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Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Narrative Essays in Grade IV Indonesian Language Learning at Elementary School 1501 Hurung Jilok

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to identify the difficulties faced by elementary school students in writing narrative essays and examine the internal and external factors influencing these difficulties in Indonesian language instruction at Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok.

Methodology: This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through narrative writing tests, classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation. Data analysis involved data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis focused on story structure, plot, paragraph development, sentence construction, word choice, spelling, and punctuation.

Main Findings: The findings indicate that students experience difficulties in selecting titles and main ideas, organizing story structures and plots, developing paragraphs and sentences, choosing appropriate words, and applying spelling and punctuation rules. These difficulties are influenced by internal factors, including interest, motivation, self-confidence, and study habits, as well as external factors, such as teaching methods, learning media, family support, and the surrounding environment.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study provides a context-specific analysis of elementary school students' narrative writing difficulties in Indonesian language instruction at Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok. Its originality lies in examining specific writing challenges alongside internal and external contributing factors, offering a comprehensive basis for developing more meaningful, process-oriented, and contextually relevant narrative writing instruction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian language holds a strategic position in primary education, serving as the primary medium through which students think, communicate, and access knowledge across all subjects. Instruction in the Indonesian language encompasses four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing is considered the most complex skill, as it requires students to express ideas in written form while simultaneously attending to the clarity of concepts, sentence structure, word choice, as well as spelling and punctuation [1], [2]. Furthermore, a strong command of the Indonesian language-developed from the primary school years-equips children with an essential foundation for communication within their social environments [3].

One form of writing taught in primary schools is the narrative essay, which involves recounting a sequence of events in chronological order. Through narrative writing, students learn to articulate their experiences, feelings, and imagination, while simultaneously practicing logical and creative thinking. Narrative writing also requires students to organize ideas, develop storylines, and use appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures to produce coherent written compositions [4]. Because narrative writing relates closely to children's daily lives, it is frequently used as an introductory tool for developing writing skills for instance, through assignments that ask students to recount personal experiences, holiday activities, or events that took place at school.

Nevertheless, various studies indicate that the narrative writing proficiency of primary school students remains suboptimal. Zahrah et al. [5] found that among fourth-grade students, the development of characters and the application of spelling and punctuation were the areas with the lowest levels of achievement; these shortcomings were attributed to a lack of student motivation and understanding, as well as instructional approaches that failed to engage the students. Similarly, Astuti et al. [1] reported that fourth-grade students in Jambi City struggled with selecting appropriate titles, developing main ideas in a logical sequence, constructing sentences with correct grammatical structure (subject–predicate–object–adverbial), and applying proper spelling and punctuation. Similar findings were reported by Harimurti and Irawan [6]. Regarding fifth-grade students, who experienced difficulties in expressing main ideas, structuring paragraphs, applying spelling and punctuation rules, selecting vocabulary, and lacked confidence when writing. Supporting these findings, Anggraeni et al. [4] regarding fifth-grade students, who experienced difficulties in expressing main ideas, structuring paragraphs, applying spelling and punctuation rules, selecting vocabulary, and lacked confidence when writing. Elementary school students experienced difficulties in developing content, organizing ideas, and constructing sentences. Other studies have examined the factors contributing to difficulties in writing narrative texts among third-grade students [7], students in lower primary grades [8], and fourth-grade students [9], as well as the challenges and potential solutions for writing narrative texts in upper primary grades [10].

These difficulties are contextual, as they are influenced by student characteristics, literacy habits, teachers' competencies and instructional methods, and environmental support. Consequently, every school requires an accurate assessment of these challenges to ensure that efforts to improve instruction are well-targeted [11]. In addition, classroom practices, opportunities for writing practice, and the quality of instructional feedback contribute to the development of students' writing abilities [2]. Consequently, every school requires an accurate assessment of these challenges to ensure that efforts to improve instruction are well-targeted. At Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok, there is a need for a study that systematically maps students' difficulties in writing narrative compositions. At Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok, there is a need for a study that systematically maps students' difficulties in writing narrative compositions.

