

# STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND THEIR PROBLEMS IN WRITING AT THE EIGHT GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 8 BUTON TENGAH

<sup>1)</sup>Nety & <sup>2)</sup>Wawan Sarifudin

<sup>1)</sup>Dosen & <sup>2)</sup>Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Unidayan Baubau

---

## ABSTRAK

*Permasalahan dalam penelitian ini adalah "Performa dan permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh siswa kelas VIII dalam Pembelajaran Menulis Bahasa Inggris di SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah". Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui performa dan permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh siswa kelas VIII dalam pembelajaran Menulis Bahasa Inggris di SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah.*

*Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Lokasi penelitian berada di SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah pada Kelas VIII. Sedangkan subjek penelitian adalah siswa dan guru Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kegiatan interview, observasi, dan dokumentes yang ada. Sementara, teknik analisis data dilakukan dengan menerapkan langkah-langkah yakni reduksi data, presentasi data, dan verifikasi data.*

*Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa performa yang ditunjukkan oleh siswa Kelas VIII SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah adalah kemampuan menulis siswa yang tidak akurat dan tidak lancar. Siswa tidak mampu menghasilkan paragraf yang baik dan benar sesuai dengan kriteria menulis. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari penggunaan tata bahasa yang salah, kosa kata yang tidak tepat, tanda baca yang tidak tepat, dan isi (konten) serta ide kalimat yang tidak jelas. Hal ini dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor seperti guru yang kurang disiplin, kurangnya fasilitas belajar di sekolah seperti perpustakaan, dan kurangnya motivasi belajar siswa. Ketiga faktor ini mempengaruhi kemampuan siswa dalam menulis.*

***Kata Kunci: Performa, permasalahan, pembelajaran menulis***

---

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of studying language is to master four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is recognized as a fundamental skill that facilitates communication among individuals. As children proceed in formal education, writing is employed as a form of communication which demonstrates knowledge and creativity. Teaching writing for students who learn English is one of the important things that have to be done well because it will influence the students' ability in developing their writing ability.

The ability to achieve communicative competence in writing is a

major faced of language development and academic success among students at all levels of the education system. Tarigan (2008: 22) explain that writing is discovered or depicting symbols of graph that depicting a language which can understand by a person so that the others can read the symbols of graph if they understand the language and the picture of graph. Similarly, according to Hermono (2002: 116) Writing is spawned thoughts or feelings (such as compose, create letter) with the inscription. Thus, writing is a series of activities to express an idea in the form of written language symbol that can be read by

the others. Meanwhile, Deporter and Hernacki (2003: 179) explain that writing is the activity of the entire brain using the right hemisphere (emotional) and left hemisphere (logic).

In writing activities, the necessary complexity of activities to draw up a article well which include the grammatical skill, pouring the contents, stylistic skill, mechanically skill, and the skill to decide (Heaton and Slamet, 2007: 142). In compliance with the thing that the writing ability by Akhadiah et.al. (1994:42) is ability of the complex, which requires some knowledge and skills. In connection with the complexity of the activities necessary for the act of writing, so the writing must be learned or acquired by learning process and practicing in earnest. Teaching writing at any level in essence a productive active teaching, which generates (generates a message), the result will be writing (Zuchdi, 1996:62)

Program teaching writing is basically implemented to achieve the following objectives (Mukhsin Ahmadi, 1990: 28):

- a) Encourage students/student to write honestly and responsibly, in relation to the use of the language carefully, integrity and sensitive.
- b) Stimulate the imagination and the power of thought or intellect pupil/student.
- c) Produce or article to good organization, precise, clear, and economical use of language in liberating everything contained in hearts and minds.
- d) A system of creative work requires steps that are systematically arranged. Sharif, Zulkarnaini, and Sumarno (2009: 11) explain that stages of writing consist of six steps, namely: a rough draft, share,

repair, editing, the rewriting, and evaluation.

In this research, the study is focused on writing performance because it would be seen how the students' writing ability under such a condition. Harmer (1998: 79) sees writing as a very important language skill. Writing as a skill: by far the most important reason for teaching writing. It is a basic language skill, just as important speaking, listening, and reading. Writing also plays an important role in teaching because it is one of productive skills in which students are able to produce written form to communicate with others in English. This study observed how the teacher lead the students in learning writing and how is the of response the students in receiving the lesson about writing. One of the aims of writing is to enhance students to be able to understand writing which they might find in their environment. In fact, students often find problems in learning writing.

