

# Identification and Characterization of Writing Skillin University

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**Abstract.** One of the things discussed in language literacy is writing skills. This skill is considered to have a higher level of difficulty if it is compared to receptive reading and listening skills. It needs to be re-identified among students who are not expected to have complex problems. Therefore, it requires research to identify and characterize student writing skills in a university that is expected to be a guide for writing skills among students. This research is a research (field study research) that aims to analyze intensively about literacy in university, especially skills. This research is descriptive (descriptive research). The data was obtained from 560 respondents spread from various universities and different fields of sciences. The identification of the writing skill result was adjusted to the scientific cluster, namely the cluster of languages in the fields of language, social, exact, engineering, health, and education. Generally, the result of this study for each field of science has similarities in the quality of writing skills. It was because the ability of each student was not significantly different. In addition, the average score of writing skills that was obtained did not fulfill the standard, which was 6.60 of the total score of 10.

**Keywords:** literacy, writing skill, students, university

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a language skill that cannot be separated from other aspects of language skills. Writing skill is the last language learning process after listening, speaking, and reading skills. Writing is an essential activity in the dynamics of human civilization. Through writing, people can communicate, convey their ideas, and be able to enrich their knowledge, as well as helpful for self-development.

Writing is also similar to any other language skill that requires practice. Without practice, it certainly makes writing skills even harder. Argued that writing is an ability that is more difficult to master than the other three abilities to listen, to speak, and to read [1]. Discipline is an important thing in writing. [2]. Internal and external factors could influence these difficulties. Besides, [3] explained the factors most associated with writing to learn that aim to improve student skills, namely the teacher and students' motivation to learn. It cannot be denied that the

teacher plays a vital role in the success of learning that the key to success in curriculum implementation is in the teacher role.

Writing is an activity that is often considered challenging. But in fact, writing is not a difficult or easy activity. Learning the theory of writing is easy, but to practice, it is not enough to be done at one time. The more often of writing exercises will make someone skilled in writing activities. Writing skill is a mechanistic skill. Writing skills cannot be mastered only through theory, but are carried out through regular practice and practice so as to produce well-structured writing. Writing is also a complex matter, and it is often considered as an enemy by students [4].

In the writing activities are also expected to have wide knowledge in order to facilitate the writing practice. Other provisions are knowledge, concepts, principles, and procedures that must be taken in writing activities. So, there are two things needed to achieve writing skills, namely knowledge of writing and practice to write. Writing is an integrated language skill, which is intended to produce something called writing. Writing, in essence, is a process of thinking and expressing thoughts themselves in the form of discourse or essay. According to [5], [6] stated that when students learn academic writing, students can learn to expose brand thinking, choose the appropriate lexicon, and arrange their texts.

Writing skills are one of the productive skills that cause diverse problems. Problems about writing are as part of learning, writing as a literacy form, and writing as a skill. These problems are related to various levels as well; the problem of elementary school, middle school, and college writers. The interesting thing is that problems that arise should be at the bottom level only. But it also appears at the top level. The problem that arises is the difficulty in pouring ideas/ ideas to be written.

The results of the initial observations regarding the ability in writing for students are as follows. First, there was a difference in the motivation to write from students. Some write because it is mandatory as their lecturers' assignments or writing because of their desire. Second, students who are still writing is not writing ideas, but writing is only as a copying activity. Third, students after writing also never reread the results of their writing. Students did not edit their writing and did not think about spelling problems in their writing process.

At least several studies revealed similar problems; Lo and Hyland (2007) in their research found low motivation in writing activities among young learners in Hong Kong. In their study [7] also provides strategies for young learners to be motivated to write because it influences the academic achievement of learners. It is still the same as research related to motivation and writing. They stated that giving students the autonomy of topic selection in writing has the effect of increasing motivation and producing writing with better content. So, these students felt they could be more successful in an environment where topics and meanings are given priority [8]. Likewise, Martin (2016) also examined writing motivation and student achievement. He said that students in the United States, about 75% of 12 students were not proficient writers, and poor student performance is not as good as rich students. So, motivation in writing is an important thing to consider in teaching for teachers. The relationship between motivation and writing achievement based on gender was also examined in a study conducted by [9]. Investigated how to foster student interest and positive attitudes towards the Indonesian language through information learning literacy based on text phenomena [10].

