CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL REVIEW

A. Writing

1. Definition of Writing

The definitions of writing are variously stated by some experts. According to Susantoleo (2010:102) writing is a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words should be done at leisure. According to Bram (1995: 7). According to Laner (1981 :1), writing is way of making meaning from experience for us and for other.

Rivers (1981: 294) stated that writing is conveying information or expression of original ideas in a consecutive way in the new language. Brown, (2001: 336) also claimed that writing is a thinking process. Furthermore, he states that writing can be planned and given with an unlimited number of revisions before its release. In addition, Elbow (1973) in Brown (2001: 336) also says that writing is a two-step process.

Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that writing competence is ability to write and master the components of writing such as grammar, style, mechanic, and judgment.

2. Process of Writing

Harmer (2005:4) suggests the process of writing into four main elements. They are planning, drafting, editing (reflecting and revising), and final version.
a. Planning Before starting to write or type, they try and decide what it is they going to say. When planning, the writer saved to think about three main issues. The first place they have to consider the purpose of their writing since this will influences not only the type of text they wish to produce, but also the language the use, and the information they choose to include. Secondly, experienced writers think of the audience they are writing for, since this will influence not only the shape of the writing, but also the choice of language. Thirdly, writer save to consider the content structure of the 10 piece, how best to sequences the facts, ideas, or arguments which they have decided to include.

b. Drafting Refer to the first version of a piece writing as a draft. This first go at a text is attending one on the assumption that is will be a mended later. As the writing process procedure into editing, a number of drafts may be produced on the way to the final version.

c. Editing(reflecting and revising) After writers have produced a draft, usually read through what they have written to see where it works and where it doesn't Reflecting and revising are often helped by other readers (or editors) who comment and make suggestions. Another reader's reaction to a piece of writing will help the author make appropriate revisions.

d. Final versions once writers have edited their draft make the changes the reader being necessary, they produced their final version. This may look considerably different from both the original plan and the first draft,
because things have changed in the editing process. But the writer is now ready to send the written text to its intended audience.

3. Genre of writing

According to Nichol (1978:13) writing is divided into four types. They are descriptive, exposition, argumentation and narrative.

a. Descriptive

Descriptive writing paints a picture. In its pure form, nothing much happens "Description" tells us what something looks like, feels like, tastes like, sounds like or smells like -without action or events. It doesn't explain a relationship or a process beyond oneself; it focuses on one's immediate subjective perceptions. Thus, descriptive writing connects the outer world with our inner feelings. It is usually concerned with creating a verbal picture of what we experience and feel at one moment, and it will use many rich and vivid adjectives and adverbs. So, as a writer, you should make the reader long to smell the rich essence of the trees, the haunting call of the wolves, or the rank odour of the sewer... if that's what you're writing about. Descriptive paragraphs and essays are usually written in the first person point of view, and are much more emotional and personal than expository writing. It should be said that you will rarely write a purely descriptive passage. Normally speaking, descriptive writing is mixed in with other styles as a supplement.
b. Exposition

Expository writing "exposes" or explains things about a subject. It is also sometimes called "information writing" because it gives information about a person, place, thing, relationship or idea. To accomplish that, it is best developed by the use of clear reasons, facts and statistical information, cause and effect relationships, or examples. Since expository paragraphs are factual, they are written without emotion and usually written in the third person. Nevertheless, you can use "I" in your expository writing if the focus is on external, neutral descriptions and explanations, rather than personal feelings (personal feelings move you into "descriptive writing"). Indeed, expository paragraphs and essays are sometimes confused with descriptive writing, because both can spend a lot of time describing things. But again, the big difference is that expository description tends to focus on external objects, situations and processes, in order to explain something in a neutral, matter-of-fact manner.

Descriptive paragraphs, on the other hand, tend to focus on our emotional responses as we perceive the world at one point in time.

c. Argumentation

Argumentation or often called persuasive writing because it aims at persuading and convincing the reader of writers’ point of view in a particular issue. Therefore, persuasive writing can found in aditorials,
letter to editor, reviews business or research proposal, opinion essay, magazine and books that argue a point of view.

d. Narrative

Narrative is to amuse, entertain, and to deal with an actual or vicarious experience in different ways. Narrative deals with problematic events that lead to a crisis or turning points of some problems, which in turn finds a resolution.