Based on personal experience and pre-observation which has been done by the researcher in SMP Negeri 8 Sangia Wambulu, there are some students who is have low self-confidence, lack of vocabulary, grammar, writing structure, mechanics and lack of motivation. So, the students cannot write in English.

Based on observation in SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah, the researchers found there were many students still experienced some difficulties in learning English especially writing. Students are difficult to write even though a sentence. Based on that problem the researchers took the research under the title "Students' Writing Performance and Their Problems at the Eight Grade of SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah".

## METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research was applied a qualitative research. Qualitative research is an approach that is also called investigates approach because researcher usually collects data by face to face and interacts with people in a place of research.

The place of this research in SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah and the time of this research was in academic year 2018. Meanwhile, the subject of research which become the source of research data was the students of SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah, which was 10 students, and 1 English teacher.

The data collection techniques that researchers used in this study were; (1) Protocol Analysis. The source of data in this research is Primary data. Primary data

is the main data as the subject of this research who can provide information about research data. (2) Secondary Data. In this case the research focused on literature that has something to do with the phenomena under researched. Meanwhile, the sources of data in this research used interview, and observation. The data analysis technique of this research used model of Miles and Huberman (1984). It is understood along with the qualitative data performed interactively and takes place continuously through to completion so that the data is already saturated. Activities in the data analysis include data reduction, data presentation, data verification or commonly known as the conclusion the verification.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Findings

#### 1. The Result of Interview with Teacher

- a. Question 1: (How are the performance of students of class VIII at SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah in writing?)

*“Siswa-siswa disini masih kurang kemampuannya menulis dalam bahasa Inggris. Jika siswa disuruh menulis sebuah paragraf mereka terlihat sangat kesulitan dan tidak dapat membuat paragraf yang bagus”.*

Based on the teachers' answer above it can be concluded that the students has less ability in writing. It is difficult for them to produce a good paragraph in English.

- b. Question 2: (How do teacher teach students to write?)

*“Pada pembelajaran menulis saya mengarahkan siswa untuk menulis berdasarkan contoh. Jadi, saya perlihatkan contoh yang ada di buku pegangan saya dan mereka menuliskannya”.*

The statement above shows that the teacher's method to teach is not exact especially in teaching writing. The students just write based on the example of the book, they will not know about the role of good writing. The teachers only give example and never give explanation how to write.

- c. Question 3: (What are the teacher's constraints in teaching writing)

*"Pada saat mengajar saya dibatasi oleh waktu karena terkadang saya datangnya terlambat berhubung tempat tinggal saya jauh dari sini. Jadi untuk membimbing mereka satu-satu dalam menulis itu waktu belajarnya tidak cukup. Di sini juga tidak ada buku belajar siswa hanya ada buku pegangan guru jadi tidak ada media belajar siswa selain dari pengajaran yang saya berikan".*

Based on teacher's explanation, it is clear that the teacher experienced some obstacles in teaching writing. The teacher is less discipline teaching, limited time to teach and the lack of learning media.

- d. Question 4: (What learning models do teacher use in learning)

*"Biasanya saya menggunakan model grammar basic method."*

Based on teacher explanation, it can be concluded that the students are difficult in writing class it cause by some aspect such as: the teacher didn't have enough time to teach them, this school also have limited writing book that lack them to improve their writing skill.

## 2. Interview with Students

The researcher asked a few things to the respondents, according to

the interview guide prepared. The researcher interviewed 10 students of grade eight SMPN 8 Buton Tengah. Below are the transcript of interview between student and researcher.

