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## Effort To Improve Writing Skill Of SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya

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### Abstrak

Menulis dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan salah satu keterampilan berbahasa yang diajarkan dalam konteks pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) di sekolah menengah pertama di Indonesia. Berdasarkan penelitian sebelumnya, sebagian besar siswa menganggap menulis adalah keterampilan yang paling sulit dari keempat keterampilan tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesulitan-kesulitan utama dalam menulis yang dihadapi siswa kelas VIII di SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya, Simalungun, dan upaya yang dilakukan guru untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Untuk memperoleh data, penulis menggunakan tes dan wawancara. Berdasarkan hasil wawancara yang dilakukan peneliti dengan guru kelas VIII, guru telah berupaya untuk mendorong dan mengarahkan siswa agar gemar membaca berbagai macam tulisan, sehingga secara tidak sadar akan terekam dalam benak siswa sehingga memudahkan mereka dalam mengarang. esai, tapi ini belum selesai. Hasil pengumpulan dokumen menunjukkan bahwa jenis permasalahan pembelajaran yang dihadapi siswa adalah kurangnya kosakata 28%, kesalahan tata bahasa 50%, dan kesalahan ejaan 22%. Hasil wawancara menunjukkan bahwa upaya koreksi yang paling umum dilakukan guru adalah dengan memberikan feedback tertulis. Hal ini menimbulkan berbagai reaksi dari siswa antara lain kebingungan, frustrasi dan lalai mengikuti komentar. Oleh karena itu, guru perlu memperjelas tanggapan tertulis yang diberikan kepada siswa dengan memberikan diskusi tatap muka lebih lanjut di kelas mengenai komentarnya terhadap tulisan siswanya.

Kata Kunci: Umpan Balik, Upaya Guru, Jenis Masalah Peserta Didik

## Abstract

Writing in English is one of the language skills that are taught in the context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesian junior high schools. According to previous studies, most of the students consider writing is the most difficult of the four skills. This research was aimed at finding out the main difficulties in writing faced by the grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya, Simalungun, and the efforts made by their teacher to overcome those problems. The design of this study was a descriptive qualitative study. To obtain the data, the writers used test and interviews. According to the findings of interviews conducted by researcher with teachers of class VIII, the teacher had made an effort to encourage and direct students to enjoy reading different writings so that they would unconsciously be recorded in students' minds, making it easier for them to compose essays, but this had not yet been accomplished. The results from the document collection showed that the types learners problems faced by the students were in the lack of vocabulary 28%, grammar error 50% , and miss spelling 22%. The results from the interviews showed that the most common correcting efforts made by the teacher were giving written feedback of writing. This leads to various reactions by the students including confusion, frustration and neglect to follow the comments. Therefore, teachers need to be clear with their written feedback given to the students by giving further face-to-face discussions in class on her comments towards their students" writing.

Keywords: Feedback, Teacher's efforts, Types learners problems

## INTRODUCTION

The most challenging aspect of language is writing. In comparison to using other languages, learning this language skill is referred to as being the most difficult. Four fundamental skills must be acquired (Meinawati et al., 2021). In addition to speaking and Writing, they are also listening. Writing is essential to learning a foreign language. Writing assignments, particularly when studying English, require the researcher to be able to provide news that is meaningful and easy to understand for the reader (Oktarina et al., 2022).

Writing skills, according to Saleh Abbas (in Sari, 2018), is the ability to express ideas, opinions, and feelings to others through written language. The precision of communicating thoughts must be reinforced by the accuracy of the language employed, including vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. In writing skills, it is expected that students can put their ideas into Writing, whereas in Writing, students are also expected to use the correct vocabulary (Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020).

Writing is a process that is conveyed to others (ideas, thoughts, opinions, information, and knowledge) in Writing (PURNAMASARI, 2022) Further, Writing is a language skill that is used to win ideas or ideas that are in mind through written language to be read and understood by others. The researcher found the learner's problems in writing from the

interview results that several factors prevent students from writing well. The first is that students need help to come up with ideas, develop them, and turn them into good Writing. It is difficult for students to organize the ideas that have been developed into continuous and meaningful sentences. The most notable example is the vocabulary that is owned by students in composing their ideas Lisnora Saragih & Sirait, 2022).

Effort is the collection of resources to carry out behavior. Effort is a term that relates to both persistence and intensity in pursuing goals. In the former, resources are mobilized across time, whereas in the latter, they are mobilized at a certain moment in time (Brehm & Self, 1989). An effort is made to remove behavioral obstacles or elements that make it harder to accomplish goals (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017). For this reason, as long as success is judged to be both achievable and worthwhile, effort is proportionate to the complexity of instrumental behavior. When accomplishment is viewed as impossibly difficult or overly difficult, effort is anticipated to be minimal given the potential rewards. The previous viewpoint presupposes that a conservation principle governs how much mental and physical effort is allocated (Reyes-Chua & Lidawan, 2019).