The verb in narrative is usually in form of past tense, except in the direct speech. There are two kinds of verbs: relational and action verbs ‘to be’ and ‘have’ are relational verbs. We usually use them to describe the characteristics of characters or things.

So it can be concluded that a narrative text is a text which contains a story either written, and there is a series of connected events, and the social function is to entertain or amuse the reader.

B. Narrative Text

1. Definition of Narrative Text

According to Pardiyono (2007: 67) narrative text is a kind of text has function to amuse, entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious experience indifferent ways. Narrative text is a kind of text that tells about a story that is based on the some events or experience. Narratives contain of problematic events which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn find a resolution. According to Grace and Sudarwati (2007) narrative text has a social function to amused, entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious
experience in different ways. In the narrative text, the readers are invited into the journey in a story to entertain them. There are many kinds of story that can be used in narrative text, such as people’s experience, some crisis events and the legend or myth in the society.

2. Characteristic of Narrative Text

Daniel (1993) stated that narrative text is a form of development story. It has historical characteristic based on the situation. It makes many kinds story of narrative text. For example, in the past, a narrative story told about a princess with the horse, but nowadays narrative text can develop be a princess with her car. The story has always changed time by time. It is because the story has effect of human behavior and modernization. A narrative text can be a form of creative thinking for students. Students can develop their ideas about many new stories. In a narrative text, the writer should take attention in the event and the problem.

According to Suzanne and William (1985) in a narration, a writer should present events in a true order. It will make a story clearer to the readers. Daniel (1993) also said that the important things in the narrative are chronological of events and problem. The problem is a characteristic of narrative text. It makes the narrative text is different in other text. For example, in descriptive text, the writers just describe people or things, but in narrative text, the writer should arise a problem that the main character should face it and solve it.
The characteristics of narrative text are concern in action, set in the time sequences; try to answer the question, what happened? And it has a conflict. In short, a narrative text should have a problem and process of events to solve the problem. In the process of solving the problem, the character will get some events in their life. The events will include all steps of the character problem solving. Furthermore, the conflict in the problem should not too difficult, but it is enough to make a simple idea based on the real life. For example, the writer can write that the poor character wants to buy a new dress for her mother. It is a simple problem, but it can arise some event and process of the character to buy a new dress for her mother. Every text has a generic structure that will help the reader to write it.

According to Djamnika and Wulandari (2013) there are three generic structures lexicogrammatical of narrative text. They are orientation, complication and resolution. The first is orientation. This is part of the opening story. As opening story, it is very important to make an interesting story to make the reader interest to read. It should also explain the background of the story, such as sets the mood by defining the setting, time, the main character, the relationship between the characters and other information to give the reader a starting point. The second is complication. This is the main body of the story. This part includes an event that leads the characters into a complication when the normal events are upset by some forms of conflict. There may be more than one complication and this serves to frustrate the characters in their attempts to achieve what they wish. This
builds also tension and anticipation for the reader. The last is resolution. The crisis resolved, for better or even worse. This part contains the ending of the character’s problem and conflict. There are three possible resolutions. First, the story will be ended with the happy ending. Second, the story will be ended by sad ending. The last, the writer allows the reader to guess the end of the story. Narrative text also has a specific of language features.

Grace and Sudarwati (2007) said the significant features of narrative text are focused on specific and usually individualized participants, use of material processes, use relational and mental processes, the use of temporal conjunction and temporal circumstances and use of past tense. Narrative text uses past tense because it told about some events in the past. There are three kinds of past tense. The first is the simple past tense. This tense is used for events which were completed in the past. For example, Malin went to the sea. The second is past perfect tense. This tense is used for an event that had happened, but still has relation with the past. For example, they had gone when I arrived. The last is past continuous tense. It tells about events which happened at the same time in the past. For example, Anne was cooking when he arrived at the door, but at the same time I was watching TV. A narrative is one of the texts that important for students” behavior.

