

Analysis of Deaf Students' Obstacles in Indonesian Writing Skills at SMPLB Dharma Asih Depok

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Abstract

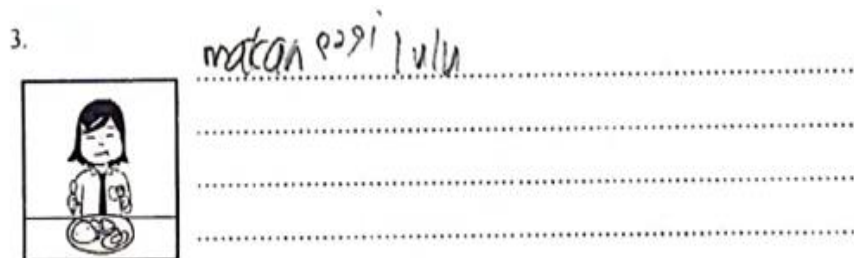
This research discusses the factors that hinder deaf children at SMPLB Dharma Asih in writing using Indonesian. The purpose of this research is to provide an overview to stakeholders in providing the right method so that deaf children's writing skills can improve optimally. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. From the results of observations and data collection on the writing of deaf students of SMPLB Dharma Asih grades 1, 2, and 3 with a total representation of 5 students, many writing errors are not following Indonesian language rules. Further analysis is also complemented by the interview process, this is caused by internal factors and external factors. Internal factors that hinder deaf students in writing include the low literacy skills of students and the tendency of students to mix sign language used for daily communication with Indonesian writing rules. External factors that hinder deaf students' skills in writing include the school curriculum, the capacity of teachers, and the family background of deaf students who tend to be hearing people.

Keywords: deaf students; writing skills; Indonesian

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the human literacy skills. Expressing ideas in the form of writing requires special skills, including conformity to language rules. For example, in Indonesian, a writing pattern or sentence consists of at least a subject and predicate. Therefore, to compose a sentence and make it into a piece of writing requires the application of subjects and predicates following language rules.

In Indonesia, students begin to be taught to write when they are still in early education (elementary school). This also applies to deaf students. From an early age, deaf students have been taught to write. However, the writing ability of deaf students cannot be said to be proficient even though they are already in junior high school. This can be seen from the results of the author's observation of junior high school deaf students at SMPLB Dharma Asih Depok. From the observations, deaf students at SLBB Dharma Asih still quite difficult to write sentences following Indonesian language rules. One example of deaf students' writing can be seen in the following deaf students' writing.



(*makan pagi Lulu*)

From the student's piece of writing, it can be seen that the student is still mistaken in placing the word order so that *makan pagi Lulu* sentence is unacceptable. If you look at the student's writing, the order of the writing is as follows.

<u>Makan</u>	<u>pagi</u>	<u>Lulu</u>
predicate		subject

This is not following Indonesian language rules which should have the order subject + predicate. Therefore, the correct sentence should be as follows.

<u>Lulu</u>	<u>makan</u>	<u>pagi</u>	(<i>Lulu eats breakfast</i>)
subject	predicate		

This certainly does not just happen. The existence of errors in writing in deaf students is certainly caused by certain factors. For this reason, the formulation of this research problem is to identify the obstacle factors that exist in deaf students of SLBB Dharma Asih in Indonesian writing skills. This research was conducted to provide an overview to stakeholders to prepare the right method so that the writing skills of deaf students become better.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This research was previously conducted by Iswahyuni (2014). In her research, Iswahyuni identified the need for deaf students to learn English as a foreign language in college. Iswahyuni also explained the obstacles faced by deaf students in learning English at the university level. In contrast to Iswahyuni, this research seeks to provide an overview of deaf students' barriers to writing in Indonesian. This is important according to the author, because Indonesian is the language of instruction in education in Indonesia. Therefore, it is important to know the writing ability of deaf students in Indonesian before deaf students try to understand other lessons besides those using Indonesian.

