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ENHANCING ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS THROUGH PODCAST CREATION: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF EFL STUDENTS AT SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: This qualitative case study focused on examining scientific article writing process. Scientific article writing is a crucial skill for university students, yet it is often taught through conventional approaches that do not fully engage learners. To encourage more interactive learning, the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University introduced a podcast project in the Article Writing course. This study employed a qualitative case study design, drawing data from student podcast transcripts and questionnaires. Findings showed that while all groups completed the brainstorming stage, many struggled to advance with drafting, revising, and editing, and none discussed publishing. Students most frequently addressed the Introduction and Conclusion, while the Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis were less developed. In terms of language features, academic vocabulary was used most consistently, with partial strengths in grammar, coherence and cohesion, and clarity and precision. However, students demonstrated weaknesses in referencing style and objectivity, and no evidence of hedging or formal tone was found. The main challenges reported were teamwork, technical barriers, and time management. These findings suggest that podcasts can serve as effective learning media for academic writing if supported by structured guidance in revision and publication, strengthened academic literacy, and systematic technical and project management support.
Keywords: *podcast; scientific article writing; English language learning; case study; academic skills.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Laplante (2018), writing is a recursive process that involves stages such as brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. In addition, Bailey (2018) emphasizes that language features requires grammar, academic vocabulary, coherence and cohesion, referencing style, hedging, objectivity, clarity and precision, and formal tone, while Reese (2023) highlights the importance of structuring an article with coherent sections such as the introduction, literature review, and conclusion. For scientific article writing, it is defined as a crucial academic skill that fosters critical thinking, scholarly development, and students' preparedness for academic and professional pursuits (Catur et al., 2024; Permana et al., 2023; Susanti, 2023). In higher education, students are frequently required to produce scientific writing in the form of assignments, research papers, theses, and publications (Isnawati, 2024; Putri Maharani et al., 2023; Saputri et al., 2023). Despite its importance, many students struggle with this process due to its complexity. Scientific writing demands cognitive and technical skills, including the ability to organize ideas, synthesize literature, use academic language, and follow writing conventions (Kumalasari et al., 2024; Nadhifah et al., 2023; Patty et al., 2023).

In Indonesian EFL programs such as the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya

University, scientific article writing is a core curricular component. However, instruction is often dominated by conventional, teacher-centered approaches, which may not accommodate students' diverse learning styles or encourage active engagement with the writing process (Ramirez, 2024). Recent studies have also highlighted that students frequently experience difficulties in articulating arguments, maintaining cohesion, and adhering to academic norms in English writing (Batubara & Fithriani, 2023; Rahmanita, 2023). These challenges indicate a need for more interactive and student-centered learning models that can foster reflective thinking and deeper involvement in the writing process.

To address this need, the Article Writing course at Sriwijaya University introduced a podcast-based project, allowing students to document and reflect on their scientific writing process through audio recordings. The integration of podcast creation aimed to promote collaborative learning, stimulate critical reflection, and enhance students' understanding of scientific article writing using a digital, student-generated audio platform.

In recent years, podcasting has emerged not only as a tool for language input but also as a medium that supports reflective learning and self-regulated academic practices. Turner et al., (2024) highlight that student-generated podcasts provide reflective spaces where learners articulate their thinking, track progress, and engage with academic content in a personal and meaningful way. In the EFL context, Akyildiz (2024) found that creating podcasts helped learners develop metacognitive awareness, improve time management, and foster a sense of ownership over their learning. Similarly, recent studies highlight that learner-produced podcasts promote academic engagement, critical thinking, and the development of self-directed learning, particularly when students actively reflect on their learning process (Errabo et al., 2024; Smydra, 2023). These findings suggest that podcasting can be leveraged not only for speaking or listening practice, but also as a strategic tool to scaffold students' growth as academic writers through ongoing reflection and self-expression.

Despite increasing interest in podcasting for EFL learning, its application in supporting academic writing remains limited. Most studies have primarily focused on enhancing listening and speaking skills (Harahap & Rizal, 2023; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Ramadhan, 2024). Limited research has explored how podcasts may support academic writing, particularly as tools for reflection and documentation of students' writing journeys. Furthermore, prior research tends to emphasize teacher-generated or passive podcast listening, rather than student-produced podcasts that encourage ownership and active learning (Berk & Aydin, 2023; Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña, 2023).