Efforts can be interpreted as a way or steps that can facilitate a person in achieving goals (Hukom, 2021). Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with class VIII teachers, they said that the teacher had made efforts to direct and motivate students to like reading various writings so that unconsciously, they would be recorded in students' minds, which would make it easier for them to compose essays, but this has not yet been done. It can motivate students to read. Students are not interested in reading, so the teacher's efforts have yet to be successful (Timperley & Parr, 2009).

Student learning motivation correlates with the type of student problems in Writing because motivation is the desire and encouragement to act consciously, so in Writing, the role of motivation is needed to be able to produce maximum essays. Therefore, the teacher plays an important role in the learning process; the approach used plays a very important role in motivating students to study more actively, continuously, and routinely (Lestari et al., 2018).

Through the description above, researchers became interested in research in grade VIII SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya to find out students' writing abilities, what are the problems students often face in Writing, and what are the teacher's efforts to overcome this. Selection of junior high school based on thought Junior high school students are people who develop and have great curiosity. Therefore, the school system or way of learning has a major influence on the development and ability of students to write. The reason for choosing grade VIII students as the object of this research is because grade VIII students are in the

middle position and have a stable level of adaptation. This is because class VIII is still in the adaptation stage, namely the transition period between the environment and the learning process, as for the selection of places in this study, namely SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya. SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya will be chosen by the researcher because the researcher found from an interview that students have problems with grammar errors and lack vocabulary and misspelling (Niño & Páez, 2018).

Based on the existing literature, there needs to be more research gaps in efforts to improve students' writing skills. While there are studies on efforts to improve students' writing skills in senior high school, there needs to be more research specifically focusing on junior high school. There are limitations to the implication of effort to improve students' writing skills carried out by previous research. Therefore, this thesis aims to fill this research gap by exploring efforts to improve students' writing skills in junior high school.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher will try to find out learners' problems in Writing and teachers' efforts to improve students' writing skills. Many students need help understanding the language and determining their writing skills and grammar. The students have some problems in Writing, starting from capitalization problems, punctuation problems, poor organization, spelling problems, and grammatical errors. Therefore, based on the above phenomenon, the researcher conducted a study entitled "Effort To Improve Writing Skill Of Smp Negeri 1 Pematang Raya".

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research methods

This research will be a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is an approach in the form of issues, descriptions in the form of opinions, and then associated with other data clarity of truth. In relation to this, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative research approach in this study. Not only gathering and compiling data but also data analysis. A qualitative approach is a research method that produces descriptive data instead of numerical data in the form of written words or spoken statements from individuals and observable behavior.

The reason researchers use descriptive qualitative research is to get broad and in-depth information about teacher efforts to improve Students' Writing skills of SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya.

## Population and Sample

The researcher determines the population and sample before conducting the research. An explanation of the population and sample is provided below. The object of the research is SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya in the 2023/2024 school students consisting of 236 students, and the researcher chose one class from eight classes as a random sample.

Purposive sampling is used as the sampling method in this study. Purposive sampling is a sampling method that takes into account factors; this study used one class. Class VIIIH, the number of students is 23 people. Researchers use this category because it will, according to the teacher, have a rather weak knowledge of English and relatively low vocabulary, spelling, and grammar compared to other categories.

## Data and Source The Data

The source of the data used in this study is the results of interviews, the results of tests, and classroom observations of students and teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya regarding the learner's problems in Writing and teachers' efforts. The secondary data in the research method is journal literature and scientific papers regarding those learners' problems in Writing and teachers' efforts.

## Technique of collecting data

1. The researcher entered the SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya
2. The researcher explained the research objectives and the things that the researcher examine
3. The researcher collected a total of 23 (twenty-three) samples of writing text done by students
4. The researcher interviewed 5 (five) students randomly from 23 students in VIII H and gave them some questions to know their types of problems in Writing.
5. The researcher interviewed the teachers to know what their efforts to improve students' writing skills.
6. The researcher recorded the interview.

## Technique of Analyzing Data

1. Analyzed the data from students' essay
2. Classified the data into different types of writing difficulties
3. Find out the types of learner problems in Writing
4. They are classified and described teacher efforts to help the students through interviews.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method. The descriptive qualitative method clearly described the findings. Research data included student responses to writing tests and interviews. In this study, the researcher asked students to write their activity during the ceremony-dependent day. The researcher interviewed these students and asked them for their opinions about their problems in Writing. The researcher interviewed this teacher and asked them what their effort was to improved student writing skills.