Based on this background, the research questions are: (1) what are the specific difficulties students encounter when writing narrative compositions during Indonesian language instruction at Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok, and (2) what factors contribute to these difficulties? This study aims to describe both aspects. Theoretically, the findings will enrich the existing body of research on the challenges of writing narrative texts in primary schools. Practically, the results can serve as a foundation for teachers to design instructional strategies, learning media, and assessments for writing that are tailored to students' needs.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This approach was chosen because the research aims to provide an in-depth description of the types of difficulties encountered and their underlying causes within a natural learning context, without imposing any specific interventions on the students. A similar approach was used by Astuti et al. [1] and Harimurti and Irawan [6] in their examination of difficulties in writing narrative essays at the elementary school level. The research was conducted at Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok, located in the Sosa Julu District, Padang Lawas Regency. The research subjects consisted of 28 fourth-grade students, as well as their class teacher (who also serves as the Indonesian language teacher). The subjects were selected purposively, based on the fact that the students in this class had already received instruction on writing narrative essays.

Data were collected using four techniques. First, a writing test was administered, in which students were asked to write a narrative essay based on a personal experience, allowing for the identification of difficulties evident in their writing. Second, classroom observations were conducted to examine the processes involved in the students' and teacher's writing activities. Third, interviews were held with the teacher and several students to explore the difficulties they experienced and the factors contributing to them. Fourth, documentation was gathered, including students' essays, instructional materials, and photographs of the activities. The students' essays were analyzed based on five aspects, which are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Aspects and Indicators for Analyzing Narrative Essays

Aspect	Indicators Analyzed	Forms of Difficulty Observed
Title and main idea	Suitability of the title to the content; accuracy and clarity of the main idea	Title identical to the theme or not reflecting the content; main idea unclear or undeveloped
Structure and plot	Completeness of opening–body–closing; sequence of events; characters and setting	Events jump around; characters and setting not depicted; no resolution
Paragraphs and sentences	Coherence between sentences; effective sentences; completeness of sentence elements (subject–predicate–object–adverbial)	Sentences too long and containing several ideas; repeated subject; inappropriate conjunctions
Word choice	Accuracy and variety of diction; use of standard words	Repeated words; limited vocabulary; non-standard words
Spelling and punctuation	Capital letters; periods and commas; the prepositions "*di*" and "*ke*"; reduplicated words	Incorrect capitals and punctuation; prepositions and prefixes confused; non-standard reduplicated words

Data validity was tested through technique triangulation, namely comparing the data from the test, observations, interviews, and documentation, as well as source triangulation, namely comparing the statements of the teacher and the students. Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, as used by Harimurti and Irawan [6]. In the condensation stage, students' essays were grouped according to the five aspects in Table 1; in the display stage, the findings were presented narratively and in tabular form; and in the final stage, the researchers drew conclusions about the forms of difficulty and the factors influencing them.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Nature of Writing and Writing Instruction in Primary Schools

Writing is the activity of expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings in good and correct written language. This skill demands creative thinking as well as mastery of language conventions [1]. In Indonesian language instruction at the primary level, writing aims not only to produce texts but also to train students to think dynamically, critically, and coherently. Writing is also an important means of indirect communication through which students can convey information and communicate their ideas to readers [12].

Because writing is a productive skill, it requires repeated practice and teacher guidance at every stage, from generating ideas, outlining, and drafting to editing and revising. The writing process involves several interconnected activities that help students organize their thoughts and develop meaningful written compositions [13], [14]. Instruction that emphasizes only the final product tends to leave students unaware of where their errors lie; therefore, varied and process-oriented approaches to teaching writing are recommended. Research has shown that writing instruction involving planning, discussion, feedback, and revision can support the development of students' writing abilities [13]-[15].

3.2. Narrative Essays

A narrative essay conveys a sequence of events in chronological order so that readers gain a picture of what happened, who was involved, and where and when the events took place [1]. The elements of a narrative generally include theme, characters and characterization, setting (place, time, and atmosphere), plot, point of view, and moral message [16], [17]. These elements work together to create a coherent story and help readers understand the events being presented. In terms of structure, a good narrative generally consists of an opening (orientation) that introduces the characters and setting, a body (complication) that presents a sequence of events and conflicts, and a closing (resolution) that explains how the conflict is resolved [16], [18]. Personal-experience narratives are commonly assigned in primary schools because students can draw on their own experiences as material for writing, making it easier for them to develop ideas and organize events into a meaningful story. Such assignments may include recounting memorable experiences, school activities, or personal events, as illustrated by Astuti et al.