To limit the research, the author chose junior high school students at SLBB Dharma Asih as the scope of the study. The selection of this school and level is based on the need to know the writing ability of deaf students in Indonesian. The selection of junior

high school students is based on the students' more proficient communication skills. This is directly supported by the conditions in the field. According to the teacher at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih, the communication skills of elementary school students in this school are still very minimal. Children at the elementary level are still learning to recognize the alphabet and basic signs. Meanwhile, at the junior high school level children have begun to learn to write simple sentences and their sign language skills are already more communicative. Therefore, the research took samples at the junior high school level by considering the ability to communicate and write which is assumed to have more patterns. From the writing of these students, it is hoped that this research can provide an overview of the condition of students' writing ability.

SLBB Dharma Asih is located in Depok City, which is one of the satellite cities (Santosa & Noviyanti, 2020). A satellite city is a city built outside a big city or metropolitan city with easy access (Shao, 2015). This means that Depok is also one of the cities with easy and open access, including access to education. Located in Depok, SLBB Dharma Asih is located in Pancoran Mas sub-district. This private school is under the auspices of the Dharma Asih Foundation. The school offers education facilities for deaf students from elementary, junior high, to high school levels.

3. METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods. Data collection in research is intended to build an inductive analysis of social problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The author's data collection process is done by going through several stages. The author begins the meeting by making introductions to deaf students. This activity took place on March 31, 2023. On Friday the author came to get acquainted with Dharma Asih Junior High School students. The number of students at Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School is 13 students. Among these deaf students, there is 1 female student who has double limitations, namely deaf and autistic. From the initial meeting, the author learned that communication between Dharma Asih Junior High School students uses Bisindo mixed with SIBI. Three class teachers teach at the junior high school. Each teacher holds 1 class each.

The next activity is the process of preparing research instruments. This limiting variable is made by the author so that the research instrument can be limited. The instrument uses simultaneous pictorial paper media and themed daily activities. Image media according to AECT (Association of Education and Communication Technology) for deaf children is one solution in learning. This method is more easily understood by deaf children who have limitations in speaking and hearing (Nofiaturrehman, 2018). Meanwhile, the theme of daily activities was chosen as the theme in the research instrument because this activity is a familiar activity for deaf students. By choosing the theme of activities that are familiar to them, it is hoped that deaf children can more easily understand the context of the activities presented in the pictures. In addition to making research instruments, the author also held a meeting with the teacher of SMP SLBB Dharma Asih. At this second meeting, the author conducted a data collection licensing

process and reviewed the research instruments that would be used with SLBB Dharma Asih teachers.

The next stage is data collection. The instruments that have been prepared are made double and distributed to Dharma Asih SLBB junior high school students. Five students participated in this study. This number is considered to be able to represent Dharma Asih Junior High School students. Dharma Asih Junior High School students who became participants in the study amounted to 5 people. The students consisted of 3 boys and 2 girls. In the process of describing the results of the study, the author will use codes 01 to 05. This is done to maintain the identity which is the privacy of students.

In the data collection process, students were asked to work on the research instrument honestly so that students' writing ability and comprehension could be clearly illustrated. The author begins the data collection process by ensuring students understand the instructions for filling out the research instrument. After being explained using sign language and confirmed regarding students' understanding of the instructions for filling out the research instrument, the author invited students to fill in the research instrument sheet. The author prepared a chain of pictures showing the daily activities of a student from waking up in the morning to going to bed again at night. From this instrument, the author wants to know the understanding of deaf students towards the activities depicted in the picture. After ensuring that deaf students understand the sequence of daily activities in the picture, the author sees the ability of deaf students by writing down the images using Indonesian.

In addition to written data, the author also uses supporting data in the form of interviews and observations with students and teachers of Dharma Asih SLBB. This interview or dialog is an effort to complement students' written data. The interviews conducted were open interviews to find out more about Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School. In addition, interviews were also conducted to find out how the teaching and learning process at school was carried out. Then, interviews were also conducted with students to find out the background of each student. This is considered important because the author wants to provide a comprehensive picture of the writing and language skills of Dharma Asih SLBB students. Writing data, background, and teaching methods can also be factors that support students' understanding of communication.

This interview was conducted using oral communication and sign language. With junior high school teachers at SLBB Dharma Asih who can hear and speak, the author communicates orally. While with SLBB Dharma Asih junior high school students, the author used Bisindo sign language used by students in daily communication.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of data collection of 5 SLBB Dharma Asih junior high school students in the field, the description of student writing results can be seen in the following table.

