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## Analysis the Use of Punctuation Marks on The Writing Ability of Nursing Students.

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### *Abstract*

*language skills are the main capital in writing skills. The writing ability of university students is the basic for language skills to the next level or level. The ability to use correct spelling is one of the important things in writing skills. The research design used a qualitative descriptive approach, because this study aims to describe the use of punctuation in writing explanatory texts for 2nd semester 4th grade students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto. This study is intended to collect data, manage data, analyze data and present data objectively regarding the object of research, namely the use of punctuation in writing explanatory texts for level 2 semester 4 of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto. Based on the result The total number of punctuation errors as many as 207 out of 45 students writing explanatory texts shows that the intensity of punctuation errors is still high enough so that improvements and improvements are needed in the learning process.*

**Keywords:** *Writing comprehension, higher education student, English language learning*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language teaching as a systematic process always leads to planning and evaluation activities. The ability of English language teachers to apply approaches, methods, and techniques in language teaching is the key to success in achieving the goals of teaching English language in schools (Xu & Margeviča-Grinberga, 2021).

Learning English is directed at improving the ability of students to communicate using English properly and correctly, both orally and in writing, as well as fostering an appreciation of the results of English literature. The teaching of English includes four language skills which include: listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills (Astawa, Artini, & Nitiasih, 2017).

As educators, a teacher is required to be able to overcome the obstacles faced by students in the learning process so that the learning objectives set can be achieved. Of the four language skills, one of which received special attention from the author, namely writing skills. The writing field studied is focused on essays (Ahmmed, Sinha, Khan, & Islam, 2020).

Writing is a way of conveying ideas to others in written form. By writing, a writer can convey his thoughts, ideas, concepts or feelings to others, either through scientific works, articles, reviews, appreciation and criticism of art, drama scripts, poetry, short stories, or novels. Writing is one of the language skills (Teng, 2021).

The accuracy of designing the learning process by paying attention to the selection of methods and media is certainly very decisive. The central situation faced by teachers in an effort to improve writing skills is evident in the process of learning English subjects in the competence of writing expository paragraphs. As a type of text with a response genre, exposition text contains an explanation of ideas or suggestions for something personal, this text is often referred to as a one-sided argumentative text (Shayakhmetova, Mukharlyamova, Zhussupova, & Beisembayeva, 2020).

The accuracy of expressing ideas must be supported by the accuracy of the language used, vocabulary and grammar and the use of spelling (Healy & Drayton, 2021). One of the most common writing errors made by students is the use of punctuation marks in sentences. Not infrequently we encounter errors in using a period (.), comma (,), semicolon (;), colon (:), hyphen (-), dash (-), question mark (?), exclamation mark (!), ellipsis (...), quotation marks (" "), single quotation mark ( ' '), brackets (( )), square brackets ([ ]), slash (/), abbreviation or apostrophe ('). Therefore, an analysis of the use of punctuation marks needs to be done as an effort towards improvement (Päiş & Tufiş, 2022).

In previous study entitled An analysis of students' errors in writing descriptive text by Anggara 2020 (Anggara & Haryudin, 2020). In this study, the researcher analyzed errors in the use of capital letters, the use of punctuation marks, commas, and writing prepositions in the exposition essay of . A similar study was also conducted by Ratnaningsih 2019 entitled "Error Analysis in the Descriptive Text Writing of Vocational High School Students " (Ratnaningsih & Azizah, 2019). This study analyzes the structure of the text in the exposition essay, the form of language errors, and the factors that cause language errors in the exposition text of students.

Another relevant research by Jamaliyah 2020 (Jamaliah, Ramlan, Fauziah, & Suryani, 2020) with the title " The Errors Analysis of Students' Grammatical Writing on Narrative Text ". The research focuses its analysis on language errors found in students' essays. The research above focuses on the problem of analyzing language errors in general, while the researchers in this study focused on the problem of analyzing punctuation in students' essays, the use of these punctuation marks is often found in writing exposition texts so that it is adequate to be used as analysis material. The type of essay chosen is exposition essay, because it contains scientific facts with a short, dense, and accurate writing pattern. The selection of the type of writing explanatory text is expected to hone students' understanding related to the pattern of writing text and the information contained therein.

