnected, so if one aspect is understandable, it will have an impact on the writing results.

Apart from grammar, the most significant barrier in writing report text is vocabulary. Low vocabulary ability implied difficulties in acquiring writing skills (Hasan & Marzuki, 2017). Vocabulary is the foundation for arranging sentence structures, which is the key to effective writing skills (Strunk & De A'Morelli, 2018). Students usually use aural and oral language in their daily life to share their thoughts, opinions and

feelings with surrounding people. A large vocabulary bank will help learners in communicating their intentions verbally or in writing. The accessibility of an online glossary and a large number of reading exercises may help students in improving their vocabulary. This statement was confirmed in the study conducted by Alisha, Safitri, & Santoso (2019) which found that students had a significant problem writing English. The finding showed that their lack of vocabulary and language mastery is the main cause of the most of of their issues. They came to the conclusion that they had limited ability in grammatically arranging sentences, and that their lack of vocabulary knowledge and insight distracted them from using the correct word.

Grammar is the aspect of writing in which the students got the lowest mean score. The importance of grammar in writing cannot be neglected. Grammar provides details that help viewers understand the context (De Oliverira, & Schaleppegrell, 2016). It is a sequence of sentences that conveys the writer's true meaning to the reader. Grammar also defines the shapes and structures of words (morphology), as well as how they are grouped in sentences (syntax). Students will be hesitant to create sentences with proper grammar because of their limited knowledge of the subject. Students make mistakes in subject-verb agreement, pronouns, tenses, articles, prepositions, and basic sentence constructions. According to Burhanuddin (2020), "reading activities, as well as grammar-related research and assignments, can help you enhance your grammatical skills".

Although the students' content score was higher than the two previous aspects, they still faced challenges in producing the qualified content of report text. The core of a text is its content, which determines whether or not the authors' message is accepted by the readers (Roe, Smith, & Kolodziej, 2018). Despite knowing the research findings, the students still lack information that is well-explained and substantive, and also ideas for writing. The main reason for their difficulties was that they were unable to select and develop the most interesting topic. Therefore, whatever they assume before they outlining their ideas in a paragraph, they did not understand what it mean in English, so they adapted familiar sentences with native language interference. Another issue was the students' inexperience with reading.

In organization, the students' mean score was as low as the content aspect which included in fair level. Here, the students' difficulties were influential to organize ideas smoothly The ideas aren't logically developed and aren't organized in a rational way. This was due to a lack of familiarity with English, a lack of ideas, or even a complete lack of understanding of the generic structure of report content. The general classification and description are two generic report text structures. Both must be complete, but most students were confused to write them in order, especially the second paragraph because they assumed that the second paragraph is longer than the first one. The result was also strengthened by the research carried out by Apandi, & Kusriandi (2016) who conducted an error analysis on essay writing organization. According to the results of the study, 16

students obtained a 3 on a scale of 1 to 64%. Then, seven students obtained on scale 4, which equaled 28 percent, and two students got on scale 2, which equaled 8 percent. As a result, the authors stated that students in UNSWAGATI Cirebon's eleventh grade are capable on organizing a text in a fair manner.

When it comes to constructing a paragraph, mechanics is an important factor that should not be overlooked because it contributes to certain judgments about the quality of a piece of writing. According to Kane (2000), mechanics is defined as the appearance of words, including how they are spelt and organized. Shehadeh (as cited in Khatib & Meihami, 2015) further classified mechanics into various categories, including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph indentation, and so on. Based on the preceding statements, mechanics in writing refers to how an essay is constructed, including whether a writer spellings words correctly, uses proper capitalization, correctly places punctuation, and adheres to other mechanics requirements. Students' difficulties were identified as faults in language, capitalization, punctuation, and the creation of perplexing phrases based on the test results. They didn't have too much trouble because they know a little about mechanics.

In terms of students' problem cause in a report text which was obtained from the interview, the authors found that the students' answer was in line with the test result, which showed that the learners found it difficult to write a report text with more than five writing elements. They claimed that writing in English is difficult, and that maximizing the five writing elements is confusing. The quantitative and qualitative data in this case supported each other. I It's not surprising that students have trouble writing good report text. A report text is a well-known sort of record made by one or more people to announce the results of an inquiry or to communicate official information to the proper authorsities.

Because the goal of report text is to retelling a result of investigation or experiment, so the learners should have deep and detail insight on the object. They investigated either parts, qualities, habits or behavior that must be revealed through experiment, or they browsed the internet. Furthermore, the students often confused to distinguish between report and descriptive text. Thus, not all students are able to master it perfectly, except in the learning activities both teachers and students do their task well. The teacher prepares and delivers the lesson and the students pay attention well. Apart from the reasons which had been mentioned previously, another reason was because during learning process that the teacher did not apply technique, strategy or proper method in teaching writing. The teacher only used a worksheet to deliver the material they convey, so the students did not catch the lesson being taught maximally.