- a. Question 1 from all samples:

Researcher: *(Do you have interest in writing learning)?*

*From total ten samples there were five people interest or like the writing class they were samples number 5,7,8,9, and 10, there were three students had less interest in writing class and there were two students didn't like the writing class.*

- b. Question 2 from all samples

Researcher: *(How the teacher guiding you in teaching writing?)*

*From the total ten samples there were eight students said they just write from the white board in writing class. They were samples number 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and there were two students were asked to write their experiences.*

- c. Question 3 from all samples:

Researcher: *(How is your respond when your teacher give you a lesson about writing?)*

*From ten respondents there six respondents were happy with the writing lesson, they were respondents number 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and the rest of that were unhappy in writing class.*

- d. Question 4 from all samples:  
Researcher: *(What is your problem in writing class?)*

*From ten samples there were seven students have the same problem they were lack in vocabulary, they were students number 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and there were three student have another problem they didn't know to write in English.*

- e. Question 5 from all samples:  
Researcher: *(How you improve your skill in writing?)*

*From total samples there were six students memorize the vocabulary to improve their writing skill, they were samples number 1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and four samples keep practicing to improve their writing skill.*

- f. Question 5 from all samples:  
Researcher: *(Have you ever did practice outside the school?)*

*From all samples there were five students often the practice in the school they were students number 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10 and another 1 student never and four students were seldom to practice.*

- g. Question 5 from all samples:  
Researcher: *(Are you interested if your teacher give you a task about writing?)*

*From all samples there were five students were interest in writing class they were students*

*number 2,7,8,9, and 10, and there were four students didn't like writing and the last one are sometime like sometime didn't like.*

Based on the answer above can be said that basically the students like to write and interested to the writing lesson. From all the samples which is consist of 10 students, it can be concluded that there were six students like to write and the rest of that they didn't like to write. Most of them have the same problem in writing class where the students are lack of vocabulary when they want to write something.

### **3. The Result of Observation**

Based on researcher observation there are some factors that affect the students' unable to write. The first factor is the less discipline of the teacher in teaching. The teachers always come late in the learning process and it is not optimal especially in writing learning. The reason why the teacher came late because the teacher's house quite far from school.

The factor is the school has limitedness learning media. This factor also affects the students unable to write. The students do not have media to be able to learn on their own in the classroom when the teacher was not there. Besides two factors above students' limitedness economic also affects students' ability in writing. In learning English the students should have dictionary in order to add knowledge about vocabulary. However, the researcher seen that not all of the

students have dictionary when learning English. From 37 students there were only three students who have dictionary.

#### 4. The Result of Documents

##### a. Grammar Problem

Based on result of account in from of test there are some problems in grammar such the use “to be”, for example:

*“may school SMPN 8 Buton Tengah”*

The sentence above does not have “to be” so the sentence is no clear and wrong. The second grammar problem that the structure of the sentence is not perfect. In the result of account there is a sentence without subject, for example:

*“Although have limited facilities but we spirit to study”*, for the correct sentence is “although the school has limited facilities but we are still spirit to learn”.

The sentence above do not have subject. In the sentence should there is a subject before verb. The third grammar problem in students’ writing is about adding suffix “-s” to indicate that the plural word. The sentence is:

*“the school have four building and seven room”* for the correct sentence is “ the school has four buildings and seven rooms”.

The word “building” in the sentence above should add suffix “-s”. Adding suffix “-s” in the word is important because it can explain the meaning of the word. Before word “building” there is word “two” that

the meaning plural. The word “building” should add suffix “-s” in order the meaning word agree with the context of sentence. The context of sentence the building are two. The word “building” must add suffix “-s” to indicate the meaning is plural.

##### b. Vocabulary Problem

Vocabulary problem on the result of students’ account is there are a lot of incorrect in choosing vocabulary and the vocabulary that incorrect for the writing. The sentence that incorrect in choosing vocabulary is, for example;

*“the teacher teach as very well”*. The correct sentence for the incorrect sentence is *“The teacher taught us very well”*.

The students are incorrect in choosing vocabulary. The word “may” should “my”. If the students use word “may” of course the sentence will be unclear because not agree with the context of sentence.

##### c. Punctuation

Based on the result of students’ account there are some sentences that the punctuation are not appropriate. The punctuation error is about using capital letter. There are some sentences does not using capital letters on the beginning of the sentences such as:

1. “my school is SMPN 8 Buton Tengah”, for the correct sentence is “My school is SMPN 8 Buton Tengah”.
2. “My school have field to physical exercise”. The correct

sentence is “My school have field to physical exercise”.