This study addresses that gap by examining how EFL students engage with the scientific writing process through the creation of podcasts. Unlike previous research that primarily positioned podcasts as tools for language input, this study explores their potential as reflective platforms. It helps students articulate their writing stages, writing aspects, and challenges. Specifically, it investigates: (1) the steps taken by students in writing scientific articles as presented in the podcast, (2) the writing aspects most frequently discussed, and (3) the challenges faced and their solutions during the podcast creation process. To guide the analysis, the study is framed by established theories on writing stages (Laplante, 2018), article structure (Reese, 2023), academic language use (Bailey, 2018), and podcast-based learning (Inderawati, 2024), this research contributes to the growing body of literature on digital pedagogy in EFL academic writing. The findings are expected to inform more innovative and learner-centered approaches in teaching scientific writing in higher education.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to explore how students in the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University engaged in podcast creation as a medium to support the development of scientific article writing skills. A case study approach allows for an in depth exploration of a particular phenomenon within a bounded context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Seventh semester students were the objects of this study. They have passed English writing skill courses, such paragraph writing, essay writing, and academic writing. They were all categorized in B1 level of Universitas Sriwijaya English Proficiency Test (known as USEPT). To meet the study need, nineteen students were selected as study samples using purposive sampling based on their participation in a podcast project focused on scientific article writing. The students were divided into four groups, with each group producing a podcast episode that discussed specific aspects of scientific article writing. This sampling strategy ensured that participants had relevant experience aligned with the study's objectives (Miles et al., 2014).

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Data were collected from two primary sources. The first consisted of podcast transcripts and recordings, which were analyzed to identify how students discussed and demonstrated the stages and components of scientific article writing. The analysis was guided by three theoretical frameworks: the five stages of scientific article writing (Laplante, 2018), academic writing features (Bailey, 2018), and article structure components (Reese, 2023). Content analysis was applied following Krippendorff's (2018) methodology, which defines it as a systematic and replicable technique for making valid and contextually grounded inferences from textual data.

The second data source was a questionnaire containing Likert-scale items and open-ended questions adapted from Inderawati (2024). The Likert-scale items explored the challenges students faced during the podcast project, including collaboration, technical issues, and time limitations. The open-ended responses offered deeper insights into students' lived experiences during the project. These responses were analyzed thematically using Braun & Clarke's (2021) six-phase reflexive thematic analysis, enabling the identification of recurring themes such as teamwork challenges, technological barriers, time management issues, and perceived learning benefits. Quantitative data from the Likert items were analyzed descriptively through frequencies and percentages to support the qualitative findings.

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, this study employed methodological triangulation by using multiple sources and methods, including podcast transcripts, Likert-scale items, and open-ended questionnaire responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). These sources complemented one another: the podcasts provided insights into students' practices in scientific article writing, while the questionnaires captured their challenges during the process. Member checking was conducted by inviting participants to verify the accuracy of podcast interpretations made, following the principles of Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Enworo, 2023). In addition, the researcher maintained a reflective journal throughout the analysis process to minimize potential bias and enhance transparency in interpretation.

Table 1. *The summary of RQ, data collection, and data analysis*

Research Question (RQ)	Data Collection Techniques	Data Sources	Data Analysis Techniques
RQ1: What are the steps taken by students in creating scientific articles that are presented in the podcast?	Documentation (Podcast Scripts and Recordings)	Students' podcast scripts and recordings	Content Analysis: The podcast transcrips were examined to trace elements of the academic writing process, including pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The data were categorized based on recurring themes or stages mentioned by the students.
RQ2: What aspects of writing were mostly discussed in the podcast?	Documentation (Podcast Scripts and Recordings)	Students' podcast content	Content Analysis: Code and categorize the topics of discussion, such as grammar, structure, citation, coherence, etc. Use thematic coding to find dominant writing aspects covered in each podcast.
RQ3: What challenges do students face during the process of creating podcasts about article writing?	Questionnaire (Closed-ended with Likert scale & open-ended questions)	Students engaged in the process of producing educational podcasts	Descriptive Analysis: for quantitative questionnaire data (percentages, frequencies from Likert scale responses). Thematic Analysis: for open-ended answers to identify common challenges (technical issues, teamwork, time management, etc.)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Steps for writing a scientific article in the podcast