Djatmika and Wulandari (2013) stated narrative text is proper to be taught to students, because the narrative text has moral value of the characters of the story. It makes student not only learn how to write, but also they will
learn about moral value that can be a lesson in their life. There are three kinds of narrative text.

According to Djatmika and Wulandari (2013) narrative text is divided into three types. They are a true story, a fable and a folk tale. First, a true story is a personal experience of a character in the story. It is made based on the fact that the character found in his/her life. This story is an interesting experience of the character in a specific time in her/his life.

3. The Structure of Narrative

Types of Narrative Writing Generally, narrative text can be categorized into fictional or imaginary narrative and nonfictional narrative. Fictional Narrative presents an imaginary story that happens in an imaginary world. Such as fairy tales, folktales, horror stories, fables, legends, myths, and science fictions. Meanwhile, a nonfictional narrative presents a story of person’s real-life. Examples of narrative nonfiction include news and magazine articles, essays, biographies, and textbooks that tell about history.

The main parts of narrative text are orientation(s), complication, and resolution.

a) Orientation

It tells about the setting in time, place and characters. It is about opening paragraph where the characters of the story are introducing.

b) Complication

It tells about problem(s) to be solved and usually involves the main characters.
c) Resolution

It describes the solution to complication. It may be resolved for better or worse happily or unhappily. Sometimes there are number of complications that have to be resolved.

4. Criteria of Good Writing

Adelstein and Pival in Tarigan (1994: 6) explain some characteristics of good writing, they are:

a. A good writing result shows the abilities of the writer in arranging the materials to be a good structure.

b. A good writing result shows the abilities of the writer to write clearly, to use the sentence structure well. It makes the reader understands in explicit and implicit meaning easily.

c. A good writing result shows the ability to write surely. It can take the reader interest to the main idea of writing. It can describe the main idea clearly and logically.

d. A good writing shows the ability of writer to criticize his draft of writing and then revise it to get the better one.

e. A good writing result shows the proud of the writer to his writing, the willingness to use a good punctuation. A good writer knows well that’s those things are important since they may give a bad effect to the result.

5. Assessment of Writing

Brown (2007) describes the three main ways in ratings writes they are:

a. Holistic (holistic scoring),
b. Analytic scoring methods

c. Triat based scoring method but he filed essentially there are two main method in the assessment a writing usually used by brown are analytic and holistic.

Glass (2005) describes the five components that must be assessed in an article. Fifth components are 1. Idea or contents, 2. Organization, 3. Word Choice, 4. Sentence, and 5. Conventions. In addition, any weight has a gradient and quality assessment or categories such as excellent to very good, good to average, fair to poor.

In assessing the narrative writing ability, the writer uses subjective test. According to Nurgiyantoro (2001:72) subjective test is a form of question which forces students to answer question using explanation in their own words. Subjective test is also often called essay test.

According to Brown (2004: 241-246), there are three scoring methods for responsive and extensive writing. They are, holistic scoring, primary trait scoring, and analytic scoring. In holistic scoring, each point on a holistic scale is given a systematic set of descriptors, and the reader-evaluator matches an overall impression with the descriptors to arrive at a score. It means that the teacher makes a table of scores with the description. In primary trait scoring, the type of scoring emphasizes the task at hand and assigns a score based on the effectiveness of the text’s achieving that one goal. For example, if the purpose of an essay is to persuade the reader to do something, the score for the writing would be on the accomplishment of that function. If the purpose is
to exploit imagination by expressing personal feelings, so the response would be evaluated on that feature alone. In this scoring method, there are four point scale ranging from zero (no response or fragmented response) to 4 (the purpose is accomplished). In analytic scoring, there are six major elements of writing that are scored, and it enables students to home in on weaknesses and to capitalize on strengths. It captures its closer association with classroom language instruction than with formal testing. However, Brown and Bailey in Brown (2004: 243-246) offer five major categories and five different levels in each categorize ranging from “unacceptable” to “excellent”.