Code of Students	Students Writing	Interpretation
01	Picture 1 blank Picture 2 blank Picture 3 blank Picture 4 blank Picture 5 blank Figure 6 blank Picture 7 blank	Student 01 in this text did not write anything from the text "Lulu's Daily Activities."
02	Picture 1 <i>Baru bangun</i> Picture 2 blank Picture 3 blank Picture 4 blank Picture 5 blank Picture 6 <i>Di sekolah pulang sudah rumah diri belajar</i> Picture 7 <i>Selamat malam</i>	Student 02 only wrote 3 out of 7 pictures of the event "Lulu's Daily Activities." In the first picture, students understand that Lulu just woke up. In the 6th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu has returned home and Lulu continues to study at home. In the 7th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu sleeps at night.

03	<p>Picture 1 <i>Tidur bangun</i></p> <p>Picture 2 <i>Mandi Lulu</i></p> <p>Picture 3 <i>Makan pagi Lulu</i></p> <p>Picture 4 <i>Ibu sekolah Lulu</i></p> <p>Picture 5 <i>Ayah pergi Lulu</i></p> <p>Picture 6 <i>Lulu belajar malam</i></p> <p>Picture 7 <i>Tidur Lulu malam</i></p>	<p>Student 03 wrote the whole activity "Lulu's Daily Activities."</p> <p>In the first picture, student 03 explains that Lulu wakes up from sleep.</p> <p>In the 2nd picture, student 03 explains that Lulu is bathing.</p> <p>In the 3rd picture, student 03 explains that Lulu is having breakfast.</p> <p>In the 4th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu leaves for school with her father, and says goodbye to her mother.</p> <p>In the 5th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu is learning to read in class.</p> <p>In the 6th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu is studying at night, at her house.</p> <p>In the 7th picture, student 03 explains that Lulu sleeps at night.</p>
04	<p>Picture 1 <i>Lulu bangun</i></p> <p><i>Jalan-jalan di mandi</i></p> <p>Picture 2 <i>Lulu mandi</i></p> <p><i>Sudah mandi jalan-jalan makanan</i></p> <p>Picture 3 <i>Lulu makanan</i></p> <p><i>Sudah makanan jalan-jalan di sekolah sama papa</i></p> <p>Picture 4 <i>Lulu jalan-jalan ke sekolah sama papa</i></p> <p>Picture 5 <i>Lulu belajar di sekolah</i></p> <p><i>Sudah belajar sama guru</i></p> <p><i>Jalan-jalan di rumah</i></p> <p>Picture 6 <i>Lulu belajar di rumah</i></p> <p><i>Sudah belajar jalan-jalan di tidur</i></p> <p>Picture 7 <i>Lulu tidur</i></p>	<p>Student 04 wrote the whole activity "Lulu's Daily Activities."</p> <p>In the first picture, student 04 explains that Lulu wakes up and wants to take a shower.</p> <p>In the 2nd picture, student 04 explains that Lulu is bathing and will continue the breakfast activity.</p> <p>In the 3rd picture, student 04 explains that Lulu is eating and will go to school.</p> <p>In the 4th picture, student 04 explains that Lulu goes to school with papa.</p> <p>In the 5th picture, student 04 explains that Lulu is studying at school with the teacher.</p> <p>In the 6th picture, student 04 explains that Lulu is studying at her home and getting ready for bed.</p> <p>In the 7th picture, student 04 explains that Lulu is sleeping.</p>

