



RURAL COLLEGE EFL LEARNERS' BARRIERS IN WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER: A PHOTOVOICE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

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abstract

Writing an academic paper leads to a serious problem for most student authors in rural universities. This current study aimed to investigate rural college EFL students' experiences in dealing with English research paper writing and publication barriers. Five senior EFL students voluntarily participated in a photovoice phenomenological study. The data were collected through two methods, including semi-structured interviews and a photovoice. The students took some emotional photos to express their feelings on paper writing and publication barriers visually. The interviews encouraged them to describe their experiences and feelings through the photos. The data were analyzed by synchronizing each photo with its qualitative description. As for the results, it is noted that there were three main paper writing and publication barriers, including a lack of linguistic competence, being trapped with a journal template, and anxiety towards written corrective feedback. Each interview result was accomplished with emotional photos in several themes such as untidy pieces of paper, scenery, internet search, children's toys, colourful pens, and empty boxes. The photos were also supported by qualitative remarks of each EFL student. In short, the photovoice helps to represent deep feelings on the research paper writing and publication barriers experienced by the EFL students.

INTRODUCTION

Research paper writing has become an inseparable task for university students who begin writing their undergraduate thesis as a graduation requirement. The task continues to be more challenging as it is experienced by EFL students. The use of English, for example, requires the EFL students to deal with academic English use and usage during research paper writing (Chee Keong & Mussa, 2015; Fadda, 2012; Flowerdew & Li, 2009; Jabali, 2018; Wastam, Bumela, & Gumiandari, 2023). Proper English writing of a research paper is considered to have a basic standard to be submitted, reviewed, and published in a target journal. However, such proper English use is not the only requirement that has to be fulfilled by the EFL students when writing and having the paper published in a journal (Talang-rao, 2021). Ideally, the students are challenged with not only linguistics barriers, but also supporting factors, including psychological and educational barriers (Alluhaybi, 2015).

Lack of focus on curriculum affects preparation of teaching syllabus and materials for research paper writing. Paper writing competence comes from intensive writing practices transformed from university curriculum or teaching strategies and it strengthens students' paper quality and publication in a journal. In this case, practical teaching strategies promote students' paper writing development that allows university EFL teachers to train their students in writing a paper for academic publication (Simon, Osei-Ampofo, Wachira, & Kwan, 2020; Wibawa et al., 2022). Moreover, a scientific learning environment which includes modern library and

scientific paper writing forum indicates that the EFL students can encourage their writing enthusiasm and monitor their own writing based on teachers' instructions.

Meanwhile, a plethora of studies reveals attention towards paper writing and its publication problems with different focuses, including paper writing and its enablers (Aydin, Yürük, Reisoğlu, & Goktas, 2023; Chien, 2019; Shamsi & Osam, 2022), English as a source of writing problem (Biswas, 2021; Cennetku, 2012; Huwari & Al - Khasawneh, 2013), journal paper writing problems (Lesmana & Ariffin, 2020; Pho & Tran, 2016; Purwanto et al., 2020; Turk et al., 2018), performance impact on paper writing (Evmenova, Graff, Jerome, & Behrmann, 2010), and paper writing strategies (Defianty & Hidayat, 2020; Majid et al., 2022). The previous studies concern mostly on paper writing problems and strategies experienced by students from various majors and are conducted through a case study, experimental and descriptive research designs. However, the studies indicate a limited focus on integrated barriers between research paper writing and its journal publication process of EFL students in a rural context (Jayantini et al., 2022; Nugroho & Sakhiyya, 2022; Sari & Sultan, 2022).