Students are directed to understand the structure and rules of writing a coherent exposition text based on the rules of the text both orally and in writing. The use of spelling and writing rules refers concerning English Spelling Guidelines.

Language skills are the main capital for students, especially for students of level 2 semester 4 of the S1 Nursing study program. The level of education affects the level of understanding of students in writing skills (Nur Fitria, 2020). These reasons encourage researchers to measure students' ability in writing skills, especially in using punctuation marks. Given the placement of punctuation is very important because it relates to the meaning of the content of writing. This is based on various assumptions, first, language skills are the main capital in writing skills. Second, the writing ability of university students is the foundation for language skills to the next level or level. Third, the ability to use correct spelling is one of the important things in writing skills.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used descriptive approach. This study aimed to describe the use of punctuation in writing explanatory texts for 2nd semester 4th grade students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto. This study is intended to collect data, manage data, analyze data and present data objectively regarding the object of research, namely the use of punctuation in writing explanatory texts for level 2 semester 4 of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

The focus of the research is focusing on the essence of the research to be carried out. In this case, the researcher focused the research on the use of punctuation in writing students' explanatory texts. The punctuation marks found in writing explanatory text are data that will be analyzed based on the Spelling Language guidelines. The operational definition of the term is essentially a definition in a measurable form, so that it is more straightforward and does not cause bias or confusion. To clarify this research, it is necessary to provide an understanding of the concept or understanding of the terms used or stated. The operational definition of this research term is the use of punctuation in writing explanatory texts for Level 2 semester 4 students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto. The use of punctuation in student essays is the use of punctuation marks that are not in accordance with standardized or established rules (EBI) (Coulson, 2020).

The data in this study is the use of punctuation marks, namely the overall punctuation that appears in writing students' explanatory texts. The source of the data in this study was writing explanatory texts for grade A 2nd semester 4th grade students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat, PPNI Mojokerto. The number of students as many as 45 people, consisting of 10 boys

and 35 girls. Instruments are tools or facilities used by authors to collect data so that research work is easier to succeed (Zohrabi, 2013). The instrument used in this study was a test instrument used to obtain data on the use of punctuation marks in writing students' explanatory texts.

To get the data in this study, the researcher conducted a test by asking students to write an explanatory text which would then be analyzed using punctuation marks. The process of collecting data by reading the entire exposition essay that will be the object of research, the essay is then validated by the examiner for further analysis, analyzing the punctuation used in the exposition essay, determining errors in the use of punctuation in the student's exposition essay and providing corrections.

### 3. RESULT

Based on the formulation of the problem in this study, the results of the research that will be discussed are the forms of using punctuation in writing explanatory essays for students for 2nd semester 4th grade students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto. The essays are including the use of punctuation in the exposition essays of students, forms of punctuation errors in writing explanatory texts for. So, in this chapter, the results of the research are described on the use of punctuation that appears by students in writing explanatory texts and the forms of punctuation errors in writing students' explanatory texts.

#### **Use of Punctuation in Students' Explanatory Text Writing**

Based on data in the form of observations of all students who were given a writing test to write explanatory texts totaling 45 people, only eleven types of punctuation were found out of the fifteen punctuation marks to be studied, namely the use of periods, commas, colons, and periods. commas, dashes, dashes, question marks, exclamation points, quotation marks, slashes, and brackets in the sample students. Meanwhile, ellipsis, single quotes, square brackets, and abbreviations or apostrophes were not found, so that only the eleven types of punctuation errors will be analyzed and described.

#### **Errors in Using Punctuation in Student Exposition Essays**

Based on the results of data analysis in Appendix 2, there are two types of punctuation errors found from 11 (eleven) punctuation marks found in students' explanatory text writing. That is, students use punctuation marks that should not or do not use punctuation marks that should be applied in sentences in their exposition essays. If students use punctuation marks that are not appropriate, it will be marked in red, such as [.] , but if students do not use punctuation marks that should be

applied in sentences in their exposition essays, they will be marked with [□]. Errors in using period punctuation in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 1: The problematic students were expelled from their schools and returned to their respective parents [□]. In data 1 which is a statement sentence, there is no use of a full stop that should be used to end the sentence. Based on the rules for using a period (point 1), it is stated that a full stop is used at the end of a statement sentence. So the researcher marks it as a form of error. The data should be written in the manner "The problematic students are expelled from their schools and returned to their respective parents."

