

Analysis Of Student's Difficulties In Writing Procedure Texts In Class XI-1 Computer And Network Engineering

Putri Lidiana Permata Sari¹, Nabila Arizka Jauhari Nasution², Ayu Mulyani Zein³,
Resty Anggica Marpaung⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Asahan University, North Sumatra, Indonesia

Corresponding author e-mail: putrilidiana88@gmail.com

Article History: Received on 05 January 2025, Revised on 05 April 2025,

Published on 04 June 2025

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the difficulties experienced by class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering students at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan in writing procedural texts in English. The main focus of this study is to identify linguistic and non-linguistic aspects that become obstacles in the writing process, such as the use of text structure, grammar, vocabulary, as well as motivational factors and understanding of the context of procedural texts. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and analysis of student-written documents. The research findings indicate that most students experience difficulties in systematically compiling procedural steps, using appropriate imperative sentences, and low mastery of technical vocabulary appropriate to their vocational fields. In addition, the lack of writing practice and limited learning media also exacerbate the existing obstacles. This study recommends the importance of direct practice-based learning strategies, the use of interactive digital media, and strengthening contextual vocabulary learning to improve the ability to write procedural texts in vocational high school students. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for English teachers in designing teaching strategies that are more effective and relevant to the needs of vocational students.

Keywords: Procedure Text, Vocational Students, Writing Difficulties.

A. Introduction

English writing skills are one of the important productive skills to be mastered by students, especially in the context of vocational education which emphasizes language mastery for professional purposes (Umi Kalsum, 2023). One type of text that is the focus of English learning at the Vocational High School (SMK) level is *the procedural text*, which is a text that functions to provide instructions or steps in doing something systematically (Permatasari & Muslimin, 2021). For students in the Computer and Network Engineering expertise program, mastery of *procedural text* is not only related to curriculum achievements, but is also relevant to the needs of the world of work which requires them to be able to understand and compile operational procedures in English (Sahputra, 2024).

However, in practice, writing *procedural texts* is often a challenge for vocational high school students (Iskandar, Kalsum, Zulkarnen, & Zakiyah, 2023). The results of initial observations and informal discussions with subject teachers indicate that many class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering students at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan experience difficulties in writing procedural texts that comply with the correct structure and language rules. These difficulties include understanding the text structure (*goal, materials, and steps*), the use of imperative sentences, and limited technical vocabulary appropriate to their field of expertise. In addition, factors such as lack of motivation, low interest in reading English texts, and learning methods that are not fully contextual contribute to worsening students' abilities in writing skills.

Research on students' difficulties in writing English texts, particularly *procedural texts*, has been extensively conducted in secondary education contexts. Previous studies have (Nurhasanah, 2025) highlighted general aspects of writing difficulties, such as text structure, grammar mastery, and vocabulary deficits. They (Andriyani & Fitria, 2021) have also explored how internal factors such as learning motivation and language anxiety influence students' writing performance. However, studies addressing vocational education contexts remain limited, particularly for students with technology and computer backgrounds.

Studies (Marwan, 2024) focusing on vocational high school (SMK) students majoring in Computer and Network Engineering are relatively limited, despite the fact that the characteristics and needs of vocational high school students differ significantly from those of regular school students. Previous research (Hamdani & Kusumawati, 2022) has tended to be general in nature and has not specifically explored the difficulties of writing *procedural text* relevant to vocational needs (ESP English for Specific Purposes). Yet, in the workplace, vocational high school students in engineering fields are required to be able to write and understand technical procedures in English, such as hardware instructions or network configuration steps.

The novelty of this research lies in its context and approach that focuses on students majoring in Computer and Network Engineering at vocational high schools, as well as an analysis that includes not only linguistic aspects (text structure, grammar, vocabulary), but also non-linguistic aspects such as motivation, learning media, and the relevance of the material to the expertise competencies. By examining grade XI-1 students of SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan, this research provides an empirical contribution to the development of more appropriate and contextual vocational-based English teaching strategies. This research also seeks to answer the need for more specific and applicable studies in teaching writing to vocational high school students.