Furthermore, learners rarely repeat the lessons learned at school, causing them to be unable to respond appropriately when asked about the lesson. The last was due to unfavorable conditions caused by a pandemic period where face to face learning process were still limited and mostly the teachers meet the students via zoom or google meet while giving a lot of tasks, and the

students whether they understand the tasks or not, the students were also demanded to be independent. Schools are requested to be more active in virtual context then because of this condition, students complain that learning process during the covid 19 pandemic is ineffective and inefficient. This is the most representative reason for students who found it difficult in writing report text.

There are some previous researches carried out which were relevant to report texts, Harahap (2015), for example, whose thesis is titled "Students' Ability in Writing Report Text at Grade XI MAN 1 Padang Sidimpuan." In her research finding, it showed that the students result after being calculated and analyzed was 3300 score. The overall score was 66 percent based on the previously specified criteria. As a result, it may be categorized into sufficient categories. It was determined that the hypothesis was approved because the students' competence to write report text at Grade XI MAN 1 Padangsidimpuan in the 2014-2015 academic year was sufficient. Besides, the second relevant study was conducted by Syarifah Wani (2017) and was titled An Analysis of the Students' Ability in Using Paragaraph Elements in Writing Report Text at Grade XI IPS-5 SMA N 3 Padangsidimpuan. The students' ability in using paragraph elements in writing report text was sufficient, with a mean score of 80 (55,53%). In this study, the students had trouble using paragraph elements such topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences in composing report text.

At SMK Negeri 1 Painan, Rahmi Azizah (2019) did a study named Students' Ability in Writing Report Text of Grade XI. According to the findings, no students had great ability and very good in their report text, but five students had good ability, fourteen students had fair ability, seven students had bad ability, and four students had very poor ability. Students' ability to write report text was found to be fair in the study. The three previous studies and the current study chose a main theme on report text, but the three relevant studies focused on the students' writing ability level, which was only represented by numbers and percentages. However, the recent authors made a breakthrough by expanding the discussions, specifically about the students' ability as well as the barriers that the students faced when writing report text during this pandemic era. It was still uncommon to conduct this type of research on this subject.

The current study's findings were supported by the findings of previous studies, which showed that the majority of students received good to fair grades. The research is expected to provide more insight into specific writing parts in which they find it difficult, and make it easier for English teachers to understand students' abilities and challenges when producing report texts. Finally, this study is expected to be part of the research literature that other researchers interested in conducting research related the topic.

The following are the limitations of this study: the purpose of this study was to determine students' proficiency in five writing elements; however, there are other factors that should be considered in writing tasks, such as motivation,

lexicogrammar features, paragraph elements, or three main factors that influence students' writing skill, namely psychological, sociocultural and linguistic. Furthermore, this study was conducted while the pandemic was still widespread, and the interaction of teachers and students during the teaching and learning process were only conducted via virtual setting. This, of course, makes teachers less effective in delivering lessons, particularly in writing, which requires extensive practice, proofreading, discussion, and revision activities. In addition, factors such as space barriers and, in some cases, network restrictions and the use of unappropriate teaching methods or strategies, all have an impact on students' writing skills. As a result, it's not surprising that the students' student achievement was below of the school's minimum passing grade of 70.

Some implications of the current study are that English instructors should explain the five writing elements as clearly as possible to help students produce a good text, as well as the language features of report text , so that students have a thorough understanding, and then enable them to organize a proper report text. Then, English teachers or instructors should encourage students to be enthusiastic about writing by providing acceptable methods and strategies that reduce their fear of writing. Lastly, English teachers should stimulate motivation by dealing with writing in such a gentle manner that students are encouraged to put their hidden ideas into verbal language.

CONCLUSION

Writing report text is one of the genres that Indonesian high school students are required to learn. This text has a special generic structure and lexicogrammatical features that make a distinction it from others in its genre. All of these are important for students to understand because they contribute to the final report text. If the students get failure, it will make students' writing unacceptable. As a result, it's critical to know how well students can write report content. Furthermore, it is also essential to recognize the key barriers that students face when writing report text.

According to the study's findings, the students got an unsatisfactory grade, which was lower than the school's minimum passing grade. They had "fair" categorization standard in writing vocabulary, grammar, organization, content, and mechanics. On the other hand, students must master all of these skills in order to write an acceptable and proper report text. Additionally, students are expected to be proficient in writing report text. Meanwhile, based on the information gathered, it was found that they had barriers with all aspects of writing, including content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Given the importance of students writing in report text, there are a number of suggestions that students can make. It is recommended that students practice English on a regular basis in order to improve their ability and minimize their writing mistakes; students should be familiar with the five writing elements of the text that they learn so that they can arrange logical and meaningful text. Furthermore, it is suggested that other researchers continue to conduct similar

research from a different perspective in order to expand future references on students' writing barriers and solutions, particularly in writing report text.

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