Data 2: The 2013 curriculum emphasizes that students are formed to have knowledge, skills, and attitudes[□] In data 2 which is a statement sentence, there is no use of a full stop that should be used to end the sentence. Based on the rules for using a period (point 1), it is stated that a full stop is used at the end of a statement sentence. So the researcher marks it as a form of error. The data should be written in a way "The 2013 curriculum emphasizes that students are formed to have knowledge, skills, and attitudes."

Data 3: ...to humans as environmental managers [□] Musilar Kasim as Deputy Minister of Education and Culture thinks that... . In data 3, there is an error in the use of punctuation marks, namely the absence of the use of periods that should be used. Based on the rules for using a period (point 1), it is stated that a period is used at the end of a statement sentence, so that sample students should use a period to end the sentence. The data should be written in a way "...to humans as managers of the environment. Musilar Kasim as Deputy Minister of Education and Culture thinks that..."

Data 4. Changes in Education Curriculum in Indonesia[.] . In data 4, the sentence is the title that is the head of the essay. In the rules for using a period (point 5 part 2), it is explained that a full stop is not used at the end of a title which is the head of an essay, illustration, or table. So that students should not use a period to end the title. The data should be written in the manner of "Changes in the Education Curriculum in Indonesia".

Data5: A clean and healthy living culture [.] will bring many benefits... . In data 5, students use the wrong period to place it. The dot in the sentence is not placed at the end of the sentence, so students should not use a full stop in that section. The data should be written in the way "A clean and healthy living culture will bring many benefits..."

Data 6: ... causes disease to the community either directly or indirectly[□] . The error in using a period in data6 is that there is no full stop that should be used, at the end of a sentence in the form of a statement. So students should put a period as a marker at the end of a statement sentence. The data should be written in a way that "...causes disease to the community either directly or indirectly."

### **Error using comma (,).**

Errors in using comma punctuation in Appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 7: Irresponsible individuals[,] tarnish the world of education in Indonesia. . In data 7 there is the use of a comma (,) which is misplaced, or should not be used. Referring to the rules for using commas, these marks are not used if the main clause precedes the clause. So that the sample students should not use a comma in the sentence. The data should be written in the way "irresponsible people have tarnished the world of English education."

Data 8: The curriculum that has been used for a long time[□] is replaced with the 2013 curriculum . In data 8 there is no use of a comma (,) which should be used to avoid misunderstandings in sentences. A comma can be used to separate the words "used" and "replaced" in the sentence. So that the researcher considers that it is necessary to use a comma in the sentence. The data should be written in the way "The curriculum that has been used for a long time has been replaced with the 2013 curriculum."

Data 9: ...want to produce English children who are productive, creative[□] and innovative.. In data 9 there is no use of commas that should be used in an itemization/numbering. Referring to the rules for using a comma, the sign is used between elements in an itemization or numeration. So that the data should be written in a way "... want to produce English children who are productive, creative, and innovative."

Data 10: In addition[□] lightning strikes and volcanic eruptions also contribute to the presence of these two substances. In data 10 there is no use of commas that should be used behind words or connecting expressions between sentences. Referring to the rules for using commas, these marks are used after words or connecting expressions between sentences. So the data should be written in a way "In addition, lightning strikes and volcanic eruptions also contribute to the presence of these two substances."

Data 11: Education[,]is the main thing for everyone to achieve success. In data 11 there is the use of a comma (,) in sentences that should not be used. The word "education" in the sentence is not a connecting expression between sentences. So that the sample students should not use a comma in the sentence. The data should be written in the way "Education is the main thing for everyone to achieve success."

### **Error Using Colon (:)**

The errors in using colon punctuation in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 12: Thesis[=]. The error in using colons in data 12 is writing the wrong punctuation mark. Colons are not symbolized in the form of the same two dots, this is important considering that the reader can only interpret the type of punctuation that has been written. So the data should be written in a "Thesis:"

Data 13: 3) entered at 07[:]00. The error in using colons in data 13 is that there is a use of signs that are not in accordance with the rules for using punctuation marks. The researcher assessed that students had erred in interpreting the separation of hour and minute statements. In this sentence, you should use a period to separate the hour numbers. So the data should be written in the way " 3) enter the clock" 07.00."