This research is crucial to thoroughly identify the various difficulties students face in writing *procedural texts*. By understanding the root causes of these problems, teachers can design more effective learning approaches tailored to their needs. Furthermore, the findings are expected to contribute to the development of contextual,

communicative, and vocational-based English writing learning strategies (ESP – English for Specific Purposes). Thus, this study aims to descriptively analyze the difficulties experienced by class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering students at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan in writing *procedure texts*, both from linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives. This study is expected to provide an empirical basis for the development of more relevant and applicable writing teaching methods in the SMK environment.

B. Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the difficulties experienced by students in writing *procedural texts*. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore data holistically and contextually based on phenomena that occur naturally in the student's learning environment (Creswell, 2020). The main focus of this study is to identify various types of difficulties experienced by class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering students at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan, both from linguistic (text structure, grammar, vocabulary) and non-linguistic (motivation, understanding of context, and learning strategies) aspects.

Data collection techniques were conducted through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of student writing (Intan Bayzura Sirait, 2025). Observations were conducted to directly observe the learning process of writing procedural texts, including teacher-student interactions, teaching methods, and student responses to the material. Interviews were conducted with several students and English teachers to explore their views, experiences, and perceptions regarding the difficulties faced in learning writing. Meanwhile, document analysis was used to systematically assess student writing based on aspects of structure, language, and completeness of content.

The data analysis technique uses an interactive model that (Moleong, 2000) includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and focusing information relevant to the research objectives. Data presentation is done in the form of descriptive narratives and tables of findings. Meanwhile, conclusions are drawn by linking the data obtained to answer the research problem formulation comprehensively.

Data validity (trustworthiness) is maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, namely comparing data from observations, interviews, and student documents, to ensure the consistency and validity of the information obtained. This step is in accordance with what is suggested by (Sugiyono, 2022), that validity in qualitative research is obtained through diligent observation, sufficient references, and triangulation. With this method, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the difficulties of vocational high school students in writing *procedural texts*, as well as become a basis for developing more effective and contextual learning strategies in teaching English in vocational education.

C. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of observations conducted during the learning process of writing procedural texts in class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering of SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan, a number of problems were found which were the main indicators of students' difficulties in writing *procedural texts*. Observations were conducted directly in the classroom for three meetings, focusing on students' learning behavior, responses to teacher instructions, and the final results of the writing activities carried out.

The first finding shows that most students do not yet understand the basic structure of *procedural text*, which consists of the components *goal*, *materials*, and *steps*. In practice, many students skip the *materials section*, or write the *steps section* in a disorganized manner and do not use imperative sentences appropriately. This indicates that their understanding of the function and format of procedural text is still low.

Furthermore, in terms of language, students appeared to have difficulty constructing sentences using correct grammar. Their sentences tended to be inconsistent in their use of tense, particularly the *simple present tense*, which is the basic form in procedural texts. Furthermore, numerous errors were found in the use of vocabulary, both general and technical, related to the field of computer and networking expertise. For example, terms like "install," "connect," or "configure" were often used incorrectly or even replaced with Indonesian equivalents.

Furthermore, observations also showed that student participation in writing activities was still low. Some students appeared passive, unenthusiastic, and confused when given the task of writing *procedural texts*. This was reinforced by the fact that they were more accustomed to theoretical learning and listening to teacher explanations, rather than practicing writing independently. The lack of interactive learning media and the limited use of examples of procedural texts that were contextualized to the world of work also exacerbated this situation.

In general, observations show that students' difficulties in writing *procedural texts* are not only caused by limited linguistic abilities, but also by a limited understanding of text structure and low motivation and active engagement in the learning process. These findings indicate the need to strengthen teaching approaches that are more practical, contextual, and tailored to the needs of vocational high school students based on vocational competencies.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of students' difficulties in writing *procedure texts*, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with three informants representing different perspectives, namely: (1) the English subject teacher of class XI-1, (2) one of the students who had good achievements in English, and (3) a student who was known to have difficulties in writing.