There are also several studies related to this research. Anderson et al. (2015) identified and test new variables to examine the results of writing activities with learning and development. The results of research conducted that writing activities were influenced by experiences that have been experienced by students. The existence of interactive writing activities and clear motivation can improve writing results in learning in higher education [11]. Anderson

researched that the need for writing about a topic or concept will help students to gain an understanding. The results showed that the impact of writing on student learning depends on the context. By using mixed methods, quasi-experimental, and repetitive actions and instilling the pedagogy of writing for learning in college influences student learning as well as perceptions about writing for learning. There is also research about the literacy relationship between the effects of writing on reading [12]. Graham and Herbert (2011) found that writing can improve reading comprehension. Increase writing amount is written by students, also improve their reading skills. And there are four types of writing: extended writing (e.g., persuasive writing), summary writing, note-taking, and answering or generating questions [13]. In addition, in the Journal of Education, Volume 20, Yuliati (2014) examined the related literacy culture entitled "Model of Literacy-Based Balanced Literacy and Literacy Movement in Elementary Schools" [14].

Based on this problem, it is necessary to examine the characteristics of students' writing skills. This is important because it has a large impact on knowledge development. This study aims to determine the characteristics of students' writing skills in higher education as a manifestation of cultural literacy and conservation, which is a continuation of the research of Haryadi et al (2018) about identifying writing literacy in higher education [15].

## **2. METHOD**

This research is a research (field study research) which intends to study intensively about literacy in higher education. It used a descriptive research by prioritizing the description of the events that exist and took place at this time or in the past.

This study does not make manipulations or changes to the independent variables but describes the conditions as they are about literacy in higher education, specifically related to writing habits and writing skills of students in college. This study aims to identify and characterize literacy culture in higher education.

The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. It intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, namely behavior, perceptions, views, motivations, daily actions, holistically and with description methods in the form of words and language (narrative) in an exceptional natural context and by utilizing various natural methods. This approach is used because the data obtained are descriptive data in the form of written and oral words from people and in the form of documents or observed behavior.

This research was conducted at universities in Central Java, including Semarang State University, Semarang Muhammadiyah University, Tidar University, Pekalongan University, and Jenderal Soedirman University. The consideration is because, in Central Java, several higher educations have variations in study programs and majors, so that the description of literacy culture can be represented with conditions and in all higher education in Indonesia.

Respondents with a total of 1218 students were divided into several universities, as in the following categories. The informants in this study were divided into key informants, namely students; and supporting informants consisting of lecturers and staff as needed. Besides informants, other data sources are in the form of a place or paper to support data taken from respondents. After obtaining data from informants, the researcher checks the members or matches the data obtained from several sources so that the data is more valid and more objective. In collecting or obtaining data, several procedures are used, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. The observation technique in research is a method used to obtain information about the study object. Interviews as data collection techniques were used by researchers to obtain verbal information that can provide information to researchers. The type of interview

used is a lead-free interview. Because even though the interview is conducted freely, it is limited by the structure of the questions prepared previously. Documentation was carried out in data collection by viewing and investigating written data contained in books, magazines, documents, letters, meeting notes, diaries, and so on.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Identification and Characterization of Student Interest in Higher Education as a Form of Literacy and Cultural Conservation**

Identification and characterization of students' writing interest in higher education as a form of literacy and cultural conservation include indicators of (1) writing needs, (2) writing difficulties, (3) writing techniques and writing quality, (4) post writing, (5) writings and publications types, and (6) writing in groups.