This current study was proposed to explore rural college EFL students' barriers in writing a research paper and having it published in a journal through oral and visual data collection strategies. More specifically, this study is different from those conducted earlier. First, it was designed based on the combination of a photovoice approach and phenomenological study. Such a combination was interesting as phenomenological study is mostly associated with mere narrative experiences of participants. The photovoice approach offered a visual field evidence which was then analyzed through scientific stages (Cai & Marks, 2021; Julien, Given, & Opryshko, 2013), following those stated in phenomenological design. In this case, it seemed interesting that their article writing skill, competence, experience, knowledge, and attitudes were needed to be explored simultaneously. The following questions were proposed to focus on research objectives: (1) How do the rural college EFL students experience barriers in writing a research paper and publishing it in a journal? (2) What are the rural college EFL students' attitudes towards the writing of a research paper and its publication process?

Barriers in Writing a Research Article

Studies have shown that the most common difficulties experienced by students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are related to language skills, such as a low level of mastery of grammar, structure, and vocabulary; discourse, such as a low level of basic academic writing skills; psychology, such as attitude, anxiety, and a lack of motivation; and teaching environment, such as a lack of attention and an inappropriate teaching method. Khan (2011), Mubarak (2017), and Akbari (2015) all came to the conclusion that language-based issues were the primary obstacles to academic writing in English for EFL students respectively. According to these studies, several components of language, such as grammar and structure, as well as writing mechanics, presented challenges for students.

According to Khan (2011), the challenges that the learners have with writing may be ascribed to a number of different issues. These factors include the lack of an English language curriculum, poor teaching techniques, improper language surroundings, and a lack of personal motivation on the part of the learners. In a manner that is analogous, the learners' writing challenges to a range of reasons, such as a lack of motivation, a poor level of English competence, a low vocabulary level, L1 interference, and apprehension (Jafari & Ansari, 2012). Additionally, they cited apprehension as one of the most prominent causes. It was found there was evidence to support the hypothesis that students' attitudes or beliefs regarding the writing process and the challenges of writing might also be a factor in academic writing issues (Jabali, 2018).

A few of the research (Ariyanti, 2016; Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Asih Wigati, 2014) were undertaken in Indonesia on the issue of EFL students' difficulty with academic writing. The results of these analyses are, for the most part, consistent with the findings of empirical investigations. On the other hand, through an examination of their written outputs, the bulk of the challenges that students have in their academic writing were uncovered. The current study explores the issue from the viewpoint of the students by employing a framework that is taken from the findings of previous empirical research.

Problems in Publishing a Research Article

Based on a review by of some studies (Jaroongkhongdach, Todd, Keyuravong, & Hall, 2012; Uzuner, 2008), it is noted that there are eight challenges that researchers from a variety of countries and fields face when trying to get their work published in international journals. These challenges include a lack of time, a lack of resources or funds, a lack of connections with the academic community in core countries, bias against scholars from peripheral countries, parochialism, problems with language, problems with the literature review and discussion section, and parochialism.

The challenges that have been outlined above provide some understanding of the difficulties that researchers working in second languages (L2) have when attempting to get their papers published in international journals. Researchers working in L2 fields may find that publishing their findings internationally is a significant obstacle. It is also crucial to emphasize that the challenges found in the studies (Jaroongkhongdach et al., 2012; Uzuner, 2008) should not be seen as problems that are just peculiar to L2 researchers as a reaction to the pressures of writing for academic publication. This is something that needs to be kept in mind. There is a possibility that researchers from English-speaking nations will also encounter some of these challenges, particularly those who are still in the beginning stages of their academic careers.

A further significant obstacle is posed by the fact that researchers are sometimes constrained in the building of their knowledge by their own culture, which can be an obstacle for non-native speakers seeking publication in international publications. Jaroongkhongdach et al. (2012) presented the argument that it is necessary for individuals in Anglophone nations to have their knowledge tested. On the other hand, in other nations such as Thailand, it is expected that knowledge would be respected, and it is possible that this may encourage Thai scholars to offer few critical comments on published works.