In summary, the categories and levels are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Maximum score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this research, the researcher will use analytic scoring to assess students’ writing skills especially in writing narrative texts. It is because this type of assessment is the easiest and the most practical.

In fact, academic context requires students to be able to compose ideas into effective writing in order to communicate and transfer ideas clearly from one’s mind to others with a little interfering noise as possible. The students then must learn that effective writing is not only characterized by
high sense of correctness on grammatical structure and vocabulary. It requires a lot of things to be applied; a high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information; a high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and a careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and sentence structure to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers (Maley, 1998). The importance of writing is also stated by Chakravety and Gautum (2000:4):

“Writing, an important part of language learning is an essentially reflective activity that requires enough time to think about the specific topic and analyze as well as to classify the background knowledge”.

The statement implies that in writing process, students are required to have good background knowledge of the topic and enough time to write. Related to the topic, writing enables students to describe their ideas in sequences and in communicative way. As Raimes (1983:3) states that writing also involves thinking. This means, the relationship between thinking and writing make writing as a valuable part of any language course. In line with the concept of writing, Belo’s (1997:135) points that writing is a continuing process of discovering how to find the most effective language for communicating one’s thought and feelings. Writing also enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences, and larger chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary which they learn in the class.
Similarly, Jacobs (1981:90) specifically mentions that in order to be effective: a piece of composition should meet the following qualities:

1. Content

Contents refer to the substance of writing, the experience of the main idea, i.e., groups of related statements that a writer presents as unit in developing a subject. Content paragraph do the work of conveying ideas rather that fulfilling special function of transition, restatement, and emphasis.

2. Organization

Organization refers to the logical organization of content. It is scarcely more than attempt to piece together all collection of fact and jumble ideas. Even in early drafts it may still be searching for order, trying to make out patterns in its materials and working to bring particulars of its subject in line with what is still only a half-formed notion of purpose.

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the selection of words those are suitable with the content. It begins with the assumption that the writer wants to express the ideas as clearly and directly as he/she can. As a general rule, clarity should be his/her prime objective. Choosing words that express his/her meaning is precisely rather than skews it or blinds it.
4. Mechanic

Mechanic refers to the use of graphic conventional of the language, i.e., the steps of arranging letters, words, paragraphs by using knowledge of structure and some others related to one another. In short, it is clearly seen that the quality of effectiveness writing is not only defined by its correct use of grammar and structure but there are other higher orders to be concerned such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanic.

Second, According to Byrne in Roza (2011), there are five components that should be considered in writing:

a. Organizing idea

Ideas are the most important factor in writing, because nobody can write meaningfully, if he/she has not anything in mind yet.

b. Grammar

The grammar of language is a description of way that the language behaves. Without having knowledge of grammar the writer cannot make his/her language communicative to a great variety of reader from different situation.

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is important in writing because by having many vocabularies, a writer can make readers explore more deeply what he/she is telling about.
d. Mechanics

1) Punctuation

Punctuation plays as an important role in helping reader to establish intonation. In other word, it is a command for the reader to raise his/her voice or drop his/her speech when he/she is going to stop.

It can also help readers to understand the state of mind of the writer.

2) Capitalization

Example:

a) Capitalize the first word of sentence. *She plays basketball.*

b) Capitalize the pronoun “I”. *If you go I will go too.*

c) Capitalize the titles of composition. In the title, the first and the more important words are capitalized except short preposition and short coordinating conjunction. *Name of specific organization (business, clubs, and schools)*

d) Capitalize all of proper noun.

   (1.) Name of detail: *God, Allah, Vishnu, etc.*

   (2.) Name of people and their title: *Dr. Bob, Hengki, etc.*

   (3.) Name of specific places: *River Amazon, Mount Bromo, etc.*

   (4.) Name of day, month, and special day: *Sunday, October, Idul Fitri, etc.*
(5.) Name of specific group of people (nationality, races, ethnic groups), language, and religion: Moslem, Indonesian, etc.

(6.) Name of geographic areas: the South East, the North, etc.