Data 14: Internet[:] is a whole computer network that is connected to one another. In data 14 there is an inappropriate use of punctuation marks. The use of colons is not followed by a series or description, so the researcher judges that students have made a mistake in using punctuation marks. The data should be written in the way "Internet is all computer networks that are connected to each other."

Data 15: School rules [:] are good rules or regulations and are the result of consistent implementation of existing regulations. The error in the use of colons in data 15 is the use of punctuation that should not be used, namely the use of colons is not followed by a series or description. So the data should be written in the way "School rules are good rules or regulations and are the result of consistent implementation of existing regulations."

Data 16: Playing futsal one team consists of [:] 6 people. The error in using colons in data 166 is that the use of colons is not followed by a series or description. The researcher assessed that the use of colons in the sentence was not in accordance with the rules for using punctuation marks. The data should be written in the way "Playing futsal, one team consists of 6 people."

#### **Errors in using semicolon punctuation Kesalahan (;).**

Errors in using semicolon punctuation in Appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 17: The benefits of using cellphones, such as [;] communicating with other people and being able to help with assignments from the teacher. In data 17 there is the use of signs that should not be used. The correct use of punctuation in the sentence is a colon, because it is followed by details or explanations. So the data should be written in a way "The benefits of using a cellphone, such as: communicating with other people and being able to help with assignments from the teacher."

Data 18: People's economic activities are agricultural, breeder or fisherman activities; small farmers, fishermen without boats, farmers without land and the like; and not large breeders, agricultural MNCs, plantations, and the like[;] . In data 18 there is the use of a semicolon that is not in accordance with the rules for using punctuation, namely students use a semicolon to end a statement sentence. At the end of the sentence, you should use a full stop. So that the data should be written in the following way: "People's economic activities are agricultural, livestock, or fishing activities; small farmers, fishermen without boats, farmers without land and the like; and not big breeders, agricultural MNCs, plantations, and the like."

Data 19: For example[;] the case of a 14-year-old teenager running away by someone he just met on Facebook. The error in using a semicolon in data 19 is that students misinterpret the difference between the function of a colon and a semicolon. In these data, the correct use of punctuation is a colon, because it is followed by details or explanations. So the data should be written in the way "For example: the case of the escape of a 14-year-old teenager by someone he just met on Facebook."

#### **Forms of Error Using Hyphens (-).**

The forms of errors in the use of hyphens in Appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 20: We must be disciplined and obey the school rules[-].In data 173 there is an inappropriate use of hyphens used to connect the words "order" and "order". In this sentence, the word "discipline" is not a repeated form of the word, the two words have their respective positions, so the use of hyphens is considered inappropriate to use. So the data should be written in the way "We must be disciplined and obey the school rules."

Data 21: This modernization era can only be passed by people[2] who are intelligent, smart, and have character. In data 21 there are errors in students in writing rephrase forms, and there is no use of punctuation that should be used. Hyphens are used to connect elements of repeated words. So the data should be written in a way "This era of modernization can only be passed by intelligent, intelligent, and characterful people."

Data 22: But in reality they are still children and are 13 [-] 18 years old.In data 22, the correct punctuation mark used is a dash (-), which is used between two numbers which means 'up to' or 'up to'. The researcher assessed that the use of hyphens in the sentence was inappropriate because it was not in accordance with the rules for the use of predefined punctuation marks. So the data should be written in the way "But in reality they are still children and aged 13-18 years."



Data 23: Every school maintains its environment[□] so that the school becomes clean and beautiful. The error in using hyphens in data 177 is that there is no use of punctuation that should be used, namely hyphens. Hyphens are used to mark the part of a word that is cut off by a line change. So the data should be written in a way "Every school takes care of its environment so that the school becomes clean and beautiful."