METHOD

Participants

This qualitative approach is challenging that it allowed the researcher to understand the nature of individual's lived experiences without considering any predetermined belief (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). This qualitative study employed five participants, namely SR, NDW, KY, EM, and HK. They were the students of English department and they were also asked to write an English research article based on their undergraduate thesis. Moreover, they were also registered in semester seven and nine. Before the final selection, there were eight students asked for becoming a volunteered participant during the study. Each student was identified to have some barriers in writing an English research article based on a preliminary interview. Having asked them to read and signed an informed consent, there were still five students who were ready to take a part in the photovoice phenomenological study. The rest of them decided not to be the participants with various reasons such as low speaking ability, lack of time, or having many task to be fulfilled. On the other side, through the consent, the selected participants stated that they would like to follow every step of the study voluntarily. They also confirmed to give true statements and photographs related to their barriers in writing a research paper.

Data Collection

There were two kinds of methods used in collecting qualitative data. First, we compiled some interview protocols as the instrument for semi-structured interview. The interview focused on asking the participants about their experiences, views, feelings regarding English research paper barriers during the article writing. One of the interview questions was “How do you experience English research article writing barriers?” The protocol was also entailed with another probing question based on participants’ responses. Each interview lasted for about thirty to forty-five minutes for each participant.

Second, having conducted the interview, we then asked each participant to take some photos using their own cell phones to express their feelings on the paper writing barriers. More specifically, the photos should reflect the following questions: (1) what is the situation surrounding the participant when writing an English research paper? (2) what barriers can cause the participant to lack paper writing enthusiasm? And (3) what factors can affect the participant to encounter research paper writing barriers? As for the third data collection step, we invited each participant to discuss their photos based on their feelings, views, and experiences. One by one participants described their photos qualitatively to enlighten the abstract experiences.

Data Analysis

The data analysis of each method as previously described in data collection was interrelated as one method supported the others. To begin, the interview results were carefully transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were, then, inserted into NVivo 12 as a qualitative data analysis application. We used such a tool to ensure that coding stages were systematically and accurately noticed. Based on the application result, several themes were identified. We also reanalyzed the transcript both manually and using the application to prove that there was no difference between the theme results when using manual or systematic method. Furthermore, some interview results were grouped into each theme category. As for the second interview, it was stated that we followed similar stages and used similar tools to analyze the qualitative data. The photos, on the other hand, were analyzed by synchronizing them with each description of each participant.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In this subpart, several identified themes are categorized and supported with interview transcripts, photos, and their descriptions. As for ethical consideration, each participant’s identity remained anonymous and each of them was coded by P (participant) 1, P2, P3, P4, and P5.

A lack of linguistic competence

The first barrier experienced by EFL students in writing an English research paper is a lack of linguistic competence. The student with lower linguistic competence has to work harder to construct grammatical sentences, proper diction, and systematic structure of the written work like a research article. The interview result with one of the EFL students (P5) showed that English grammar is not as simple as downloading and reading a text from the internet. Grammar is said to be more complex as it is internalized into an academic paper. P5 stated:

I am very concerned with my supervisors’ task to write a paper that will be submitted in an English journal accredited in Sinta 2. I read other authors’ published paper and I imagined when mine can be accepted and published as well. Unfortunately, when I began writing a paper, I encountered some barriers in understanding grammatical elements with its unlimited variety. Having learnt simple present tense, there is another tense that needs to be understood. When I

learn active form, there is passive for that should be completed as well. Understanding grammar is the most disturbing step of writing a journal paper.
(P5)

P5 found that there are various types of English grammar that need to be enhanced when a beginner author (i.e. an EFL student) is engaged in writing a paper. The writing barrier emerged as there was no level of grammar that has to be understood once the EFL students indulged themselves in such linguistic competence. For example, P5 did not have any idea which tense should be learnt first and the number of tenses disturbed concentration in finding out what tense and why such tense need to be learnt when writing a paper.