05	Picture 1 <i>Matahari, aku sudah jam 4.25</i> Picture 2 <i>Cuci, aku sudah jam 5.10</i> Picture 3 <i>Makanan-makanan Lulu, aku sudah jam 5.30</i> Picture 4 <i>Ibu, ayah, Lulu, bye! Ayah, aku, bye!</i> Picture 5 <i>Guru buku</i> Picture 6 <i>Rumah, malam, buku</i> Picture 7 <i>Aku mata sakit, bobo, jam 21.30</i>	Student 05 wrote the whole activity "Lulu's Daily Activities." In the first picture, student 05 explains that it is morning and shows 4.25 am. In the 2nd picture, student 05 explains that Lulu takes a bath at 5.10 am. In the 3rd picture, student 05 explains that Lulu eats breakfast at 5.30 am. In the 4th picture, student 05 explains that Lulu and dad said goodbye to mom. In the 5th picture, student 05 explains that there is a teacher who teaches using a book. In the 6th picture, student 05 explains that Lulu is at home at night and reads books. In the 7th picture, student 05 explains that Lulu has a sore eye and goes to bed at 9:30pm. ¹
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This section is the main part for the author state the result but does not interpret them. Results are the answers to your research questions, and discussion interprets your results. Discussion should compare your recent findings with previous studies to show your gaps and novelty. If you have subfields you can write them as follows:

4.1 Writing skills of junior high school deaf students of SLBB Dharma Asih

From the results of the data collection process, students 01 and 02 are female students and students 03, 04, and 05 are male students. All students who became research participants were students who were able to sign language well and expressively. At the beginning of the introduction process, they also had good self-confidence. They quickly adapted to the researcher who was a hearing person without being shy to interact.

All five students are deaf students who have been deaf since birth. They come from the same family background, which is hearing. Therefore, the environment at home is also an environment that can hear and does not experience deafness. From the interview results, these five students are students who have attended SLBB Dharma Asih since elementary school. They are still continuing at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih until now.

In their daily activities, all five students use Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)

¹ Table of writing of junior high school students of SLBB Dharma Asih that matches the students' original writing and corrects spelling errors.

to interact. They only use SIBI for alphabetical use. When communicating they do not use SIBI. This is known by the author from observations with students and interactions with teachers. They also revealed that teaching and learning activities are dominated by copying what the teacher says in class.

The difficulties faced by students when working on this sentence research instrument were expressed by students 01 and 02 whose writing results were not full. Student 01 revealed that he understood the material provided with the title "Lulu's Daily Activities". This is evidenced by the narration made by students to researchers using sign language. From the message conveyed by the sign, student 01 was able to explain the process of Lulu's activities. However, when asked to write, student 01 expressed the inability to write due to limitations in remembering the letters that must be spelled according to the activities in the picture. When the researcher tried to ask about the text given, student 02 was able to tell his understanding of Lulu's daily activities. Student 02 told the story using sign language. However, when the author asked the student to write the story in the form of Indonesian writing, student 02 revealed that there were many words that he was unable to write because he forgot the alphabet.

4.2 SLBB Dharma Asih Junior High School Educators & School Education System

SMP SLBB Dharma Asih consists of 3 classes taught by 1 class teacher each. All three teachers are responsible for the classes they manage. At Dharma Asih, each class teacher will teach all subjects according to the curriculum prepared by the government. In the 2022-2023 school year, Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School uses an independent curriculum where subjects are organized thematically. Therefore, each class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the learning theme can be delivered to students according to the lesson plan. From the results of interviews with Dharma Asih SLBB teachers, several things were found. Broadly speaking, these are divided into 2, namely related to the teacher's educational background and sign language skills.

Based on the educational background of SLBB Dharma Asih junior high school teachers, the three junior high school teachers have educational backgrounds that are not from the field of education for children with special needs. From the interviews conducted, the junior high school class teachers at Dharma Asih come from law and math education. From the results of interviews with the three teachers, there is 1 teacher who has been teaching since 2012 while the other 2 teachers are new teachers who have not been teaching for 5 years at Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School.

With a background that is not from the science of education for children with special needs, the three Dharma Asih SLBB teachers stated that they did not have sufficient insight into teaching methods to educate deaf children at Dharma Asih Junior High School according to the needs of children. They conduct the process of teaching and learning activities through direct experience interacting with students in the classroom. The approach taken by SLBB Dharma Asih Junior High School teachers in interacting with students is a personal approach outside of learning hours.

In daily life, the process of teaching and learning activities by teachers at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih is carried out by dictating. The lack of understanding of teaching

material for deaf children makes children introduced to the material through the process of copying. Students in the daily learning process are asked to copy material from books or school blackboards into their respective notebooks. For this reason, SMP SLBB Dharma Asih students are accustomed to copying writing from books or the blackboard. Meanwhile, in the process of understanding the material, Dharma Asih SLBB teachers have not stated that they have a special method to ensure that students' understanding of the material presented can be measured optimally.