The two sentences above are not using capital letter in the beginning of sentences. The correct sentences are the sentences which use the capital letter in the beginning of the sentences. Besides it does not use capital letter in the beginning of the sentences, the students also use capital letter in the middle of the sentence. If use capital letter in the middle of the sentences is one of error punctuation.

#### **d. Content**

The content in students' writing is unclear, for example:

1. “ray cless divide into three rooms with the teachers room”.  
The correct sentence for the sentence above is “My class divides into two rooms with the teachers” room”.
2. “the teachers in my school teach es kery weel”. For the sentence is “The teachers in my school teach us very well”.

The sentences above have unclear content. It is because the sentence has incorrect vocabulary. The incorrect vocabulary in the sentence affects the content of the sentence.

#### **e. Idea**

Most of the students' writing is clear. Some of them has unclear idea, for example:

“I am class VIII. In class VIII have students my have two building an

three rooms. Ray class divided into two rooms with the teachers room. My school no have library and to moratorium although have limited facilities but we spirit to study the teachers in my school teach us kery well my school have field to physical exercise some student do physical exercise when after study”.

The good paragraph for the paragraph above is:

“I am at the second grade of SMP. In my class, there are 37 students. My school have four buildings and seven rooms. My class divided into two rooms, those are class room and teachers' room. My school does not have library and laboratory. Although my school has limited facilities but we still have spirit to study. The teachers in my school teach us very well. My school has field to physical exercise. Some students do physical exercise after studying.

Based on the researcher's analysis the paragraph above has unclear idea. In the paragraph does not indicate specific thing refer to idea in the paragraph. Besides that the paragraph do not have correct punctuation that is why it difficult to analysis the sentences. The punctuation affects the idea of paragraph. If the punctuation is correct it will easy to analyses where the main idea and the supporting sentence, but if the punctuation is wrong the difficult to analysis the idea. In addition the idea also affected by the wrong vocabulary. If the sentences don't meaning then the paragraph will be have unclear idea.

## **B. Discussion**

Based on presentation the result of data analysis it can be described this study is finding about the students' writing performance of Class VIII at SMP Negeri 8 Buton Tengah. Based on the researcher observation the student are difficult to improve their writing skill it cause of some aspect such as: The teacher often come late, they have less of facility such as library and teacher. The students also have some problem in improving their writing skill such as the student are weak in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, content and idea. Students' ability in writing a paragraph based on the writing indicators is not adequate. The students' inability based on data obtained that the students are not able easily to create idea in paragraph and unable to adjust the sentence structure vocabulary, punctuation and content in paragraph.

It is seen from aspect of writing a good paragraph, the students do not show the result the content, idea, structure, punctuation and vocabulary that appropriate. In this case, the results of students' writing cannot be said well because there are many errors in these paragraphs. The error in the form of the sentence structure is not appropriate, the number of incorrect for the writing vocabulary, incorrect punctuation and content and ideas are unclear.

### **1. Grammar**

Viewed from the grammar many students that do not understand about the using grammar in the sentence. According to Lyons (1968: 54) in learning English one of the big students' problems is grammar. The other specialists about grammar problem are according to Dulay and Krashen (1981:

50) grammar problem include: error analysis, error of mission, error of addition, error of selection and error of ordering.

Students in SMPN 8 Buton Tengah were very difficult in mastering the grammar in writing class, it cause of they are difficult to recognize word or changing word in past, future or present also English was difficult because of it was different the write and the pronounce. The effects of the students do not understand about using grammar in sentence so the result of their writing there are many error in grammar. In the grammar problem the students don't understand about using "to be" in the nominal sentence. Besides that the adding suffix "-s" and apostrophe are include also students' obstacle in writing a correct sentence.

### **2. Vocabulary**

Refer to the vocabulary of many students wrong in choosing vocabuslaries and incorrect for the writing vocabulary. The election of wrong vocabulary and wrong writing vocabulary influenced the context of paragraph.

The wrong in choosing vocabulary make the writing unclear meaning. For example, the word "my" witten "may" Both the right vocabulary but their meaning is different and one of them is "may" does not agree with the context of the paragraph.