The data was collected from students at SMP N 1 Pematang Raya grade eight using 23 objects. After collecting the data, the researcher identified the types of learners problem. By identifying what types of learners' problems and what the teacher's efforts are, the researchers found that many students need help to write English well (Harahap, 2017).

### Data Test

The writer has identified the learner errors, and she has calculated the number of each error. She draws the results of the calculation into a table and converts them into percentages. The writer concludes from the results of the test data on student writing that students have problems with writing. It shows what learners make when writing recount texts about their experiences on Independence Day. This table below is the result of a student test.

### Data analysis

The following four writing-related difficulties faced by EFL students are mentioned by (Chen 2002 : 35). College students struggle with vocabulary to start. They complain loudly about their limited vocabulary. When students have a limited vocabulary, it is difficult for them to write down their ideas clearly. Second, the challenges of writing now extend beyond only language and grammar to include the creation and development of ideas. When asked to come up with ideas and provide supporting details for a paragraph, pupils are frequently irritated.

### Data Analysis Students Test Learner Errors

Based on the results of the students' tests above, it can be seen that there are students who have learner errors in grammar error, lack vocabulary, and miss spelling.

## Grammar Error

We found that the students made a lot of errors in grammar in their Writing. Most students had difficulties to arrange sentences correctly based on the rules of grammar. Here are some examples of grammatical errors found in their Writing:

"My family and I went to watch the parade."

The student's sentence above shows that he had a problem with statement . The sentence could read "My family and I went to watch the parade".

"the statmennt wrong because subject placement". However it could also be written "I and my family went to watch the parade".

## Lack Vocabulary

In the aspect of vocabulary, the students tended to choose words which were not suitable for the context they were writing about; this is a classic problem of poor collocation. It can be seen in the example below:

" For melihat marcingban and masih in great number penampilan"

from the above examples, we can see that the student had difficulty in choosing appropriate words to complete the sentence, and student don't have enough vocabulary to make good sentences. The sentences must be "To see the performance of marching band".

## Miss spelling

The researchers found that the students made a lot of errors in spelling. Most students failed to use correct spelling, correct punctuation, and correct capitalization. There were a lot of errors found in example:

"After sfentine othome wit mai female"

The above excerpt clearly shows that the student made mistakes in the spelling of the words "seventeen" and "at home". He spelt the word "sfentine" Furthermore, he made an error in spelling the letter "a" in the word "othome". The correct sentence should be "After 17th at home with family".

## Data Analysis of Interview

### Interview teachers

Q : How can the teacher improve students' writing skills according to grammar?

A : Explain the importance of grammar and sentence structure, as well as content. From the teacher" s statements above, we know that she taught grammar related to the text she would give in the next writing class. In other words, she taught grammar by integrating it into the actual writing process. Chin (2000) suggested that the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in Writing is to use students" writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. Therefore, the teacher needs to integrate

Writing and grammar instruction by giving mini-grammar lessons using documents written by the students. Beside teaching grammar separately, the teacher also gave written feedback on the grammar in the Writing done by her students.

Q : What are the teacher's efforts to make students able to write well-organized in a logical and cohesive sequence?

A : The problem in organization with the above paragraph is that there were no transition signals to clearly connect the sentences. The student should have put connective words.

From the teacher's statements above, the efforts of the teacher to give written feedback are also relevant to the efforts suggested by Mojica (2010). She declares that feedback is effective to overcome problems of organization faced by students. In this study, the organization aspect was the second lowest writing problem faced by the students. In addition to written feedback, the teacher also taught the students about conjunctions and introduced her students to other cohesive devices. She explained the function of cohesive devices so that the students would know where and how to use them properly.

Q : What are the teacher's efforts to make students understand how to write correct grammar?

A : Introduce new concepts as students reach the editing stage of writing projects. That way, they apply the concepts in an authentic context. For example, if students are writing narratives, teach and practice how to punctuate dialogue. Then, have students correctly punctuate the dialogue in their own Writing.

From the teacher 's statement above, we know that she asked her students to brainstorm first before writing. As a result, they can list down whatever comes into their mind and later eliminate those things irrelevant to the given topic. Besides, the teacher can also give feedback if there was any problem with the content in the Writing. This is similar to Mojica (2010) who also claims that brainstorming and written feedback are helpful ways to deal with problems that students have in the content of their Writing

Q : What efforts do teachers make to enable students to choose the right words and use words effectively?