On the other hand, Dharma Asih Junior High School teachers also could not sign when they were initially accepted at the SLBB. Teachers at Dharma Asih Junior High School are not from an educational background for children with special needs. Dharma Asih Junior High School teachers are hearing teachers who communicate orally in their daily activities. None of the three teachers had experience interacting with deaf people before joining this school. Therefore, in implementing the process of teaching and learning activities, teachers at Dharma Asih Junior High School learn a lot of signs from students directly when interacting.

The lack of sign proficiency builds gaps in student and teacher communication. In daily activities, students often misunderstand the information given by the teacher. Because of frequent misunderstandings, students are finally accustomed to just copying the material and the teacher has limited further explanation.

The recruitment of deaf teachers at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih is still very limited. Currently, there is 1 teacher who is a deaf teacher. The deaf teacher has a different closeness with students than the hearing teacher because of her ability to sign. This triggers the author's assumption that the deaf teacher can be better able to explain the material following the language used by children, besides he also has the same limitations as his students. However, the deaf teacher at Dharma Asih is currently not empowered to teach as a class teacher. The deaf teacher currently teaches sewing skills. Therefore, limitations in the delivery of school materials at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih still occur.

At SMP SLBB Dharma Asih, the method of learning sign language uses SIBI. The regional government also ensures the availability of SIBI dictionaries in schools for children with special needs and deaf teachers in Indonesia. In the implementation process, SLBB Dharma Asih Junior High School teachers learn a lot of signs from daily communication with students. However, when the researchers made observations, the deaf teachers' understanding of their students' conditions still needed attention. During one visit, the author still encountered Dharma Asih teachers who called deaf students by shouting. This certainly will not be heard by students because deaf students cannot hear. Therefore, from this observation, the author sees a lack of understanding from hearing teachers of the conditions and culture of the deaf.

According to one of the Dharma Asih SLBB junior high school teachers who is one of the oldest teachers, sign proficiency for teachers is important when teaching deaf students because he often encounters difficulties when trying to understand students about the teaching material being presented. The existence of this communication gap causes the relationship between teachers and students to not be well established.

In addition, teaching methods that suit the needs of students are also still an

obstacle for teachers at SLB Dharma Asih. This was conveyed by teaching staff that from the government there is no teaching method specifically prepared for deaf children other than guidelines using SIBI (Indonesian Sign Language System). Signing capacity for hearing teachers in teaching deaf students is also still minimal. Therefore, junior high school teachers at SLBB Dharma Asih do a lot of sign learning when the teaching and learning process takes place and get sign education from students directly. This brings discomfort for SLBB Dharma Asih junior high school teachers. One of the teachers revealed that the low cognitive level of deaf students is also caused by teaching methods that are still not optimal. The material presented in the textbook for deaf and hearing children is made differently. For example, in language lessons, the ability of hearing children of the same age and deaf children to understand text is much different. This is because the curriculum for deaf students is designed to lag hearing students. Therefore, this is also a factor in why deaf students' cognition is still below that of hearing students in general.

SIBI is a sign language created by the late Anton Widyatmoko, a former principal at Widya Bakti SLBB, Semarang and in collaboration with other former SLBB principals in Jakarta and Surabaya (Gumelar, Hafiar, & Subekti, 2018). SIBI has a dictionary that has been disseminated to schools with special needs since 2001. The SIBI dictionary is also available at Dharma Asih and is used by teachers. In daily life, teachers at SMP SLBB Dharma Asih also explained that they often encounter differences in the use of signs. In the process of teaching and learning activities, one of the junior high school teachers at SLBB Dharma Asih delivers material using SIBI but in daily communication outside the classroom, children also use BISINDO (Indonesian Sign Language) which is a natural sign language formed from the deaf community in Indonesia. Sometimes, the use of SIBI or BISINDO is mixed at Dharma Asih Junior High School according to the teacher.

Although there are language differences, in principle, the teaching staff at Dharma Asih Junior High School do not care about this. For them, student understanding of educational material is more important regardless of the sign language used. Therefore, this is why the teachers at Dharma Asih Junior High School are not so worried about language. The interviews revealed that the majority of Dharma Asih educators did not have sign skills before joining Dharma Asih. They only learned signs when they became teachers and until now they are still learning to understand the deaf culture of children.