(7.) Name of specific structure such as buildings and bridges:

White House, the Great Wall, Golden Gate Bridge, etc.

3) Spelling

Spelling in the English language is very difficult because the English spelling system is based primarily on meaning rather than on sound. To make matters worse, the spelling rules used in English are complicated.

4) Content

Content is how the writer develop the idea related with the topic.

Another expert, Heaton (1997: 138) states that writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also the conceptual and judgment element. The following analysis attempt to group the many and varied skill necessary for writing good process into four main ideas:

1. Grammatical Skill

Grammatical Skill is the ability to write correct sentences.
2. Stylistic skill

Stylistic skill is the ability to manipulate sentences and use language effectively.

3. Mechanical skill

It is the ability to correct those conventions peculiar to the written language e.g. punctuation spelling.

4. Judgment skill

It is the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information.

6. Problem in Writing

One of the main problems among students is the fact that many of them cannot develop their writing skills, mostly the ones who are making compositions in a foreign language. This has become very difficult not only for students but also for professors, because all of them are looking for good results in every single step of the learning process.

Through history there have been many cases of this situation and it is important to say that this problem happens not only in our country but also in many others around the world. In the United States in 1874, 97% of the nation’s high school graduates entered college. However, although they were native speakers of English, their writing skill was poor. For example, the Harvard faculty was distressed by the low level in English on the freshmen students” part, including upper-class students. For this reason, they sought to
remedy writing deficiencies by instituting freshman English (a remedial course). The original purpose given for the almost universal instituting of freshman English in college across the country, following the Harvard model was to “make up” for what students “failed to learn” in High school, in essence In addition, first remedial writing course at the University of California at Berkely, subject A (a pre-freshman English course) began in 1898. At that time the University required high schools to take subject A, a non-credit composition course. There have been many disputes about the course and its effectiveness; however, the decline in essay writing scores of college students provided more objective evidence that the writing skill was getting worse. There was a significant increase in errors involving awkwardness of expression, run-on sentences and incoherent paragraphs.

There were more poor writers and their scores were lower than in other years. Moreover, the theoretician Kitzhaber, A. R. (1963) surveyed composition courses in four year colleges and concluded that their quality and content were exceedingly diverse. He punished composition instructors and their approaches with phrases that ring true today: “Teaching young people to write well has always proved so frustratingly difficult and the methods used so time-consuming and laborious for teachers and students alike”. In other words, no one approach has solved the problems nor does it seem likely that any strategy or Writing skill difficulties of the English Composition I students’ philosophy will provide remedy. “Each method helps some students and fails with others. Writing needs to persist; teachers must teach
composition if students want to develop effective writing skills“, Kitzhaber added. Although some of the strategies teachers use encourage their students to be creative and organized, that is not enough. Students must take into account many aspects at the time of writing such as: vocabulary, mechanics, grammar, organization and content and not only one of these items because to create adequate compositions students must take into account every single detail.

The problem is that they do not care about the kind of essays they are creating and they do not follow the correct steps that will provide all the sources for their compositions. They just care about the grade they will receive at the end of a homework assignment. Besides, remedial writing courses for students with problems regarding this skill are not accepted by some theorists. For Example, in 1974 the English composition teacher Karliner A. said that placing students in special remedial writing courses is not a solution. He added that “writing competency is a skill which needs continual reinforcement; it is impossible to expect that one student will become a good writer if he has never written before and if it will not be required to write again in their college career.” If professors require little or no writing experience when they do require a paper and provide no constructive feedback, when writing is found to be inadequate, then it is foolish to expect that most undergraduates will develop their writing skills. Professors must expect a development of the writing skills according to what they have taught to students in the writing area.
Likewise, the National Assessment of Educational Progress Report by the writer Martha Maxwell (1975) stated that “poor writers seem to be getting poorer in those skills that are specific to written communication, but seldom called for in conversation: that are acquired largely through broad reading and considerable rewriting; that are most seldom taught, and when taught who have little use for written communication.” The continuing drop in average scores on college entrance examinations provides additional evidence of the pervasiveness of the problems. The composition researcher R. Lloyd-Jones (1976) argues that the media have decided poor writing is news and that there is no crisis. He continues by saying, “A crisis is a good turning point; perhaps our need for good writing has increased, so our inadequacies are more poignant. Still our disease about writing is probably chronic rather than acute.”