3.3. Difficulties in Writing Narrative Essays

Writing difficulties can be identified from the errors that appear in students' writing; the more errors there are, the higher the level of difficulty experienced [1]. Based on previous research, difficulties in writing narratives in primary school can be grouped into five aspects: (a) determining the title and main idea, (b) story structure and plot, including characterization and setting, (c) paragraph development and effective sentence construction, (d) word choice, and (e) the use of spelling and punctuation. Difficulty in determining the main idea in narrative story

texts has also been reported by Alam et al. [19] among fourth-grade students. Comparable difficulties have been documented in other genres and grade levels, such as descriptive writing, narrative writing among Grade V students [14], [15], and even writing among Grade II students [16], which suggests that writing difficulties begin early and are not confined to a single genre or grade.

3.4. Factors Influencing Writing Difficulties

Factors influencing writing difficulties are divided into internal and external factors. Internal factors originate from within the student and include attitude toward learning, interest, motivation, memory, study habits, and self-confidence [20] specifically examined difficulties in learning to write essays from the perspective of students' self-confidence, which indicates that the affective aspect is a concern in studies of writing difficulties. Alves-Wold et al. [21] identified several factors influencing elementary students' motivation to write, including interest in writing activities, beliefs about their writing abilities, and the support they receive during the writing process. External factors originate from outside the student and include the methods and media used by the teacher, parental support and guidance, the community environment, and the influence of social media. In addition, at the concrete operational stage of development, primary school students still need real objects, pictures, or other aids to convey their ideas [1].

3.5. Relevant Previous Studies

Several previous studies relevant to this review are summarized in Table 2. All three used a qualitative approach and show overlapping patterns of difficulty, although they were conducted at different grade levels and in different locations.

Table 2. Summary of Relevant Previous Studies

Researcher	Subjects and Location	Main Findings
Rahayu [22]	Fourth-grade students (22 students), an elementary school in Purwakarta	Highest aspects: setting and content of ideas; lowest aspects: characters, and spelling and punctuation. Contributing factors: lack of motivation and understanding, and less engaging instruction.
Astuti et al. [1]	Fourth-grade students (28 students), SDN 28/IV Jambi City	Difficulties in choosing titles, developing main ideas, constructing sentences according to the subject–predicate–object–adverbial pattern, and using spelling and punctuation. Internal factors: attitude, enthusiasm, and study habits; external factors: conventional methods and family support.
Harimurti and Irawan [6]	Fifth-grade students, Elementary school 1 Kedungwuluh Kidul (case study)	Difficulties in conveying main ideas, structuring paragraphs, using spelling and punctuation, choosing vocabulary, and self-confidence. Factors: memory, motivation, parental attention, environment, and social media.

This article presents the forms of students' difficulties in writing narrative essays based on the five aspects of analysis, the factors that influence them, and a discussion linked to the results of previous research. Table 3 and Table 4 summarize the key findings, and Figure 1 presents an integrative model that links the contributing factors, the difficulties, and the instructional responses.

3.6. Difficulties in Determining the Title and Main Idea

The title and the main idea are the starting point of narrative writing. Astuti et al. [1] found that students tend to write titles identical to the assigned theme, whereas a title should have a narrower scope and describe the content of the essay. Difficulty in finding and developing main ideas in sequence was also reported by Harimurti and Irawan [6], while Alam et al. [19] examined fourth-grade students' difficulties in determining the main idea in narrative story texts. The essays from Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok follow the same pattern, which indicates that students are not yet accustomed to turning experiences into focused ideas. Students are generally able to tell many things orally but are not yet able to choose a single main event and limit the scope of their story. Pre-writing strategies such as brainstorming, guiding questions (who, when, where, what, why, and how), and mind maps can help students formulate the main idea before writing.

3.7. Difficulties in Organizing Story Structure and Plot

Rahayu [22] reported that setting and content of ideas were the aspects with the highest ability among fourth-grade students, whereas characters were among the lowest. This finding is interesting because it shows that students can relatively easily state where and when events occur but are not yet skilled at bringing characters to life through description, dialogue, or feelings. Astuti et al. [1] added that the relationships between sentences in students' essays are often not yet cohesive, so the plot feels jumpy and lacks connecting sentences. In the context

of Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok, the incoherence of the plot needs to be examined from two sides: whether students have not yet understood the opening–body–closing structure, or whether they understand it but are not yet able to express it in sentences and paragraphs that are connected to one another. This distinction is important because it determines the kind of help the teacher should provide. Essay outlines and event-sequence cards suit the first problem, whereas exercises using chronological connectors such as "at first," "then," "after that," and "finally" suit the second.