Data 24: To make students[□] aware of the importance of school rules and regulations. The error in data 180 is that there is no hyphen used to connect elements of repeat words. Based on the rules for using punctuation marks, students should place a hyphen to connect the words student and student, so the data should be written in the way "So that students

#### **Error using dash (-).**

Errors in using dashes in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 26: Because so that schools can become a benchmark for other schools [-]. The error in the use of dashes in data 184 is the use of punctuation that should not be used, namely hyphens are used to connect elements of repeated words. The punctuation mark that should be used is a hyphen (-) to connect elements of repeated words. So the data should be written in the way "because the school can become a benchmark for other schools."

Data 27: With the existence of e[-] commerce, it is easier for us to shop without having to go to the mall or the place to buy and sell the goods we want. In data 28, the punctuation mark that should be used is a hyphen (-) to clarify the relationship between parts of words or expressions. The researcher assessed that the students had made a mistake in using dashes in the sentence, because it was not in accordance with the rules for using punctuation marks. So the data should be written in the way "With e-commerce it makes it easier for us to shop without having to go to the mall or the place to buy and sell the goods we want."

#### **Error Using Question Mark (?).**

Errors in the use of question marks in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 28: How to eradicate that can damage education [?]? The error in using question marks in data 28 is the use of punctuation marks that should not be written twice. In this sentence, students write question marks 2 (two) times, so that it violates the rules of writing punctuation marks. The data should be written in the way "How to eradicate that can damage education?"

#### **Error Using Exclamation Mark (!).**

Errors in using exclamation points in appendix 2 (data corpus), include the following:

Data 28: Because cleanliness is part of faith[!]. The error in using exclamation points in data 188 is the use of written signs that are not based on the rules for using punctuation marks. In this sentence, students use an exclamation mark which is written 2 (two) times, so it is considered to violate the rules of writing and using punctuation marks. The data should be written in the way "Because cleanliness is part of faith!".

Data 29: Done[!]. The error in using exclamation points in data 29 is the use of signs that are not written based on the rules for using punctuation marks. In this sentence, students use an exclamation mark which is written 2 (two) times, so it is considered to violate the rules of writing and using punctuation marks. The data should be written as "Done!"

#### **Incorrect use of quotation marks ("...").**

Errors in the use of quotation marks in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 30 : ["Naughty Students Need Severe Sanctions"] The error in using punctuation in data 190 is the use of quotation marks in the title which is the head of the essay. In this data, students use quotation marks to enclose the title at the head of the essay. The use of quotation marks in the titles of poems, songs, films, soap operas, articles, scripts, or book chapters used in sentences. So that the data should be written in the way "Naughty Students Need to be Given Heavy Sanctions".

Data 31: ["Naughty Students Need Sanctions"] .The error in using punctuation in data 192 is the use of quotation marks in the title which is the head of the essay. In this data, students use quotation marks to enclose the title at the head of the essay. The use of quotation marks is based on the rules for using punctuation marks, only for the titles of poems, songs, films, soap operas, articles, scripts, or book chapters used in sentences. So the data should be written in the way "Naughty Students Need to be Sanctioned".

#### **Error using slash (/).**

Errors in the use of quotation marks in appendix 2 (data corpus), are as follows:

Data 32: Environmental cleanliness is not difficult to implement if we get used to a clean and healthy lifestyle. The error in using punctuation in data 203 is the use of signs that are not based on the rules for using punctuation. In these sentences, students use slashes to abbreviate the word "for". So, the data should be written in the way "Environmental hygiene is not difficult to implement if we get used to a clean and healthy lifestyle."

Data 33: Cleanliness is part of faith is one of the most important factors for creating comfort and beauty... The error in using punctuation in data 205 is the use of signs that are not based on the rules for using punctuation. In these sentences, students use slashes to abbreviate the word "for". So, the data should be written in the way "Cleanliness is part of faith is one of the most important factors to create comfort and beauty..."

Data 34: Cleanliness can create beauty[/]peace, and comfort. The error in using punctuation in data 34 is that the part of the word in the sentence is included in the detailing/numbering category, namely the word beauty/peace. So that the punctuation mark that is considered appropriate to be used is a comma (,) to be used between the elements of detailing or numeration. The data should be written in a way "Cleanliness can create beauty, peace, and comfort."

#### 4. DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at 2nd semester 4th grade students of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto as the object of research with a total of 42 students. Then analyzed the level of error in using punctuation in writing an expository essay. It aims to determine the level of knowledge of students in using punctuation in writing expository essays. This research was conducted in two meetings on 7 and 11 November 2021.