Regarding the first research question, " What are the steps taken by students in writing scientific articles as presented in the podcast?" The transcripts from four student podcasts were analyzed using content analysis. This analysis was guided by the writing process framework proposed by Laplante's (2018) theory, which outlines five key stages: brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, publishing. Table 2 presents the results, showing the extent to which each group included these stages in their podcast dicussion.

Table 2. Checking the procedures for scientific article writing in the podcast

Writing Procedure	Podcast Group 1	Podcast Group 2	Podcast Group 3	Podcast Group 4	Frequency
Brainstorming	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Drafting	✓	×	✓	×	2
Revising	✓	×	✓	×	2
Editing	✓	×	✓	×	2
Publishing	×	×	×	×	0

Table 2. shows that every group covered the brainstorming stage, suggesting that this phase is regarded as a fundamental basis for launching the process of producing a scientific paper. For students discovering ideas and deciding on the direction of their writing, this phase is the first step.

Only Podcast Groups 1 and 3 carried on the writing process through the steps of drafting, editing, and revising, though. These results show that not all students fully appreciate the relevance of the methodical delivery and refining phases of scientific publications.

Examining the podcasts of the students demonstrates that the first stage that of brainstorming is still the main emphasis of the process of creating scientific publications they provide. While all groups agree that concept research is important before writing, only a small portion follow the steps of content creation and technical changes including drafting, editing, and revising. This phenomenon implies that, as Laplante (2018) suggests which consists of five primary stages: brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing students do not yet completely comprehend the academic writing cycle as a whole.

The absence of conversation about later procedures like editing and revising appears directly connected to the pragmatic difficulties students in writing encounter. According to Asnas & Hidayanti (2024) and Harahap et al. (2024), students usually struggle with first drafts, lack awareness of good editing techniques, and often skip the revising stage entirely. This is further supported by Liu et al. (2024), who underline that raising knowledge of how and when to edit may much help academic writing to be successful, confirm this. One of the main components in generating excellent academic work fit for publishing is effective revision. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that none of the podcasts included any discussion of the publication stage. This suggests that students usually see writing as an activity limited to text production, without thinking through the features of scientific publication. Many final-year students still struggle with producing journal entries, according to Sahan et al. (2024) especially with regard to the format of scientific writing and the publishing process.

The absence of the publishing stage in all groups may reflect several underlying factors. One possible reason is a lack of explicit awareness, as students often perceive article writing as complete once the text is drafted and revised, without considering dissemination as part of the process. Recent research into EFL academic writing has found that students frequently struggle with post-writing stages such as final editing, reviewing, or submitting work for publication due to limited exposure or absence of instruction on these stages (Taufiqulloh et al., 2025). Another factor could be time constraints during the project, which focused more on producing podcast content than guiding students through the complete publication cycle. In a study of Indonesian EFL learners, barriers to completing final writing projects often include limited supervisor support, tight deadlines, and lack of clarity about publication expectations (Alkhasanah & Kholis, 2024). Compared to those studies, the Sriwijaya University students demonstrated a similar gap, suggesting that the omission of publishing is not an isolated issue but a broader challenge in EFL academic writing instruction.

These results coincide with the opinions of Persohn & Branson (2025), who say podcasts are a useful tool for presenting scientific knowledge and raising student involvement in the learning process. Still, the degree to which the offered material addresses all phases of scientific writing will greatly affect the value of podcasts. Within the framework of this study, student created podcasts mostly still emphasizing the early phases of writing and do not yet address the last stages of publishing.

Therefore, even if students show a quite excellent awareness of the early phases of writing, including brainstorming, they still need more direction to grasp and apply the whole phases of scientific writing thoroughly. Therefore, the use of podcasts in learning has to be planned in a more

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organised and thorough way to better suit all levels of scientific writing.