3.8. Difficulties in Developing Paragraphs and Constructing Sentences

Difficulties at this stage generally lie in constructing effective sentences. Students' sentences that were too long and contained several main ideas in a single sentence, repetition of the subject, inappropriate use of conjunctions, and structures that did not yet follow the subject–predicate–object–adverbial pattern. Anoted fifth-grade students' difficulty in structuring paragraphs. These difficulties are related to students' limited understanding of sentence structure, grammatical rules, and the appropriate use of punctuation [23], [24]. Students may also experience difficulties in transforming spoken ideas into organized written language, particularly when they have not yet developed sufficient writing experience [25]. Teachers can help through exercises that break long sentences into several shorter ones, combine short sentences meaningfully, and encourage students to read their own writing aloud to identify awkward expressions before revising them. Explicit grammar instruction and guided writing practice can also help students develop clearer and more coherent sentences [26].

3.9. Difficulties in Choosing Words

Word choice is closely related to students' vocabulary. Vocabulary selection among the difficulties of fifth-grade students, overly frequent repetition of the pronoun "saya" (I) within a single paragraph and the use of non-standard forms. who found that elementary school students tended to use limited vocabulary, repeat words frequently, and experience difficulties in selecting appropriate words. Limited vocabulary can make students' writing less varied and monotonous. Vocabulary development is also closely connected to reading activities, as exposure to written texts provides opportunities for students to encounter and learn new words [27]. Furthermore, reading and writing are closely related literacy skills that share linguistic knowledge, including vocabulary. Therefore, providing reading corners, encouraging students to read stories before writing, and using vocabulary lists containing verbs and adjectives to describe characters, events, and atmosphere can serve as practical strategies to support students in developing more varied and meaningful written compositions [28].

3.10. Difficulties in Using Spelling and Punctuation

Spelling and punctuation are the aspects most consistently reported as problematic. Rahayu [22] placed them as the lowest aspect among fourth-grade students. Astuti et al. [1] found improperly used capital letters, inconsistent use of periods, the preposition "di" not yet distinguished from the prefix, and non-standard writing of reduplicated words, while Harimurti and Irawan [6] reported spelling and punctuation problems among fifth-grade students. These errors can arise because students focus on the content of the story and neglect writing conventions, especially when editing has not yet become a habit. Thus, an editing stage using a simple checklist (capital letters, periods, commas, and prepositions) needs to become a permanent part of writing instruction. Similar convention errors have been reported in Grade V essays [29], in the use of capital letters and punctuation among elementary students [30], and in Grade IV essays and paragraphs [31], [32], which shows that this pattern is widespread and is not specific to narrative writing.

Table 3 synthesizes the key findings for the five aspects. It places the forms of difficulty observed in this study next to the evidence from previous studies and states the interpretation and pedagogical implication that follows from each.

Table 3. Synthesis of Key Findings by Aspect of Narrative Writing

Aspect	Forms of difficulty observed in this study	Evidence from previous studies	Interpretation and pedagogical implication
Title and main idea	Title identical to the theme or not reflecting the content; main idea unclear or undeveloped	Same pattern in Grade IV and Grade V students	Students can tell many things orally but cannot yet choose one focal event; pre-writing (brainstorming, guiding questions, mind map) should come first
Structure and plot	Events jump around; characters and setting not depicted; no resolution	Characters among the lowest aspects and setting among the highest; weak cohesion between sentences	Students can name where and when but cannot yet bring characters to life; the cause (structure vs. expression) decides whether outlines or connectors are needed

Aspect	Forms of difficulty observed in this study	Evidence from previous studies	Interpretation and pedagogical implication
Paragraphs and sentences	Sentences too long and containing several ideas; repeated subject; inappropriate conjunctions	Reported for Grade IV and Grade V	Likely transfer of spoken language into writing; sentence splitting and combining and reading one's own text aloud before revising
Word choice	Repeated words; limited vocabulary; non-standard words	Reported for Grade IV and Grade V	Limited vocabulary is tied to reading habits; reading corners, reading before writing, and word lists
Spelling and punctuation	Incorrect capitals and punctuation; prepositions and prefixes confused; non-standard reduplicated words	Lowest aspect; consistent across	Students focus on content and neglect conventions; a checklist-based editing stage should become routine