To use punctuation according to the regulations in the Enhanced English Spelling (EBI) in writing an expository essay, it requires further understanding, such as being able to distinguish each type of punctuation and its function.

The use of punctuation marks in the EBI book (Permendikbud 2015: 24) contains fifteen types of punctuation, namely periods, commas, colons, hyphens, question marks, exclamation points, ellipsis marks, quotation marks, brackets, dashes, italics, semicolons, dashes, single quotes, square brackets, and abbreviations or apostrophes in writing. However, sometimes the use of punctuation used is usually still inaccurate or wrong. This inability is caused by a lack of students' knowledge of the use of proper punctuation. This still happens and is experienced by most students in writing expository essays.

The results showed that errors in the use of punctuation marks were only found in 10 of the 15 types of punctuation to be studied. This is because in writing an expository essay there are several types of punctuation that are not ideal to use. The errors in the use of signs made by students, namely the ten punctuation marks are as follows:

##### **Error Using Dot**

A full stop is used at the end of a statement that is not a question or an exclamation; at the end of a sentence whose ending element is marked with a

period; behind numbers or letters in an overview chart or list; behind names, abbreviations, names of titles, positions, ranks, and greetings; to separate the numbers, hours, minutes, and seconds that indicate the time; as a separator for the hour, minute and second numbers indicating the time period; in the bibliography among the authors' names; the title of the article that does not end with a question mark or exclamation mark and the place of publisher; on abbreviations of words or expressions that are already common; and as a separator for the thousands or multiples thereof that indicate the number. However, a full stop is also not used in certain rules, such as not being used after a number or letter in a chart or summary if the number or letter is the last in a series of numbers or letters; separator of thousands or multiples thereof indicating the number; in order of year and number (page, car, phone, etc.); at the end of the title which is the head of the essay or the head of the illustration, table, etc.; behind the name and address of the recipient of the letter, the name and address of the sender of the letter, and behind the date of the letter; in abbreviations of chemical symbols, units of measure, doses.

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in the use of periods. This is because students use a period that is not in accordance with the rules that have been set in English Spelling. One example of this error was because the sample students did not write a period in a sentence that was not a question or an exclamation and the sample student wrote a period that should not be used. This can be seen in the sentence "Students with problems are expelled from their schools and returned to their respective parents[□]" . The error of the sample students was not to write a period at the end of the sentence which was not a question or an exclamation, so the researcher marked it as a form of error. Likewise with the sentence "Changes in the Education Curriculum in Indonesia[.]" . The student's mistake was to use a dot at the end of the title in the form of an essay, so the researcher marked it as a form of error. In the sentence "1)[.]The ceremonial officer must come first to prepare the ceremonial texts[.]" . The student's error is that the period is not used for numbers or letters that are already bracketed in a detail. At the end of the sentence there is also the use of a period that is not supposed to be used, it should end using a comma, because the sentence is a detail, so the researcher marks it as a form of error.

### **Error Using Comma**

A comma is used between elements in an item or number; as a separator of one equivalent sentence from the equivalent sentence

next that precedes the word, such as but, but, whereas and unless; as a separator of the clause from the main clause if the clause precedes the main clause; behind the words or phrases connecting sentences found at the beginning of the sentence, such as therefore, so, thus, in connection with that, and even though; as a separator of exclamations, such as o, yes, wah, ouch, and pity, or words used as

greetings, such as Ma'am, Dik, or Mas from other words in the sentence; as a direct quotation separator from other parts of a sentence; between the name and address, parts of the address, place and residence, as well as the name of the place and region or country written sequentially; as a separator part of the name behind the arrangement in the bibliography; between sections in footnotes or endnotes; the name of the person and the academic title that follows it to distinguish it from the abbreviation of self, family, or surname; title number markers, between rupiah and cents which are expressed in numbers; flanking opposition and adverbs; and avoid misreading or misunderstanding behind the information contained at the beginning of the sentence. However, commas are also not used in certain rules, such as not being used as a separator for direct quotations from other parts that accompany them in a sentence, if the direct quotation ends in a question mark or exclamation mark.