Aspects of article writing mostly discussed in the podcast

The second research question, namely "What are the writing aspects most frequently discussed in the podcast?", seeks to identify the key components of academic writing that were most frequently addressed by students. To explore this, the researcher conducted a content analysis of four student podcast transcripts. Guided by Reese's (2023) theory on article structure and Bailey's (2018) theory on language features, this analysis focused on the organizational and linguistic aspects of scientific article writing. The results are presented in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3. *Checking the structure of scientific article writing in the podcasts*

Article Structure	Podcast Group 1	Podcast Group 2	Podcast Group 3	Podcast Group 4	Frequency
Introduction	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis	✓	×	✓	✓	3
Conclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	4

Table 3. illustrates the presence of Reese's (2023) three core structural components of scientific articles namely Introduction, Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis, and Conclusion across the podcasts. All four groups addressed the Introduction and Conclusion sections, indicating that students were able to articulate these parts clearly. Meanwhile, the Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis component appeared in three out of four podcasts, suggesting that most groups understood the importance of incorporating theoretical grounding into their writing. One group, however, did not demonstrate this component, indicating varied levels of comprehension.

Table 4. *Checking the language feature of scientific article writing in the podcasts*

Language Feature	Podcast Group 1	Podcast Group 2	Podcast Group 3	Podcast Group 4	Frequency
Grammar	✓	×	✓	×	**2**
Academic Vocabulary	✓	✓	✓	×	**3**
Coherence and Cohesion	✓	×	✓	×	**2**
Referencing Style	✓	×	×	×	**1**
Hedging	×	×	×	×	**0**
Objectivity	×	×	✓	×	**1**
Clarity and Precesion	×	✓	✓	×	**2**
Formal Tone	×	×	×	×	**0**

Table 4. presents an analysis of the eight language features of scientific article writing as proposed by Bailey (2018). Among these features, *academic vocabulary* emerged as the most frequently addressed, appearing in three out of four podcast groups. This indicates that students tend to pay attention to the use of appropriate terminology in academic contexts. Other features such as *grammar*, *coherence and cohesion*, and *clarity and precision* were mentioned in two podcast groups, suggesting a moderate level of awareness. On the other hand, *referencing style* and *objectivity* were only found in one group; while *hedging* and *formal tone* were not identified in any of the podcasts. These findings imply that students, in their efforts to produce scientific texts, may overlook several essential aspects of academic language, especially those requiring subtle or formal expression.

To help students grasp hedging and a formal tone in academic writing, teachers can begin with explicit instruction by explaining the function of hedging, such as using phrases like "might," "suggests," or "appears", to express caution or uncertainty, which is a key feature of scholarly work. It is also important to clarify what constitutes a formal tone, such as avoiding contractions, slang, or overly casual expressions. Modeling is another effective strategy; teachers can show authentic academic texts or revise student samples to

highlight the use of hedging and formal language (Lewin, 2005; Verma, 2023).

This result immediately addresses the second study question on the features of scientific article writing most often mentioned in student podcasts. Based on the study of the four podcasts, it can be inferred that most of the groups show a quite strong knowledge of the fundamental structure of scientific articles, especially the Introduction and Conclusion parts, as outlined in theory of Reese (2023). While Group 2 and Group 4 have not yet examined these parts in depth, Group 1 and Group 3 effectively covered all three primary structures in great detail including Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis.

The data suggest that while more significant elements such as theoretical synthesis and discussion are less explored, students often focus more on the introduction and conclusion sections of scientific article writing. This inclination shows that even if students grasp the fundamental framework of academic writing, they still find it difficult to create compelling arguments, particularly in thorough synthesizing of ideas. This is consistent with the results of Aksakall et al. (2024), which show that students typically can only provide a descriptive account of past research without closely tying it to their own points of view. These results show that students still have to develop their ability to evaluate and critically analyse literature reviews.