1. Indicators of writing needs include: (1) the writing interest showed a balanced outcome between students who like and dislike writing. (2) Writing routines showed results that always write every day at 8.2%, often writing every day 25.9%, rarely writing 55.7%, and never writing 5.3%. (3) The intensity or frequency of writing will strengthen the ability to develop writing showed the results of the number of writing every day with an intensity of more than three times by 24.2%, intensity three times by 10.5%, the intensity of writing twice by 23.2%, and writing intensity one time by 42%. (4) The number of hours of writing every day showed the results that the number of hours needed to write every day with an average of more than 4 hours of 7.2%, 3-4 hours of 9.9%, 1-2 hours of 42, 5%, and less than an hour by 40.3%. (5) The type of writing construction indicated that 72.1% writing assignments, 17.7% writing poetry/ novels, writing articles with 2.7%, and few for writing other types such as short stories and diaries. (6) The indicators for reasons for writing are for hobbies by 22.5%, for professions with 0.8%, for leisure time with 0.3%. (7) Writing schedule showed the results of 2.6%, which those who often did writing schedule by 6.8%, those who rarely did writing schedule is 38.7%, and those who never did writing schedule by 51.9%.
2. Writing difficulties include: (1) writing difficulties experienced by students showing results that always feel difficulty in writing by 4.2%, often feel difficulty writing by 33.5%, sometimes find it difficult to write by 52.5%, and never felt difficulty in writing by 9.8%. (2) The causes of writing difficulties show results when writing due to environmental disturbances by 22.3%, difficulties because of not knowing what is written by 53%, because there is no interest for 16.7%, etc. (3) The presence or absence of writing difficulties showed the results for those who always overcome difficulties when writing by 4.5%, for those who often overcome difficulties by 24.7%, for those who sometimes overcome writing difficulties by 59.8%, and for those who did not overcome difficulties when writing by 11%. (4) The place to ask when writing showed the results of asking the classmates by 68%, boarding houses' friends by 9.5%, the lecturer by 7.1%, those who never asked by 2.5%, etc. (5) The books that help writing difficulties showed results for those who always read books to overcome writing difficulties by 1.4%, who often read to overcome difficulties by 8.9%, who rarely reading to overcome difficulties by 44.7%, and those who did not had read to overcome writing difficulties by 45.1%.
3. Writing techniques and quality of writing include: (1) writing references showed results before writing who always read references by 8.9%, who often read references before writing by 32.6%, who rarely read references before writing by 51.4%, and those who had

never read references before writing by 7.1%. (2) The reading used showed the reading results used as references in the form of books by 62.2%, journals by 22.7%, newspapers by 3.9%, and the rest are references from the internet, books, and articles. (3) Writing technique showed results that always read or hear good and correct writing procedures by 3.5%, who often read or hear good and correct writing procedures by 33.6%, who rarely read or hear good and correct writing procedures by 53.9%, and those who had never read or heard good and correct writing procedures by 8.9%. (4) Knowledge of writing stages showed results that always read or hear writing stages by 2.7%, who often read or hear writing stages by 31.4%, who rarely reading or hearing writing stages by 55.7%, and who had never reading or listening stages 10.2%. (5) Determining the written topic showed the results which always determine the topic before writing by 23.2%, who often determines the topic before writing by 38.4%, who rarely determines the topic before writing by 35.1%, and who never determines the topic before writing by 3.3%. (6) Essay frameworks showed results who always create a writing framework by 12.4%, who often makes a writing framework by 24.3%, who sometimes makes a writing framework by 53%, and who had never made a writing framework by 10, 3% (7) Paying attention to the framework of writing when writing showed results which always pay attention to the framework when writing by 12.2%, who often pay attention to the framework when writing by 26.5%, who rarely pay attention to the framework when writing by 51.5%, and who never pay attention to the framework that was compiled when writing by 99.9%. (8) The quality of writing showed results who never pay attention to writing or spelling by 4.4%, which sometimes pay attention to writing or spelling by 49.9%, who often pay attention to writing or spelling by 44.5%, and who do not know about the writing or spelling by 1.2%. (9) Paying attention to word choice when writing showed results which never pay attention to word choice for meaning accuracy by 2.5%, which sometimes pay attention to word choice for meaning accuracy by 39.6%, which often pays attention to word choice for accuracy of meaning equal by 57.2%, and those who did not know about word choice for meaning accuracy by 0.7%. (10) Paying attention to sentence procedures when writing showed results that never pay attention to sentence procedures by 2.4%, who rarely pay attention to sentence sentences by 44%, who often pay attention to sentence sentences by 52.2%, and who do not know about procedures sentences of 1.4%. (11) Paying attention to paragraphs when writing showed results which have never paid attention to paragraph arrangement by 2.2%, who sometimes paid attention to paragraph arrangement by 43.3%, who often paid attention to paragraph arrangement by 53%, and who did not know about paragraph arrangement by 1.5%.