In writing explanatory text, the sample students found some errors in the use of commas. The error was because the sample students did not write a comma in the sentence as a separator of one equivalent sentence from the next equivalent sentence that precedes the word, such as but, but,

whereas and unless; behind the words or phrases connecting sentences found at the beginning of the sentence, such as therefore, so, thus, in connection with that, and even though; as a separator of interjections, such as o, yes, woah, ouch, and pity, as a separator of direct quotations from other parts of a sentence; avoid misreading or misunderstanding behind the information contained at the beginning of the sentence or the sample student writes a comma that is not actually needed. This can be seen in the sentence "So[□] basically we have to be disciplined and obey school rules". Likewise with the sentence "So[□] teachers should give, monitor, and educate their students not to take actions that harm others".

### **Error Using Colon**

A colon is used as the end of a complete statement followed by a series or explanation; after a word or expression that requires explanation; in the drama script after the word that shows the actor in the conversation; and between volumes or numbers and pages, chapters and verses in the scriptures, titles and subheads of an essay, as well as the name of the city and publisher of the reference book in the essay.

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in using colons. This can be seen in the sentence "playing futsal one team consists of [:] 6 people". Likewise with the sentence "3) enter at 07[:]00". Based on the analysis that the researcher did, there was an error in using the sign because it was not in accordance with the rules for using the punctuation that had been set.

### **Error Using Semicolon**

A semicolon can be used instead of a conjunction to separate one equivalent sentence from another in a compound sentence; used at the end of the details in the form of a clause; used to separate the details in a sentence that already uses a comma.

In writing explanatory text, students found several errors in using semicolons that were not in accordance with the rules for using punctuation that had been set. This can be seen in the sentence “for example[;] the case of a 14-year-old teenager running away by someone he just met on Facebook” . Based on the analysis conducted by the researcher, the punctuation in the sentence violates the rules for using a semicolon.

### **Error Using Hyphen**

Hyphens are used to join syllables separated by line breaks; connect the prefix with the part of the word that follows it or the suffix with the part of the word that precedes it at the turn of the line; connect elements of repeated words; connect parts of the date and letters in a word that is spelled one by one; clarify the relationship

- relationship of part of a word or phrase and omission of part of a phrase or group of words; to concatenate se- with the next word starting with a capital letter; th with numbers, numbers with -an, words or affixes with capital letters abbreviations; pronouns in the form of affixes; a combination of words which is a unity; and elements of the English language with elements of a foreign language.

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in the use of hyphens. One of the errors was that students did not use hyphens to mark repeated words. This can be seen in the sentence “so that students[□]students are aware of the importance of school rules and regulations”. On the other hand, students use hyphens in both words that have their respective positions. This can be seen in the sentence “We must be disciplined and obey the school [-] order”

### **Error using dash**

A dash is used as a delimiter for the insertion of a word or sentence that provides an explanation outside the main structure of the sentence; affirmation of the existence of appositional information or other information, so that the sentence becomes clearer; and between two numbers, dates or places with the meaning 'up to' or 'up to'.

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in using dashes. One example of this error is because students use dashes to connect elements of repeated words. This can be seen in the sentence “because the school can become a benchmark for other schools [-] schools”

### **Error Using Question Mark**

A question mark is used at the end of a question sentence; and in brackets to state the part of the sentence that is doubtful or which cannot be proven true).

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in the use of question marks. The error was because the sample students wrote question marks that were not supposed to be used. This can be seen in the sentence "How to eradicate that can damage education[?]?". In this sentence, the sample students were excessive in writing question marks in their essays, so the sentence should have been written in the way "what's wrong, sir, why are you wet?"

### **Error Using Exclamation Mark**

An exclamation mark is used to end an expression or question in the form of an exclamation or command that describes seriousness, disbelief, or strong emotions. In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in using exclamation points. The error was because the sample students wrote down the punctuation marks twice. Therefore there is one of two exclamation marks that should not be used. This can be seen in the sentence "Because cleanliness is part of faith[!]"