Another EFL student (P2) believed that although a journal template looked much simpler, it is noticed that the EFL student has to be aware of its grammatical issue integrated in a paper. As noted by P2:

A crucial, but doubtful moment in writing and submitting a research paper is to determine type of tense or particular grammatical structure for our paper abstract. It is a bit doubtful for many student authors. The introduction subpart is more uninteresting in me and my classmates as there is no tangible clue that proves which tense should be used and what structure should be indulged in the subpart. Other subparts such as literature review, method, findings, discussion, and conclusion are still nor clear enough to be attached with grammatical elements. (P2)

P2 is not the only EFL student who encountered a grammatical barrier in providing structure for each part of a paper. P1 admitted that:

Grammar is the most dominant barrier among other kinds of paper writing barriers as it cannot be modified or rewritten like paper content. Grammar is a static element in writing, and it helps to determine both meaning and purpose of the study. Writing a paper without proper structure or grammar will result in ambiguity of meaning and formal errors. As for me, I am very afraid of grammar compared to other important parts of a paper. I believe that it is the basic element before a student begins to present their ideas and conduct a study. (P1)

As grammar was stated to be the most difficult element in writing a paper, some EFL students experienced difficult selection of vocabularies when writing such a paper. Although vocabularies are the first matter that every EFL student find in learning English, its use and function remain complicated for many students who are writing an academic English paper. An EFL student (P3) admitted that academic vocabulary was much different from daily vocabulary use. It was noticed as formal and technical depending on its function and context in a sentence. P3 believed:

Academic vocabulary is not easy to be integrated into a good or grammatical sentence. It is another big problem when we talk about a paragraph or a full paper. I used to speak English in the classroom and informal vocabularies were used to make conversation. Even if I attended creative writing in semester five, daily vocabulary was more effective. (P3)

The above EFL students' experiences are also revealed through some photos that enable them to express their deep, abstract feelings on the research paper barriers. The photos are not standardized, but they contain students' own perspective, interpretation, and attitude towards their lack of linguistic competence. Each photo is entailed with its description based on the interviews with the EFL students whose photo is attached. As for the first photo, P2 took it when she wrote some paragraphs in the introduction and literature parts of her research paper.

The first photo was of untidy pieces of paper which assumed that both parts of paper were not in line and unsystematic.



Picture 1. Untidy pieces of paper

Having interviewed the EFL student, it is noted that the photo was related with barriers in terms of incorrect grammar and false selection of academic vocabularies in writing the sentence. As P2 stated:

The writing circumstance is getting worse when I am constructing some paragraphs in the first two parts of paper, introduction, and literature review. I have struggled to make sure that the sentences fit with standardized English grammar. Meanwhile, untidy pieces of paper are like my writing that looks good, but it is clearly unstructured. (P2)

The EFL student (P4) also expresses his feelings in encountering linguistics barriers when writing a research article. He took a photo with the theme of scenery. It is believed that scenery represents feeling that reveals some interpretations.



Picture 2. Scenery

To get a clear meaning of the photo, P4 said:

I love taking scenery photos. The scenery photo represents my feeling about linguistics competence that affects the quality of my paper writing. The meaning of scenery is that I have been writing the paper, but I also face many barriers that cannot be easily handled such as grammatical sentences. As for the problem, the scenery teaches me to see green trees, to calm down while looking at the beauty of nature, and to avoid the crowd while writing the paper. (P4)

As the photo implies, the student (P4) believed that scenery helped the mind to recover from becoming anxious about what was being written. Moreover, it cannot be easily applied to every written sentence without a good understanding.