4. Post-writing includes: (1) Reviewing the writing showed the results who have never re-read the writings by 1.6%, who rarely re-read the writings by 34.3%, who often re-read the writings by 42%, and who always re-read the writings by 22.1%. (2) Improving writing showed results who never improve writing after completion by 4.7%, who rarely improves writing after completion by 42.1%, who often improves writing after completion by 42.8%, and who always corrects writing after completion by 10.4%. (3) Suggestion on writing showed results that have never asked for other people's suggestion on writings by 8.5%, who rarely ask other people's suggestion on writings by 52.5%, who often ask suggestion from others about the writings by 32.1%, and those who always ask for other people's suggestion on the writings by 6.9%. (4) The person who asked to provide suggestions of 71.7% of classmates, to the senior of 10.3%, to the lecturer of.
5. Types of Writing and Publications include; (1) The type of writing written that have been made includes scientific writing by 38.3%, fiction writing by 37%, popular writing by 12%,

and other types of writing are the rest. (2) Discussion of writings in lectures showed that the results of written works had never been discussed in lectures by 51%, whose writings are sometimes discussed in lectures by 44.5%, whose writings are often discussed in lectures by 3.8%, and whose are always discussed in lectures by 0.7%. (3) Published writings show the results of the writings that have never been included in the seminar by 89.5%, whose writings are sometimes included in the seminar by 9.1%, whose writings are often included in the seminar by 1.2%, and their writings are always included in the seminar by 0%.

6. Writing in groups includes: (1) writing in groups showed the results of writing who was never done in groups by 14.3%, who rarely writing in groups by 61.3%, who often wrote in groups by 23.4% , and who always write in groups by 1%. (2) The reason for writing in groups showed the results of reasons for writing in groups because there was an assignment by 79.6%, the reason for writing in groups because of the usual cooperation by 13.2%, the reason for writing in groups is because it makes articles for seminars by 3.2%, who had never written in groups by 1.1%, and the rest had never written in groups, the reason there was no writing in groups, had never written in groups, etc. (3) The type of writing in group writing showed the results when writing in groups written is a lecture assignment by 86.7%, writing an article by 4.7%, writing a proposal by 5.7%, writing a scientific paper by 0.3%, etc..

The results of all the components of the questions that were filled in by 1218 respondents quantitatively showed the results that the motivation for literacy activities was still low, namely writing skills in higher education. This is measured from several indicators that have been presented previously, namely indicators of (1) writing needs, (2) writing difficulties, (3) writing techniques and quality of writing, (4) post-writing, (5) types of writing and publications, and (6) group writing.

### **Identification and Characterization of Student Writing Skills in Higher Education as a Form of Literacy and Cultural Conservation**

Based on data from several universities, 1218 respondents were obtained from various universities and different fields of science. From this data, it can be described in the following table.

**Table 1 Score of Writing Skills in Accordance with Subjects**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Types of Sciences</b>	<b>Highest Score</b>	<b>Lowest Score</b>	<b>Average</b>
1	Linguistics	8,7	4,2	6,77
2	Social	7,7	3,5	6,50
3	Sciences	9,0	5,1	7,25
4	Engineering	7,6	4,0	6,20
5	Health	7,9	4,4	6,25
6	Education	8,0	3,9	6,65
Average				6,60

Based on the table, in general, each field of science has similarities in the quality of writing skills. It is because the ability of each student does not differ much. In addition, the average score obtained already meets the minimum standard, which was 6.60. From the table above also showed the results that the exact sciences clusters had better writing skills if it is compared to

other sciences clusters. Whereas, other knowledge groups have average writing skills that are almost the same.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results described, the following are the conclusions. Based on all the components of the question, quantitatively, it is concluded that students' interest in writing in higher education was still low. This is measured by several indicators, including writing needs, writing difficulties, writing techniques, and writing quality. These indicators are interrelated with one another, complementing student writing weaknesses and findings that can be developed to improve student abilities. Based on the basis of the data, which is a measure of literacy in writing students who are interested in writing more on college assignments that they are supposed to do. The awareness to develop the quality of writing is still lacking and limited. Even though they have difficulty writing, only a small percentage really wants to find out the solution, and some don't ask the right people or find out the right book. The quality and quantity of student writing literacy are also influenced by the assignments given by the lecturer.

In general, each field of study has similarities in the quality of writing skills. That is because the ability of each student does not differ much. In addition, the average value obtained already meets the minimum standard, which is 6.60.

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