Interviews with English teachers revealed that the majority of students still struggle

to understand the basic structure of *procedural texts*. The teacher stated that many students simply write the steps of the procedure without paying attention to the complete format, such as the *goals* and *materials* sections. The teacher also highlighted that weak mastery of technical vocabulary and poor grammar skills are major obstacles. He added that current learning methods have been classical and have not optimized digital media or contextual practice due to limited school facilities.

Meanwhile, an interview with one of the high-achieving students revealed that although he was able to write *procedural texts* with relatively good structure, he acknowledged that the process remained challenging. He stated that the biggest obstacles were choosing and using appropriate vocabulary and avoiding direct translations from Indonesian. He stated that more regular practice and the use of sample texts relevant to the Computer and Network Engineering major were very helpful in understanding how to write technical instructions correctly.

In contrast, interviews with students experiencing learning difficulties revealed that they lacked a clear understanding of the purpose of the *procedural text writing assignment*. They admitted to being confused by English terms and unsure how to organize them into logical steps. They also reported that their teacher's explanations were often too fast, and they felt insecure due to their fear of making mistakes. They expressed their hope that their teachers would provide more visual examples and practice exercises with step-by-step guidance.

From these three sources, it can be concluded that the difficulties experienced by students in writing *procedural texts* are multidimensional, involving linguistic factors (such as grammar and vocabulary), understanding of text structure, and learning approaches that are still not optimal in supporting the needs of vocational students. These results reinforce previous observations and emphasize the importance of innovation in English language learning methods in vocational schools, particularly by utilizing an *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP)-based approach.

The results of this study indicate that students of class XI-1 Computer and Network Engineering at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan face various difficulties in writing *procedure texts*, both from the aspects of text structure, use of grammar, technical vocabulary, to active involvement in the learning process. This finding is in line with research conducted by (Rahmawati, 2025), which revealed that students often have difficulty in compiling *procedure texts* systematically due to a weak understanding of text structure and a lack of contextual practice.

Linguistically, students in this study tended to make errors in the use of *the simple present tense* and lacked understanding of the imperative sentence form commonly used in *procedural texts*. This is reinforced by findings (Fitria, 2024) that note grammatical weaknesses are a dominant obstacle in students' writing skills. Lack of mastery of *technical vocabulary* is also a significant challenge, especially for vocational high school students majoring in technical subjects. In this context, (Putri & Susilowati, 2024) it emphasizes that vocational high school students need an *English*

for *Specific Purposes (ESP)* -based learning approach so they can master vocabulary relevant to their fields of expertise.

Non-linguistic aspects such as low motivation, lack of active student participation, and limited media and learning strategies also contribute to the low quality of student writing. Interviews indicate that students feel insecure and passive because they are not given enough space to practice independently. Research (Sutarto & Wulandari, 2020) supports these findings, where writing instruction that is still dominated by lecture methods has been shown to be less effective in developing productive skills such as writing.

Furthermore, observations also show that teachers have not fully utilized digital learning media or contextualized examples of procedural texts relevant to students' majors. This indicates the need for a more innovative and practice-based approach. As explained by (Anugrah & Pratiwi, 2021), the integration of interactive media and the use of examples relevant to students' lives can improve students' understanding of structure and written expression skills.

Thus, the findings of this study not only confirm the findings of previous studies but also provide new contributions to the context of vocational education, particularly in vocational high schools majoring in Computer and Network Engineering. This research emphasizes the importance of developing *ESP-based*, contextual writing learning strategies that encourage active student participation in the learning process.