Additionally, the results of Suseno (2024) underline the need of synthesis skills in academic writing, which include analysis, interpretation, and integration of quotes from references with the author's ideas to construct a cohesive theoretical framework. Academic writing lacks complexity and originality without excellent synthesis. For inexperienced academic writers to generate significant scientific work, then the development of literary synthesis abilities becomes very vital.

Moreover, the neglect of academic language elements such objectivity, formal language style, and hedging suggests that students' command of scientific writing is still somewhat poor. Actually, these language characteristics are really crucial for enhancing correctness and trustworthiness in expressing scholarly arguments. This is supported by Listyani (2025), who noted that students typically struggle in adopting the four basic aspects of academic writing style, namely objectivity, formality, accuracy, and hedging, notably in maintaining a formal tone and utilising cautious language, supports this result. These results confirm that still a major difficulty for academic writing practices among students is learning the style of scientific language. Therefore, there has to be a learning technique that not only stresses comprehending the fundamental structure of scientific publications but also promotes a deeper knowledge of the role of each section and the suitable use of academic language.

The absence of hedging and formal tone across all four podcasts may suggest that students have not yet fully recognized these features as critical components of academic writing. Although no explicit comments from students emerged in the transcripts regarding these omissions, this silence could indicate a limited awareness of their importance. From a pedagogical perspective, it might be useful for teachers to provide targeted practice, such as asking students to rewrite informal statements into more academic forms or by analyzing sample texts that illustrate hedging strategies. Through such approaches, students could gradually develop a stronger understanding of how hedging and formality contribute to academic credibility.

Challenges faced by students during the process of creating a podcast on scientific article writing

To answer the third research question, namely "What are the challenges faced during the podcast creation?", the data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach.

Table 5. *Likert-scale questionnaire results*

No	Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1	I found the level of difficulty in collaborating on the podcast project to be quite high	1 (5.3%)	7 (36.8%)	6 (31.6%)	5 (26.3%)	0 (0%)
2	The main challenges in the podcast collaboration included communication, scheduling, idea development, and maintaining consistent quality	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (15.8%)	13 (68.4%)	3 (15.8%)
3	I gained valuable benefits from collaborating on the podcast project	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	10 (52.6%)	8 (42.1%)
4	The workload and time commitment involved in the podcast collaboration were quite demanding	1 (5.3%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (21.1%)	11 (57.9%)	1 (5.3%)

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5	The main technical challenges I encountered included audio equipment, device coordination, file management, and internet connectivity	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	16 (84.2%)	1 (5.3%)
6	Coordinating schedules and maintaining team communication during the podcast project was very challenging	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	5 (26.3%)	12 (63.2%)	1 (5.3%)
7	Interpersonal challenges included communication difficulties, conflicts, and differences in working styles among team members	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)	15 (78.9%)	0 (0%)
8	I experienced a significant amount of stress and pressure during the collaborative podcast creation process	2 (10.5%)	8 (42.1%)	5 (26.3%)	3 (15.8%)	1 (5.3%)
9	I gained meaningful learning experiences from the collaborative podcast project	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (78.9%)	4 (21.1%)
10	I am satisfied with the final quality of the podcast produced through collaboration	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (78.9%)	4 (21.1%)
11	Effective communication among team members played a crucial role in the success of the podcast project	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (47.4%)	10 (52.6%)
12	Each team member actively contributed ideas and skills during the podcast creation process	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	8 (42.1%)	9 (47.4%)
13	Joint decision-making was an essential part of the team dynamics in the podcast project	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	12 (63.2%)	5 (26.3%)
14	Technical issues affected the final quality of the podcast project	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	14 (73.7%)	3 (15.8%)
15	The collaborative podcast process helped prepare me for future teamwork or professional collaboration	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	7 (36.8%)	10 (52.6%)

Based on the results of the Likert-scale questionnaire presented in the table above, the statements given to the students can be grouped into four main categories, namely Collaborative and Interpersonal Challenges, Technical Challenges, Time Management Difficulties, and Valuable Experiences from Collaboration.