### **Error Using Quotes**

Quotation marks are used to enclose direct quotations originating from conversations, manuscripts, poetry titles, essays or book chapters used in sentences, unfamiliar scientific terms or words with special meanings. In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in using quotation marks. The error was because the sample students used quotation marks that were not in place, which were used to flank the title which was the head of the essay. This can be seen in the sentence "["]Students who are naughty need to be given severe sanctions["]"

### **Error using slash marks**

The slash is used in letter numbers, address numbers, and marking the period of one year which is divided into two calendar years; slash marks are used instead of the words and, or, and every; slash marks are used to enclose letters, words, or groups of words as corrections or reductions for errors or excesses in manuscripts written by other people.

In writing explanatory text, students found some errors in using slash marks. This can be seen in the sentence "Cleanliness is part of faith is one of the most important factors for creating comfort and beauty"

This study found that the most punctuation errors were the use of commas (,) as many as 90 punctuation errors. The second most frequent use of punctuation marks was the use of a period (.) as many as 60 punctuation errors. The third most

frequent use of punctuation marks was the use of a colon (:) as many as 15 punctuation errors.

In the use of quotation marks ("..."), the researcher found 12 punctuation errors, in the use of hyphens (-) 11 punctuation errors, in the semicolon (;) as many as 6 punctuation errors, in the slash mark there are (/) 6 punctuation errors, 3 punctuation errors in dash (-), 2 punctuation errors (!) on exclamation mark, and 1 question mark (?) punctuation error.

The weakness experienced by students is that they pay less attention to how to write punctuation marks, so sometimes there are punctuation marks that are difficult to distinguish, such as the use of periods and commas which resemble each other in writing. Another weakness is that students pay less attention to the use of commas which should be in the writing of sentences in their exposition essays. Based on the results of data analysis, it can be seen that the total number of punctuation errors in students' exposition essays is 207 errors in the use of punctuation marks.

These findings differ from those studied by Ige Janet L.W. (2014) which in his research only analyzed two forms of punctuation, namely the period (.) and the comma (,). Errors in the use of periods became the most dominant use of punctuation errors with a total of 46 errors in his research, and only 33 errors in the use of commas were found.

The finding which shows that punctuation errors are found in 10 out of 15 types of punctuation is different from that researched by Hussain 2021 (Hussain, Saeed, & Zeb, 2021), who in his research on language errors there were only six types of punctuation errors, with the most dominant finding of errors being hyphens. (-) as many as 29 usage errors. The differences in the findings above were triggered because of the different number of participants who were conducted to research. In addition, the differences in the learning process in Nursing student also affect the results of the study.

The obstacles faced by students in using punctuation marks are as follows: Lack of students' knowledge about the types of punctuation in English sentences. Lack of students' understanding of the proper use of punctuation marks.

From the description above, it can be concluded that the occurrence of errors made by students is due to a lack of understanding and knowledge in determining and distinguishing punctuation marks in English sentences. Another thing found in this study was that students also did not pay attention to the use of capital letters and prepositions in their writing. Based on this fact, an English teacher should pay attention to the problem of using punctuation marks and other things in students' English lessons, so that these mistakes do not occur continuously.

## 5. CONCLUSION



Based on the presentation of the results of data analysis and the previous discussion, conclusions can be drawn about the analysis of the use of punctuation marks at level 2 semester 4 of the S1 Nursing Study Program, STIKES Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto as follows. In writing students' explanatory texts, of the 15 types of punctuation marks, there are only 11 types of punctuation that appear to be analyzed and determined the form of punctuation errors. The results showed that punctuation errors were found in 10 of the 15 types of punctuation studied. This is because in writing explanatory text there are several types of punctuation that are not ideal to use. The most common punctuation errors found were commas, as many as 90 errors. The least punctuation errors found in question marks were 1 error. The total number of punctuation errors as many as 207 out of 45 students writing explanatory texts shows that the intensity of punctuation errors is still high enough so that improvements and improvements are needed in the learning process. The suggestions from the researchers are the understanding of the use of improved English spelling needs to be improved again, so that there are no mistakes in placement and use of punctuation marks. Teachers should provide further understanding of the systematics of writing essays and the use of good and correct spelling, especially the use of punctuation marks, this research is expected to be used as reference material and further guidelines similar to this research.

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#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

AWM contributes writing the article, conceptualization of the idea, and analysis. literature data collection and screening collected material. literature data collection and screening collected material. scientific English review. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript

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