D. Conclusions

This study concludes that 11th-grade Computer and Network Engineering students at SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan experience various difficulties in writing *procedural texts*. These difficulties include incomplete understanding of text structure, weak mastery of grammar, inappropriate use of technical vocabulary, and low student motivation and participation in the learning process. In addition, theoretical teaching methods and the lack of contextual learning media also worsen the effectiveness of writing learning. These findings provide important implications for English teachers in vocational schools, especially in implementing a more applicable, practice-based approach that is in line with vocational needs. The use of digital learning media, relevant examples of technical procedural texts, and reinforcement of *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*-based teaching can help significantly improve students' writing skills. Limitations in this study lie in the scope of the data which only covers one class and the qualitative data collection method. This makes the results of the study cannot be generalized widely to all vocational high school students. Future research is recommended to involve more participants from various majors in vocational high schools and combine quantitative approaches to obtain more varied and measurable data. In addition, testing of *ESP-based* interventions or interactive digital media also needs to be carried out to measure the effectiveness of more innovative teaching methods in improving the ability to write procedural texts.

E. Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to all those who supported and contributed to the completion of this study. Special thanks go to the English teacher of SMK Bina Satria Medan Marelan and the students of class XI-1 TKJ for their cooperation and willingness to participate. Appreciation is also extended to the academic supervisors and lecturers at Asahan University for their valuable guidance, as well as to peers who offered encouragement and constructive feedback throughout the research process.

References

Andriyani, L., & Fitria, T. (2021). Teaching English for Specific Purposes to Vocational Students: Challenges and Strategies. *Journal of English Teaching and Learning Issues*, 4 (1), 33-42.

Anugrah, R., & Pratiwi, N. (2021). Students' Difficulties in Writing Procedure Text at Junior High School. *Journal of English Language and Education*, 6 (2), 87-95.

Creswell, J. (2020). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage Publications.

Fitria, T. (2024). Teaching Writing Procedure Text by Using Guided Writing Strategy. *Journal of English Language and Literature (JELL)*, 4 (2), 70-76.

Hamdani, A., & Kusumawati, E. (2022). The Effect of Teaching Strategy on Students' Writing Skill in Procedure Text. *Journal of Language and Literature Education*, 5 (1), 45-53.

Intan Bayzura Sirait, JD (2025). Analysis Of Factors Inhibiting Changes In The Independent Curriculum In Private Elementary Madrasah In Tandungbalai City. *Jurnal Abshar (Islamic Family Law, Education, Islamic Studies and Humanities)*, 5 (1), 20-24.

Iskandar, T., Kalsum, U., Zulkarnen, & Zakiyah, N. (2023). *Philosophy of Islamic Educational Management: A Study of Educational Management from an Islamic Philosophical Perspective*. Nganjuk: DEWA PUBLISHING.

Marwan, A. (2024). ESP Teaching for Vocational High School Students: Teachers' Beliefs and Practices. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9 (3), 545-553.

Moleong, LJ (2000). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.

Nurhasanah, S. (2025). Grammatical Errors in Writing Procedure Text: A Case Study of Vocational High School Students. *JELE (Journal of English Language and Education)*, 6 (1), 34-42.

Permatasari, A., & Muslimin, A. (2021). Analyzing the Students' Difficulties in Writing Procedure Text Using Grammar Correctly. *JELLT (Journal of English Language and Language Teaching)*, 5 (1), 12-20.

Putri, MA, & Susilowati, R. (2024). Students' Anxiety in Writing Procedure Text. *ELT Forum: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8 (1), 12-20.

Rahmawati. (2025). The Analysis of Students' Problems in Writing Procedure Text. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 3 (5), 580-585.

Sahputra, HY (2024). Utilization of Social Media as a Supporting Tool for Educational Success at Bumi Qur'an Siantar Middle School. *Mudarrisuna Journal: Media for Islamic Religious Education Studies*, 14 (4), 476-487. doi:10.22373/jm.v14i4.24509

Sugiyono. (2022). *Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Research Methods*. Bandung: CV. Alfabeta.

Sutarto, H., & Wulandari, D. (2020). Analysis of Students' Writing Difficulties in Procedure Texts. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 5 (3), 112-120.

Umi Kalsum, PS (2023). *Contemporary Issues*. Jambi: PT. Sonpedia Publishing.