A : She usually introduced new vocabulary to her students. Before Writing, she also asked them to look for words related to the topic they were going to write about. Therefore, they could prepare a list of words to be used in their Writing. For all writing classes, she asked them to each bring a dictionary so that when writing, they can look up words they want to know about.

Q : What are the teacher's efforts to direct students to be able to use mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, capital letters, and paragraphs well?

A : Study the rules related to grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, capitalization, and the rest.

Looking at the teacher" s response above, to anticipate the problem in the use of

Punctuation and capitalization, she argued that she had briefly taught the students about Where to put capital letters and also explained how to use several functions of Punctuation. Asking students to memorize vocabulary that was given seemed to be Effective in helping students to overcome some of their problems with spelling.

#### Research Findings

After analyzing the data, the researcher found that the students have problems with their motivation to learn English and have problems with learning errors. And teacher effort.

Based on the result of this study, the researcher found a table of learner's problems.

Table 1. Learners Problems

Types of problems	Number of people	Percentage
Grammar	25	50%
Vocabulary	14	28%
Miss spelling	11	22%
Total	50	100%

The table above shows that the students had problems in grammar, vocabulary, and miss spelling. It clearly shows that the biggest problem in writing this type of text was in the grammar 50 % total errors. The aspect of language use also included errors of grammar made by the students in their texts. The second major problem area was the aspect of vocabulay included 28 % errors. The third major problem area was the aspect of miss spelling, with 22% out of the total errors in the students" Writing.

Based from the table the research found that the dominant types of problem face by students in SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Raya is grammar the total of problems 50% from 50 total the problems of students.

Based on the result of this study, the researcher found a table of teachers' efforts.

Table 2. Teachers Efforts

Aspect	Efforts
Grammar	Teaching grammar separately from writing Written feedback

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Vocabulary	Introducing new words Asking students to search for words related to the writing topic Asking students to look up the meaning of words in a dictionary Written feedback
Miss spelling	Teaching capitalization and punctuation Giving vocabulary lessons to emphasize spelling Written feedback

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## Discussion

From all the efforts made by the teacher, written feedback appears to be the most common effort that she made to help her students (Fitri et al., 2022). She gave written feedback on all aspects of writing problems faced by the students. In previous research of efforts to improve writing skill of high school students and the efforts made by their teachers to overcome these problems (Jalaluddin, 2019). The results of the document collection showed that the highest percentage of problems faced by students was in the aspect of language use and the least problem was in the aspect of content (Sholikhin, 2021). The results of the interviews showed that the most frequent correction effort made by the teacher was to provide written feedback for all aspects of writing namely language use, mechanics, vocabulary, organization, and content. In addition, teachers also need to develop a systemized form of feedback and explain to students what the feedback means and what they should do with the feedback to help students improve their writing skills. The second of the previous of the research (Yundayani, 2019) that was conducted entitled Investigating the effect of canva on students' writing skills. Research in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom has highlighted the importance of introducing visual media in an effort to help students improve their writing skills (Magnifico et al., 2019). This study aims to investigate the effect of Canva on students' writing ability (Fidriani et al., 2021). The third previous research Portfolio as a The effect of mind mapping technique on students' writing skills this research aims to prove that the mind mapping technique is an effective way to help students overcome problems such as nervousness and lack of confidence to improve their writing skills, as well as help students organize ideas systematically and create themes that are easy to understand (Imran, 2022).

Based on the findings and the following discussion are the final results of the research that has done once the test and once corrected but still wrong in the test, the researcher concludes that:

1. Types of students problems are divided into several categories, namely grammar error many as 25 or 50% lack vocabulary many as 14 or 28%, and miss spelling many as 11 or 22% (Khasawneh & Al-Rub, 2020).
2. The dominant problem faced by students of SMP Negeri 1 pematang Raya is grammar error as many 25 from 50 problems or 50 %.
3. The results from interviews showed that the most common correcting efforts made by teacher were giving written feedback of writing.

After seeing the results of the research that has been done, the author -suggest to students to further improve their understanding of grammatical.

## CONCLUSION

The aims of this research were to find out the problems were faced by the students in Writing and also the efforts made by their teacher to cope with these problems. Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the students had some problems with their writing skills, particularly in grammar, vocabulary, miss spelling. Among those problems, grammatical errors in language use were the major writing problem that they had. On the other hand, problems with content were found the least from these students. In order to overcome these writing problems, the teacher made many efforts, which were found to be useful to the students, except the effort of providing written feedback. The study revealed that it could not solve the problems faced by the students in some aspects, particularly in language use and mechanics, because further discussion was not done to discuss the errors directly with the students in class. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers need to develop more systemized forms of feedback and make it clear to students what the feedback means and what they are to do with it.

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