Collaborative and interpersonal challenges

The findings from the Likert scale questionnaire indicate that students faced various challenges during the collaborative podcast production process, particularly in the areas of communication, technological limitations, and group dynamics. A significant portion of respondents, 84.2%, identified key difficulties such as maintaining consistent quality, managing schedules, generating ideas, and ensuring effective communication (Statement 2). In addition, 78.9% of students reported experiencing interpersonal challenges, including communication breakdowns, conflicts, and differing work styles among team members (Statement 7). Despite these issues, perspectives on the overall difficulty of collaboration varied. Only 26.3% of participants considered the group work to be extremely challenging, while 42.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed with that view (Statement 1). These findings align with the study by Pratiwi et al. (2024), which highlights that technology supported collaboration, such as podcast projects, can improve students' communication abilities.

Technical challenges

Technical issues were among the most frequently cited problems. As many as 89.5% of respondents noted difficulties such as limited access to proper audio recording tools, device synchronization problems, file-sharing obstacles, and unstable internet connectivity (Statement 5). The same percentage also believed that these technical setbacks negatively impacted the overall quality of the final podcast output (Statement 14). These findings highlight the importance of adequate technical preparation and proper equipment support in the implementation of media-based learning projects.

Time management difficulties and stress

63.2% of respondents said the time and effort needed for this project was somewhat taxing, based on Likert scale data (Statement 4). This is probably the result of the difficulty of chores including coordination among team members, planning,

recording, and editing. Furthermore, 68.5% of respondents agreed that keeping team communication and organising schedules provide challenges in and of itself (Statement 6), therefore suggesting trouble in timing among other academic obligations. Still, just 21.1% of respondents said they were really stressed during the teamwork process (Statement 8). These findings are consistent with the qualitative data, which indicate that most students managed their time pressure effectively, suggesting that stress-related issues were not significantly present.

Benefits of learning & collaboration

Despite the various challenges encountered, all participants (100%) reported that they gained valuable learning experiences (Statement 9) and expressed satisfaction with the podcasts they had produced (Statement 10). In addition, 89.5% agreed that the project experience helped prepare them for future professional collaboration (Statement 15), while 94.7% acknowledged the benefits of working in a group (Statement 3). Shared decision-making (Statement 13) and the active involvement of each member (Statement 12) were also seen as key contributors to the success of the project. Importantly, all respondents identified effective communication as a crucial factor in achieving positive outcomes (Statement 11). These quantitative findings are consistent with the qualitative responses from the open-ended questions, which emphasized the participants' appreciation for both the collaborative process and the learning opportunities it offered. As noted by Inderawati (2024), acknowledging and addressing challenges while leveraging team strengths can significantly enhance the quality of collaborative podcast projects. These insights underscore the importance of communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution in overcoming difficulties and achieving meaningful project outcomes.

The results show that producing a podcast on scientific article writing presents several difficulties for students, particularly in terms of team collaboration, technological constraints, and time management. These findings are consistent with earlier studies which suggest that digital based collaborative initiatives require strong organizational and interpersonal skills (Pena & Cassany, 2023). Challenges in group projects such as communication breakdowns, conflicting perspectives, and unequal task distribution frequently emerge during student podcast production. Similar issues were reported by Muffels & Weyenberg (2024), who found that podcast based learning environments often present difficulties related to cooperation and role allocation. Pascual (2023) also noted that although student created podcasts enhanced communication and engagement, learners often struggled to coordinate roles and distribute tasks fairly within online groups. These collaborative difficulties were also echoed by students in this study, who reported challenges in setting clear responsibilities and managing group conflicts. Additionally, Gunderson & Cumming (2023) emphasized that digital audio projects require well defined group structures, yet students frequently experience misalignment in responsibilities and time planning. Fantini (2024) found that unclear role definitions and insufficient negotiation led to frequent miscommunication and breakdowns in task coordination, impacting both the process and final quality of the work. Likewise, Hernandez-Lopez & Mendoza-Jimenez (2025) observed that although podcast assignments increased cognitive engagement, many students faced organizational difficulties in task management and meeting deadlines.