Jones has criticized tests and other indicators of a decline in writing skills on the ground that they emphasize grammar and mechanics, which are superficial aspects of writing, and he points out that professors have secretaries and editors to make „silent changes” in their works. Besides, English instructors struggling to teach open admission to students and claim that their student papers need more than editing.

In the same year, the press reported that only 34% of the entering freshmen responding to the American Council of Education questionnaire taken of an article of the magazine “Science News” thought their high schools had prepared them very well for college English courses, although
only 13% had planned to ask their colleges for special assistance in writing. The main problem is that students who received high grades in high school may be unaware of their poor writing. Consequently, students entering college with good grades in English composition may have not been required to write in high school and may have minimal skills. The problems that colleges face today in developing and maintaining effective programs for poorly prepared students must be viewed in the context of the changes that are occurring in higher education in this country, the individual institution’s standards and goals, the diverse expectations and characteristics of the students themselves, and the attitudes, teaching strategies, and expectations of the faculty. Fiscal realities and the shrinking pool of highly qualified recent high school graduates who choose to attend college are other significant influences on the kind of programs colleges offer and their effectiveness. Although the definition of underprepared varies from one institution to another, one fact remains: colleges, whatever their standards will continue to accept large numbers of poorly prepared students.

Colleges today are in transition, faced with rising costs and the specter, if not reality, of declining enrollments. As a consequence, students who have not been considered college material in the past are now being courted by colleges. Former college dropouts are also being sought to return and fill college classrooms. Increasing federal and state financial aid programs permit these new kinds of students to pay for higher education. At the same time, the number of well-prepared students (that is those in the
upper quarter of their high school graduating classes) who enroll in four-year colleges continues to decline, paralleling the decline in scores on college admission tests.

The high-ability student has more options if he decides to attend college. These factors combine to change the basic quality of freshman courses by removing high-ability students from those courses and increasing the number of students with lower ability and weaker skills. While faculty members complain about the lower skills of entering students and the disintegration of academic standards (blaming the latter on the students), grade inflation continues, confusing able students and robbing lower-ability students of their incentive to learn. Good writing requires practice and adequate feedback, which many high school teachers have de-emphasized. In fact, students may substitute such electives as journalism, speech and drama for the traditional high school composition and literature courses. When given an option, students who must need writing practice choose subjects that do not require writing. In addition, students are rarely able to assess the quality of their own writing; they are usually not taught how to evaluate their work and are unaware of the criteria teachers use in grading it. Therefore, it is not possible to understand students’ writing problems without considering the expectation of college professors.

Every professor, whether in a university or a community college, expects students to be literate because of the educational process it is supposed that every student has already followed at that level. Some writer
professors take an issue with the trend away from teaching writing. The composition teacher Miles, J. (1975) expresses the position that teaching writing is responsibility of each faculty member. He says, “We know that good writing, like good thinking, cannot be taught ‘once and for all’ it is not a simple skill like swimming; indeed even a swimmer can be coached to get better and better”. Thinking is one of the most complex abilities, and writing is an evidence of it. So students need help with writing at many stages from third grade to eighth, to tenth to high school, to college and beyond and from subject to subject. Whenever a new stage of thought and a new subject matter comes along, the accumulated abilities of the students need conscious thoroughgoing adapting to the new material and maturity.