Trapped by a journal template

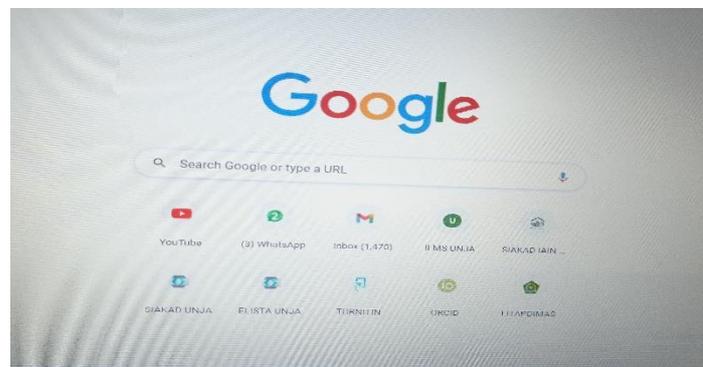
Some EFL students found a journal template as barrier in writing and having an English research paper published. It is far from its simplicity when some EFL students tried to fulfill each part. The template in an English journal was considered complicated for many EFL students. P1 was sure that he needed much time to accomplish a template in an English journal due to its complexity. P1 stated:

I was asked by my supervisor to learn an English journal on the internet and read the template carefully and accurately. First, the template was not well known to me. I then, tried focus on the template for couple days. Seriously, the journal template increased my dizziness after finishing the first stress in writing the paper. I must follow many rules, including various fonts, structure, citation, and, of course, grammatical sentences. (P1)

Unlike P1, another EFL student (P3) revealed an experience towards completing a journal template. It was believed that the template required the student to write a perfect research paper before its submission process. P3 found that reading, citing, and synthesizing references from previous studies were a negative barrier in writing a paper. References needed to be read, understood, and cited in the paper. They were also needed to be paraphrased using author's own words to avoid plagiarism. Moreover, automated applications such as Mendeley or Zotero was recommended to be used in order to submit to a journal. P3 said:

It is a pride to submit a paper to an English journal, but fulfilling journal requirement is not a favorable part for me. I am very stressed to rewrite some parts of the paper and restructure the citation. I did not know anything about application for citing references. Finally, I learnt it from various resources on the internet. It is only for my paper submission. (P3)

As for the barriers in terms of citation and paraphrase, P3 also showed feeling through a photo. The photo about internet search was chosen since it represented experience and feeling about difficulty in citing references or paraphrasing sentences. The internet was believed to be a fine solution to learn how to use automatic citation and how paraphrases were proceeded to avoid higher plagiarism intensity.



Picture 3. Internet search – Google

Having taken the photo, P3 was interviewed, and the following result shows detailed description on visual feeling.

I chose the internet search to show what I am stressful about feeling and experiencing towards accomplishing a journal template. Fortunately, the barrier is like searching for a particular file online. It is not easy to find the exact one among millions of file, but I always make sure that the internet provides such

special file if I focus on finding it. In this case, I should not think about how much time I will spend to find it. I have focus and set the focus. (P3)

The barrier to fulfill an English journal is also described by another EFL student (P5) through a photo on children's toys.



Picture 4. Children's toys

The following interview revealed the student's feeling or attitude towards accomplishing a template before submitting the paper. P5 stated:

Fulfilling a journal template is like playing with children's toys. They vary from colours, types, sizes, or price. We will find it doubtful to choose a toy to be played with and how to play such a crowded toy. When we enjoy each toy and let other toys support our main toy, it will be much fun. Meanwhile, restructuring our paper based on the template might be burdening, but such template seems to be a new kind of energy to submit our paper. (P5)

Anxiety towards written corrective feedback

Written corrective feedback (WCF) leads the EFL students to a particular level of anxiety in writing an English research paper and having it published in a journal. WCF is considered a barrier as it results in a lack of motivation to revise a paper and increasing number of time allocated to finish the paper. The EFL students have different experiences towards WCF from either their supervisors or journal editor and reviewers. One of the students (P4) said:

Do you know what I am afraid of during the paper writing process in undergraduate (S1) level? It is a correction made by my supervisors. Let me talk about my experiences. I wrote the paper seriously and carefully as I forced myself to avoid any kind of mistake or error. However, having been submitted to and corrected by both supervisors, each paragraph was marked as mistakes. (P4)

Moreover, to express feeling based on the experiences in dealing with WCF from the supervisors, P4 took a photo of colourful pens. Such photo was chosen as it was believed to represent P4's feeling when receiving WCF for written paper.