In delivering educational materials, Dharma Asih SLBB teachers prioritize the development of student's cognitive abilities. From the results of the interview, they said that often the teaching material that should be completed within 1 week is backed up to 2 weeks. This is due to the difficulty of SLBB Dharma Asih Junior High School students to understand the material presented by the teacher. One example that was conveyed to the author was in math subjects. To understand students about the concepts of multiplication and division, they need quite a long time and do the repetition process more often than the time provided in the education teaching unit. Therefore, from the results of the collection of final grades, the SLBB Dharma Asih junior high school teacher said that the scores of junior high school students there were still quite low because they did not

match the targets stated in the textbook.

In addition to teaching materials that focus on students' cognitive development, Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School also provides skills classes. Based on an interview with the principal, this is the focus of the school as an alternative for Dharma Asih SLB students. This is done so that when students graduate from school, students not only have theoretical knowledge but also practice. Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School provides sewing classes. This class is one of the alternative solutions to encourage the soft skills of Dharma Asih SLBB students. In addition to some of the educational conditions and challenges that exist at Dharma Asih based on the teacher's speech, the author also made observations about Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School. From the results of the author's observations, educators at Dharma Asih SLBB Junior High School are quite open to the presence of external parties. The school also opens space for collaboration with various parties that can support students' cognitive development. One of the collaboration activities carried out by the school is the stabilization of SLBB Dharma Asih teachers and students. The school is open to working with the University of Indonesia to increase the capacity of teachers and students. In 2018, Dharma Asih collaborated with the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, University of Indonesia to conduct Indonesian language teaching for deaf children. In the process, children are trained to write short stories of daily activities and teachers are given an understanding of the importance of having sign skills in communicating with deaf students.

SLBB Dharma Asih is also very cooperative in supporting research. This school is often used as a source of learning for students majoring in special needs education as their research space. This was explained by the principal when the author discussed it during a visit to the school. Therefore, although there are still systems and conditions that become obstacles for teachers, Dharma Asih can be said to be open to continuing to develop in educating its students.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data findings in the field, it can be seen that the writing ability of deaf students of SMP SLBB Dharma Asih is still said to be not proficient. This can be seen from the many discrepancies in Indonesian sentences from the results of student writing. In addition, based on the results of observations and interviews with the school and students, it can be identified that several obstacles make it difficult for deaf students to write in Indonesian. The author divides these barriers into two major groups, namely internal barriers and external barriers.

Internal barriers are barriers that arise from deaf students. Among these internal barriers is the low literacy skills of students. Deaf students of SMP SLBB Dharma Asih do not have sufficient knowledge in writing Indonesian sentences. Therefore, from the results of research in the field, student writing has not used rules that follow Indonesian. This is important to be a concern for stakeholders because the initial requirement for students to write well is to have good knowledge of writing skills. In addition, another internal obstacle is the tendency of students to mix the rules of written Indonesian with sign language to communicate daily. In daily conversations, the Indonesian sign language

(Bisindo) used when translated does have differences from Indonesian. Bisindo has an irregular pattern when viewed from an Indonesian perspective. Therefore, when students write down their thoughts, they tend to translate visually based on the sign language used daily.

Second, the capacity of the teaching staff can also be an obstacle for students in having writing skills. The background of teachers who are not from special needs schools or even not deaf teachers, makes students and teachers have a communication gap. This gap makes the teaching and learning process not optimal because the teacher is not equipped with sign language skills, which is the language used to communicate with deaf people. Therefore, increasing the capacity of teachers according to the needs of students should be the focus of stakeholders to improve the quality of students.

Third, the family background of students, the majority of whom come from non-deaf families, also inhibits students from having writing skills. Students need support not only from school but also from home. When family members do not have sign skills or are minimal in communicating with deaf students using signs, students become more difficult to understand the surrounding conditions which affect student competence. Therefore, it is important to equip every family, especially those with deaf family members, to understand how to communicate with deaf people. This can optimize the ability of deaf students to communicate and be skilled at writing.

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