On the other hand, there are many problems that students present at the moment of writing. The individual with writing difficulties may have one or more of the following problems:

a. Poor handwriting/ writing illegibly
   1) Does not follow lines on a paper
   2) Writes too small or too large
   3) Writes too light or too hard
   4) Pencil grip incorrect
   5) Does not visually track writing
   6) Writes letters or numbers backwards or upside down
   7) Mixes capital and lower case letters inappropriately
b. Poor spelling skills
   1) Spells phonetically and cannot remember patterns
   2) Spells words differently in the same document
   3) Reverses letters in spelling

c. Difficulty with copying or completing work on a printed page
   1) Difficulty copying from board
   2) Difficulty copying from a book or other printed material
   3) Difficulty filling out forms
   4) Difficulty completing fill-in blank worksheets

d. Difficulty taking notes from oral presentations
   1) Unable to write homework assignments correctly
   2) Writing is too slow to get lecture points on a paper
   3) Takes notes but is unable to distinguish important information from extraneous information
   4) Reverses or ignores numbers, parts of sentences and/or whole words taking notes

e. May have problems with grammar, syntax and organization
   1) Demonstrates inconsistent memory for sentence mechanics (e.g. lack of punctuation and capitalization)
   2) Persistent problems with sentence structure (sentences may be incomplete or syntax may be incorrect or disassociated)
   3) Does not have all parts of a well organized paragraph (Topic sentence and supporting sentences)
f. Demonstrates writing skills inconsistent with verbal abilities

1) Writes short and/or simple essays even though he can verbalize more complex thought

2) Can verbalize answers to tests but written answers are wrong, left blank or incomplete

3) Oral vocabulary more complex that written vocabulary

Some psychologists have investigated about all these problems and they have identified three types of students that can suffer these difficulties among them it can be mentioned: the basic writing, the cognitive egocentrism and the focused argumentative student.

First of all, the college student with minimal writing skills and little previous exposure to books and readings has been called “the basic writing student”. For this kind of student academic writing is a trash, not a way of saying something to someone. They have severe grammatical or other basic writing problems and have difficulty with writing academic assignments. Unfortunately, these errors tend to persist and they are seldom addressed in courses where writing is assigned.

Many college students who do not have severe grammatical or other basic writing problems do have difficulty with academic writing assignments. The major problems areas in students’ attempts at academic writing are shown below, which have been identified by the psychologist Williams J. Lamberg:
a) They lack self-management skills. Symptoms include a history of incomplete courses, turning in papers late, and not knowing specifics details of the assignments such as due date or amount required.

b) They lack a strategy for composing and have no set of procedures for working through a writing assignment from beginning to end.

c) They fail to understand and follow directions. They may write good papers but do not follow the instructor’s assignment.

d) They write poorly organized papers and sometimes fail to select a topic.

e) They have many errors and patterns of errors; in other words, they lack a system of proofreading.

f) Their papers lack introductions.

g) They have problems in understanding and accepting the teacher’s criticism.

Moreover, the cognitive egocentrism is a situation that affects many students. This is when they are asked to compose paragraphs, analyze objective data and instead they write about personal opinions provided by the data. In 1979, the writer Andrea Lunsford used Piaget’s concept of egocentrism to explain the reasons why these writers have problems, but she realized that apparently they are unaware that they have veered from the assigned topic. That means that they are not conscious of what they are doing, this just happens. In addition, the focused argumentation was studied by the professor Dean Drenk, who said that many students as writers have difficulty
discovering issues within a topic or formulating thesis statements that take focused positions on issues. He realized that either they write a diffuse thesis statement, or they write a paper that has no thesis statement at all.

Therefore, it comes an inadequate thesis statement, which is missing sense of the issue at hand. Many of the problems that have been presented here are not only for native English speakers but also for the ones that are learning English as a second or foreign language. A second-language or dialectic speaker who has thoroughly mastered English grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may still have problems in organizing his ideas and writing essays.

It is more difficult for a foreign or second language learner to put into practice all the strategies and techniques that have been taught to them in their composition courses since they have to think in English, not in their native language. Besides, if they have not developed this ability in their own language, probably it will be impossible to become a good writer in a field that is completely strange to them. If professors believe that just by taking a writing course their students will be better and will be able to create excellent compositions, they are wrong. This is a subject that needs to improve the techniques every day and mostly in teaching composition to non-English speakers. The instructor must be very careful in the strategies he/she will apply with his/her students, and must pay attention to every single detail during the class.