Previous research identifies attitude, motivation, and study habits as the main internal factors. Explained that students who enjoy writing tend to be more enthusiastic and find it easier to write narratives, whereas students who do not review lessons at home and go straight to play are more prone to difficulties. Cited memory, learning motivation, and self-confidence as influencing factors, in line with the attention given to self-confidence in the study [20]. Students' lack of motivation and understanding. This shows that writing difficulty is not merely a cognitive or linguistic matter but also an affective one: students who are afraid of making mistakes tend to write minimally or are reluctant to start. Motivational research offers a theoretical lens for this affective dimension. According to self-efficacy theory, students' beliefs about their capability influence the effort and persistence they invest in a task, and reviews report a positive relation between writing self-efficacy and writing performance, a relation that has also been examined among elementary students [33]-[36]. Writing motivation has several components, including self-efficacy, goal orientations, interest, and attributions [37], and children's achievement goals for writing change across the elementary years. In a study of 307 Grade IV students, intrinsic motivation strengthened self-efficacy for ideation, conventions, and self-regulation, whereas extrinsic motivation did not . The reluctance to start writing is therefore better read as a self-efficacy problem that instruction can address through modeling, goal setting, and self-evaluation, through teachers' encouraging feedback, and through classroom conditions designed to develop the motivation to write [38].

On the external side, found conventional instruction with media limited to the blackboard and thematic textbooks that made students bored, as well as varying levels of parental guidance. Parental attention, an unsupportive environment, and the influence of social media, cited less engaging instruction. In primary schools, the roles of teachers and parents are crucial because students still depend on adult guidance. Referred to the lack of habit of using Indonesian in daily communication as one of the factors behind the difficulty, which is relevant to examine if students more often use a regional language at home. Parents' roles as motivator, facilitator, companion, and model have been described in relation to children's reading interest, which Section 3.9 linked to vocabulary and writing [39]. Writing performance among upper elementary students has also been associated with student-, teacher-, and class-level characteristics. These findings support the view that external factors operate at the level of the home, the teacher, and the classroom at the same time.

Table 4 summarizes the internal and external factors, the evidence behind them, and the instructional responses they imply.

Table 4. Internal and External Factors and Their Instructional Implications

Type	Factor	Evidence from previous studies	Instructional implication
Internal	Interest, attitude, and study habits	Students who enjoy writing are more enthusiastic, and those who do not review lessons at home are more prone to difficulties	Short, regular writing practice; topics drawn from students' own experiences
Internal	Motivation and self-confidence	Self-confidence lack of motivation self-efficacy is related to writing performance; intrinsic motivation strengthens self-efficacy	Modeling, goal setting, and self-evaluation; low-risk tasks and encouraging feedback
Internal	Memory	Cited as an influencing factor	Word lists and visual aids that reduce the memory load

Type	Factor	Evidence from previous studies	Instructional implication
External	Teaching methods and media	Conventional methods and limited media; less engaging instruction	Process-oriented instruction with varied media: mind map, picture series, digital stories, Think Talk Write, experiential learning
External	Parental support and environment	Parental attention and environment ; parental roles in reading interest; teacher- and class-level correlates.	School–family collaboration; reading corners and shared reading at home
External	Language used at home and social media	Little use of Indonesian in daily communication; social media	More use of standard Indonesian in class discussion; check the role of the regional language

Based on previous research, several efforts can be considered by teachers. First, providing motivation about the importance of writing and inviting students to practice gradually with creatively packaged teaching materials [22]. Second, implementing varied and process-oriented writing instruction, for example through the mind-mapping model as applied by Wati et al. [40]in teaching narrative essay writing to fifth-grade students. Third, providing tutoring for students who need it, involving parents in guiding learning at home, and providing literacy support facilities at school. Fourth, giving specific feedback on each aspect of the writing, not merely a final score, so that students understand where their errors lie and can correct them in subsequent writing. Other studies offer further options: picture-series media, digital stories, the Think Talk Write model and experiential learning have all been used to improve narrative writing. At a broader level, a meta-analysis of writing instruction in the elementary grades supports process-oriented and strategy-based teaching, evidence from the upper elementary grades indicates that writing intervention can raise text quality, and formative feedback from adults, peers, and the writers themselves strengthens students' writing.