### **3. Punctuation**

The next indicator of the result of students' writing is about the punctuation. Punctuation is used to



create sense, clarity and stress in sentences. Punctuation is typographic symbol used in spelling system (KBBI, 2008:1393). Punctuation is a symbol that used in writing activity to determine intonation in order someone can comprehend the message.

#### **4. Content**

According to Suriamiharja (1996: 48) a good and effective paragraph should fulfill three rules and regulations. They are cohesion, coherence, and development/completeness of paragraph. Refer to the content, the results of the students' writing is unclear. The students' writing are not cohesion, coherence and complete.

#### **5. Idea**

Akhadiah, et al (in Agus Suriamiharja, 1996: 46), explain that "in

paragraph have one unit idea which support by all off main sentence or topic sentence, supporting sentence and closing sentence". In order can extend idea and feeling in writing, it needs enough vocabulary and choosing of correct vocabulary. In choosing the word should be fulfill two main rules and regulations are exactness and uniformity. (Suriamiharja, *et al* 1996: 25)

Refer to the idea the results of the students' writing do not have clear idea. In their writing cannot determine the main idea and supporting sentences. This happen because the grammar, vocabulary and punctuation in the students' writing are not appropriate. It make the idea of paragraph unclear. Such as the content, the idea of paragraph also influenced by grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research results it showed that the students' have some problems in writing performance at grade VIII SMPNegeri 8 Buton Tengah is inaccurate and non-current. Based on the researcher observation the student are difficult to improve their writing skill it cause of some aspect such as: The teacher often come late, they have less of facility such as library and teacher. The students also have some problem in improving their writing skill such as the student are weak in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, content and idea. Students' ability in writing a paragraph based on the writing indicators is not adequate.

The unable of the students influenced by some factors are teacher factor, school factor, and students' factor. The teacher factors are less discipline in teaching and the teaching method is inappropriate. The school factor that the school have limitedness learning facilities. The students factor that the students' limitedness motivation. The three factors Affect student's ability in writing.

### **Suggestion**

Based on the conclusions of this study submitted suggestions, as follows:

1. Learning to write should be more increase through giving some training to students in writing with due respect to

- the contents of the article, essay organization, use of language, diction (word choice), structure of sentences and the use of spelling and punctuation.
2. The principal should warn teachers to be discipline and optimal teaching without any reason so that the teacher can further improve discipline in teaching.
  3. Teachers should be more discipline in teaching without any reason to be able to teach optimally and can guide the students properly, especially in writing.
  4. Students should further enhance the mastery of the theory, practice hard to write a good and right and increasing knowledge of vocabulary.
  5. The government should pay attention to the condition of the existing school in remote area, especially learning media so that the students can learn same as with students the school is not in remote area.
  6. For the next researchers, it is expected to take the same research in depth with various design of research so the new thing will be founded that affect the students' writing ability in learning how to write.

## REFERENCES

- Agus Suriamiharja, dkk. (1996). *Petunjuk Praktis Menulis*. Jakarta: Depdikbud.
- Ahmadi, Mukhsin. (1990). *Strategi Belajar Mengajar Keterampilan Berbahasa dan Apresiasi Sastra*. Malang: YA3.
- Akhadiah, Sabarti. (1994). *Pembinaan Kemampuan Menulis Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Deporter, Bobbi & Mike Hernacki. (2003). *Quantum Learning*. Jakarta: Kaifa.
- Darmiyati, Zuchdi. (1996). *Pembelajaran Menulis dengan Pendekatan Proses*. Pidato Karya Ilmiah disampaikan pada sidang senat FPBS UNY.
- Harmer, Jeremy. (1998). *How to Teach English*. England: Person Education Limited.
- Heaton and Slamet St. Y. (2008). *Menulis Merupakan Keterampilan yang Sukar dan Kompleks*.
- Hermono. (2002). *Mengikat Makna*. Bandung: Kaifa.
- Lyons, John. (1968). *Introduction to Theoretical*. London: Cambridge University press.
- Miles, A.M and Huberman. (1984). *Qualitative Data Analysis: a source book of new methods volume 175 from sage library of social research*. sage publications.
- Stepen, D Krashen. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Syarif Elina, Zulkarnaini, Sumarno. (2009). *Pembelajaran Menulis*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.
- Tarigan, H.G. (2008). *Menulis Sebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa*. Bandung: Angkasa.