Picture 5. Colourful pens

Based on the interview result, P4 has a clear opinion and view about why colourful pens represented attitude in restructuring the paper based on supervisors' written corrections. P4 expressed:

The colourful pens are imagined through my thoughts when the supervisors return my paper together with its various corrections. The pens mean that different corrections will require different revision or different writing treatment. On the other hand, different supervisors have different styles in correcting my paper. So, both correction type and style are like colourful pens. (P4)

As for journal review, the EFL student (P1) admitted that anxiety was getting increased when receiving an email stating that the submitted paper required major revision. To express such feeling and experience, P1 took a photo on an empty box. P1 considered the empty box revealed lonely feeling and absence of ideas.



Picture 6. Empty box

Having taken the photo, we interviewed the EFL student (P1) and the result is as follows:

The empty box indicates that my thoughts are now empty as I am required to revise each of my research papers I submitted to a journal. I have to revise the title, abstract, research questions, results, and discussion. Moreover, I am asked to recite more references by downloading them in international reputable journals. Finally, I do not know what to do, what and how to start. That is why I said that I have an empty mind. (P1)

Discussion

This current photovoice phenomenological study reveals some particular barriers experienced by several EFL students in writing their English papers, including a lack of

linguistic competence, a problem in fulfilling a journal template, and apprehension towards written corrective feedback. The term linguistics competence is known as an abstract skill required for EFL students in recognizing several linguistic elements, including grammar, vocabulary, structure, and deixis. Such competence is the basic knowledge needed when a beginner author (i.e. EFL student) begins writing a paper for journal publication (Chien, 2019; Prčić, 2014). Competence also helps the author to determine content objective and meaning for each written sentence. However, it is noted that such competence leads the EFL students to writing barriers. The reason is because English grammar consists of comprehensive types which cannot be easily understood by the EFL students as beginner paper authors (Alghazo, Al Salem, Alrashdan, & Rabab'ah, 2021; Ma & Qian, 2020; Prčić, 2014). The authors are responsible for the quality of each sentence they write in a paper. Some previous findings also found that grammar is considered the most dominant barrier experienced by EFL students in writing an English paper (Biber, Gray, Staples, & Egbert, 2020; Chien, 2019).

A lack of reading and writing habits reduce EFL students' abilities in recognizing differences between academic and daily life vocabularies. In this case, a research paper requires more additional time to acknowledge exact academic vocabularies (Granger & Larsson, 2021; Maamuujav, 2021). Academic vocabulary, on the other side, will be a serious barrier for those who ignore its use and do not find out an appropriate strategy to use it. Such vocabulary is more basic than grammar as it is combined to construct a grammatical phrase or sentence. Some studies (Csomay & Prades, 2018; Durrant, 2016; Mozaffari & Moini, 2014) showed that academic vocabulary should be first instructed to EFL students before they move to higher English levels such as grammar, reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

The EFL student author needs more additional time to revise or rewrite their corrected paper or paper with many grammatical problems. Autonomous English learning should be applied in enhancing feedback (Dewi & Roki'ah, 2023). Such additional time will result in paper accomplishment, submission, revision, or publication setbacks. This phenomenon usually occurs due to the author's barriers in understanding and utilizing linguistic competence (Day & Kristiansen, 2018; Hyland, 2016). Another impact is that the paper has worse sentence, grammatical, or deictic structures. If the structures are not organized properly, its meaning must be vague and it reduces reader's understanding toward the paper. Meanwhile, a template is considered a standard or rule that has to be completed by an author before submitting to a journal. However, a journal template is also tricky for most novice authors with a lack of paper writing and publication experiences. A paper that does not follow a template will not be considered to be proceeded in a journal. On the other side, a template has to be completed as a structured body of a good journal paper (Cuschieri, Grech, & Savona-Ventura, 2019).