In addition to interpersonal challenges, technical limitations also posed significant barriers during podcast production. Students encountered limitations such as poor audio quality, restricted access to recording equipment, and unstable internet connections. According to Inderawati et al. (2024) noted that the selection of microphones, audio interfaces, and basic soundproofing methods significantly influences the final audio product. Mohale (2025) highlighted that poor audio quality, excessive duration, and complex language structures may reduce the instructional effectiveness of audio based media. Similarly, Sager et al., (2025) found that students often encountered significant challenges during the editing phase, especially in removing background noise, maintaining narrative clarity, and ensuring a coherent audio flow issues that were also reflected in student complaints about technical obstacles in this study.

Time management another prominent concern among students. Many students reporting difficulties in balancing podcast tasks alongside other academic responsibilities. The absence of clear role division and structured planning often contributed to delays and uneven workload. This finding aligns with Enríquez et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of time regulation in digital project based learning. Similarly, Gudkova & Shadrina (2025) found that students involved in podcast-based project learning frequently

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struggled with planning, scheduling, and maintaining self-regulation, especially when managing complex, multi-phase assignments that required collaboration and independent responsibility.

The challenges reported by students mainly revolved around teamwork, technological limitations, and time management. Some students also suggested practical ways to address these issues. For instance, one student noted, "Collaborative scheduling to avoid time conflicts" (R3), while another mentioned, "Task delegation within team helped reduce individual time burden" (R8). Another participant highlighted the usefulness of digital tools: "Use of Google Calendar to coordinate team schedules" (R15). These strategies show that students were proactive in overcoming the difficulties they faced and were actively thinking of ways to improve collaboration and workflow.

To put these challenges in context, it is useful to compare them with traditional writing projects. Unlike conventional writing, podcasts require collaboration, performance, and creativity, which can lead to stronger team dynamics and communication growth. Similar issues are evident in other collaborative academic tasks. For example, Aksakall et al. (2024) found that EFL students often struggle with group coordination and meeting deadlines. This suggests that some difficulties, like teamwork and time management, are common across collaborative projects. However, technological issues—such as limited audio-editing skills or restricted access to recording tools—appear more specific to podcast projects. These findings highlight the need to strengthen not only students' writing abilities but also their technical skills when integrating digital media into academic tasks

Interestingly, despite facing various challenges, most students still view this experience as a meaningful learning opportunity. They not only learn article writing content but also develop other important skills. That collaborative experience strengthens students' teamwork, communication skills, media production, and leadership abilities. These findings align with the study Sah et al. (2024) which states that project-based learning such as podcasts contributes to strengthening 21st-century competencies, including critical thinking, collaboration, and digital literacy.

CONCLUSION

According to the creation podcast on article writing in the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University, every student group can engage in the initial step of writing that of brainstorming. Only a small number of organisations, meanwhile, carried on the process through to the editing level and none addressed publication as the last stage. This disorder highlights the requirement of direction so that students grasp publishing as the height of the scientific writing process rather than only generate articles.

From the structural point of view, the Introduction and Conclusion sections of the article are the most often discussed; the same two groups only fully address the Theoretical Overview and Literature Synthesis, hence suggesting the need of enhancing the integration of theory and literature. Regarding linguistic traits, most groups showed strength in terms of grammar, academic vocabulary, clarity and accuracy. More complex elements such reference style, hedging, objectivity, and formal tone were rarely used, nevertheless, suggesting the necessity of more thorough instruction in academic writing style.

Along with technological limitations, time management, and team coordination, the podcast production process presented other major difficulties. Often impeding the seamless running of the project were coordination difficulties, insufficient tools and internet connectivity, and unorganised schedule. Still, students thought the experience was worthwhile as it improved their knowledge of scientific article writing and helped them to acquire critical skills such media production, leadership, collaboration, and communication. Thus, given that their implementation is supported by guidance in publication literacy, improved instruction on structural and language features, and systematic technical and managerial support, podcasts can be an efficient medium for learning academic writing in the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University.

For future research, a follow-up study could be conducted in which students receive structured podcast training to examine whether systematic guidance enhances both the technical quality of podcasts and their impact on academic writing skills.

Furthermore, as a practical step, Sriwijaya University may consider integrating podcast workshops into the curriculum, particularly in the Article Writing course, to provide students with hands on experience and structured support in combining digital media with academic literacy.

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