Taken together, the findings are better read as a chain than as five separate problems. Internal factors (interest, motivation, self-confidence, and study habits) and external factors (teaching methods and media, parental support, and the surrounding environment) shape how students handle each stage of writing, from choosing a focus to editing conventions. Difficulties at the earlier stages, namely selecting the main idea and organizing the plot, are likely to affect the later ones, because students who have not settled on a focus tend to produce loosely connected sentences that are hard to edit. This reading is an analytic interpretation of the pattern in Table 3 and not a statistical claim. Figure 1 summarizes these relationships and links each group of difficulties to the instructional response discussed in Section 3.13.



Figure 1. Conceptual model of the factors, difficulties, and instructional responses in narrative writing

3.11. Comparison with Previous Studies

The present findings converge strongly with earlier research. The five aspects of difficulty and the division into internal and external factors match those reported for Grade IV students in Jambi City and for Grade V students and the weakness in spelling and punctuation matches the lowest aspect reported (Table 2). Two points

are worth emphasizing. First, the studies in Table 2 were conducted in other regions, so this study adds evidence from a school in Sosa Julu District, Padang Lawas Regency. Second, reading the five aspects together with the contributing factors shows that the difficulties are interdependent, which suggests that instruction should start with the main idea and story structure before attention turns to sentence-level conventions. Found setting to be among the strongest aspects and characters among the weakest, whereas stressed weak cohesion between sentences; both point to the same underlying issue, namely that students can name the elements of a story but cannot yet develop and connect them.

Because this is a qualitative case study of one class of 28 students, the findings are not generalized statistically. They are offered as analytic generalizations: the patterns are likely to be transferable to elementary classes with similar characteristics, such as a single class teacher who also teaches Indonesian and a comparable school community, and the convergence with studies from other regions supports this reading. The novelty of the study lies in three points: (1) it examines five aspects of narrative writing together with internal and external factors in one design that uses technique and source triangulation; (2) it provides evidence from a context that is absent from the studies in Table 2; and (3) it connects each group of difficulties to a specific instructional response in a single model (Figure 1).

This study has several limitations. First, it covers one class in one school, so the findings reflect local conditions. Second, students wrote only one narrative essay based on a personal experience, and their difficulties in other narrative types, such as imaginative stories, or at other times may differ. Third, the analysis is descriptive and qualitative; this article does not report the frequency of each type of difficulty or test the relationship between factors and difficulties statistically, so the contribution of each factor cannot be ranked. Fourth, the interview data are self-reports and may be affected by social desirability, although triangulation reduces this risk. Future research could use several writing tasks, mixed methods that combine error counts with interviews, longitudinal designs, and intervention studies that test the instructional responses in Figure 1.

Theoretically, the findings support the view that writing difficulty is multidimensional, involving linguistic skill, motivation, and the learning environment [39]. Practically, they imply that teachers should plan writing as a process with a specific focus at each stage, give feedback on each aspect instead of a single score, and treat students' confidence as an instructional target. Schools can support this through reading corners, varied media, and training in process-oriented writing instruction, and parents can support it through shared reading and conversation in Indonesian at home. Because writing about content also improves learning in other subjects strengthening narrative writing has benefits beyond the Indonesian language lesson [40].

4. CONCLUSION

This study analyzed students' difficulties in writing narrative essays in Indonesian language learning at Elementary school 1501 Hurung Jilok through five aspects, namely title and main idea, story structure and plot, paragraphs and sentences, word choice, and spelling and punctuation. These difficulties are influenced by internal factors in the form of interest, motivation, self-confidence, and study habits, as well as external factors in the form of learning methods and media, parental support, and the environment, as also found in previous studies. Difficulties in writing narratives are multidimensional, so addressing them needs to touch on the linguistic aspect as well as the affective aspect and the learning environment.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed. First, teachers should adopt a process-oriented writing sequence (pre-writing with guiding questions or mind maps, outlining, drafting, editing with a checklist, and revision) and give specific feedback on each of the five aspects instead of a single score. Second, teachers should treat motivation and self-confidence as instructional targets through modeling, short writing tasks, and encouraging feedback. Third, the school should provide literacy support such as a reading corner, varied learning media, and teacher training in process-oriented writing instruction. Fourth, parents should be involved through simple home routines, such as reading together and talking about daily events in Indonesian. Fifth, future researchers should test these recommendations through classroom action research or experimental designs and extend the analysis to other schools, grades, and narrative types.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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