Regarding paper structure, it is believed that introduction part causes the EFL student authors to encounter either linguistic or content barriers (Cuschieri et al., 2019). The problem in the introduction ranges from its complicated content structure to types of tenses appropriately used in the sentence. Literature review is believed to cause a barrier for a beginner paper author. Fortunately, such barriers can be solved by understanding and accomplishing a journal template synchronously (Alghazo et al., 2021; Cuschieri et al., 2019; Simon et al., 2020). Lastly, written corrective feedback (WCF) has caused an anxiety for EFL student authors due to its impact (Al-Jarrah, 2016; Cánovas Guirao, Roca de Larios, & Coyle, 2015). For most paper authors, major revision seems to be an unfavorable stage since they have to rewrite or revise what has been written as an accomplished paper. Some authors think that their accomplished paper is ready to published without recognizing how written correction affects revision. In reality, paper revision is a compulsory step that requires every author to rewrite some parts in order to fulfill standard academic writing. Meanwhile, it is stated that WCF teaches the author not to easily feel satisfied

with what has been achieved in a beginning stage (Ene & Kosobucki, 2016; Gholaminia, Gholaminia, & Marzban, 2014; Luquin & García Mayo, 2021).

Rural EFL students face a range of obstacles when it comes to writing, which is attributed to a confluence of elements associated with their surroundings, educational provisions, and socio-economic circumstances. Rural universities frequently encounter constraints in terms of accessing educational resources, such as books, libraries, and language learning materials (Weiss et al., 2023; Coady, 2020). The insufficiency of resources impedes EFL students' access to a wide range of writing styles and strategies. The potential impact of inadequate infrastructure in rural areas on the accessibility and standard of education cannot be overlooked. Insufficient availability of computers, internet, and technology affects students' capacity to exercise writing skills and interact with online language learning resources. Rural EFL students possess a restricted level of familiarity with the English language beyond the confines of the educational setting (Yao, 2022). The absence of immersion provides difficulties for individuals in cultivating an innate sense of the language and acquiring the lexicon and idiomatic phrases employed in written communication.

Language input, encompassing both oral and written language exposure, plays a pivotal role in the development of language skills. Rural EFL students experience a reduced level of exposure to genuine English input, which potentially affect their capacity to assimilate grammar regulations, sentence formations, and the vocabulary essential for writing (Poonpon et al., 2022; Lopez, 2021). The access to quality education for pupils may be influenced by socio-economic situations prevalent in rural areas. Inadequate financial resources result in a dearth of proficient educators, obsolete instructional materials, and excessively populated classrooms, all of which hinder the facilitation of effective writing education.

Rural EFL students come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which influence their writing styles and make it challenging to conform to standard English conventions. The differences include variations in grammar, syntax, and rhetorical strategies (Lopez, 2021). Writing often benefits from peer interaction and feedback. In rural areas, where the student population might be limited, opportunities for peer collaboration and constructive feedback on writing are scarce (Ruiz, 2020). Teachers in rural areas encounter challenges in terms of training and professional development opportunities. Insufficient training affects their ability to effectively teach writing skills and provide constructive feedback. EFL students in rural areas encounter lower motivation and aspirations due to limited exposure to opportunities that require proficiency in English writing (Singh & Manjaly, 2022; Coady, 2020). A lack of awareness about the benefits of strong writing skills contributes to a disinterest in developing this aspect of language proficiency.

CONCLUSION

Writing an English research paper and having it published in a journal are interesting in most EFL students, but, at the same time, it is also burdening due to its complexity and responsibility. The EFL student author is expected to be ready before they plan to write a paper. Intensive and regular writing practices or training are needed to help them avoid some popular barriers during paper writing. Grammar, for example, has to be indulged more comprehensively since it determines content structure and meaning of the author through the research paper. Reading and reviewing various literature from both international reputable journals and national accredited journals are effective to enable the authors in dealing with citation, referencing, or synthesizing references into their own ideas.

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