

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' PROBLEMS AT SMP ISLAM AL – ISHLAH BUKITTINGGI IN WRITING SHORT MESSAGE

Zilvia Rismi MZ¹, Lailatul Husna², Ernati²

¹The Student of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

E-mail : zilviarismi@gmail.com

²The English Lecturers of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to describe the second year students' problems in writing short message at SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi. This research was limited to the students' problems in writing addressee, students' problems in writing content, students' problems in writing sender, students' problems in using grammar, students' problems in using vocabulary and students' problems in applying mechanic in writing short message. The design of this research was descriptive research. The population of this research was the second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi. The total number of the population members was 131 students, which are distributed into 5 classes. The researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample. The sample of this research was class VIII.A and VIII.B. To find out the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique by using two scorers. Then, the test was valid in term of content validity. The total number of sample was 53 students. Generally, the result of analyzing data showed that the second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi have problems in writing short message. It could be seen that 73.58% students have problems in writing short message. In detail the percentage of each aspects of writing short message were; 62.26% have problems in writing addressee, 33.96% have problems in writing content, 33.96% have problems in writing sender, 58.49% have problems in using grammar, 24.53% have problems in using vocabulary, 79.25% have problems in applying mechanic in writing short message. Based on the result of finding, the teachers are suggested to explain more about how to write short message, should give the exercise about grammar and how to apply mechanic correctly in writing short message. The students are suggested to do writing exercise not only in the school, but do practicing at home.

Key Words: Problems, Writing, Short Message

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary school until university. But today, based on the curriculum 2013, English is not taught for elementary school, only junior high school, senior high school and college or university students

learn English. English language skills are divided into two forms of language: oral language which consists of listening and speaking skills, and written language consists of reading and writing skills. Language components such as vocabulary,

mechanic, and grammar are also needed in English.

Harmer (2004:4) states that writing is used for a wide variety of purposes and it is produced in different form. While Rohman (2002:7) adds that writing is usefully described as a process, something which shows continuous change in time like growth in organic nature. Different things happen at different stages in the process of putting thoughts into words and words into paper. Writing is not a natural skill because someone cannot master this skill automatically and easily. To master it, someone should have writing practice. This may stimulate the writing skill by expressing feeling, thoughts in a good passage. Practice makes perfect, in order to have a good writing skill, practicing is really required and needed.

Writing is a product which is influenced by some elements such as grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary. In junior high school, the basic competency that should be achieved in the writing English subject is the students should have the competence to write and comprehend short functional text, or monologue texts such as narrative, descriptive, report, recount and procedure.

In junior high school, writing skill is taught integrated with other language skills. There are many materials given in

junior high school, one of them is about genre. There are five genres which are taught to the students of Junior high school. The genres are narrative, recount, report, procedure and descriptive text. Junior high school students also learn about short functional text.

According to Cameron and Myers (2013:1), the purpose of functional text is to give you specific information. Meanwhile, Setiasih (2012:3) says that short functional text has social function to inform something. It calls short functional text because the text is short and has specific information. Functional texts provide information and directions to help students.

Based on the researcher's interview with some students and English teacher of SMP Islam Al - Ishlah Bukittinggi, the students had studied about short message. The students said that they had many problems when the teacher asked them to write in English, for example the students did not know with the vocabulary, grammar, and they were not interested to write because English was considered as difficult subject for some students. The teacher also said that the students still had problems in writing. The students had problem with grammar, lack of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and they

also had problem in making a good sentence arrangement.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled “An Analysis of the Second Year Students’ Problems at SMP Islam Al - Ishlah Bukittinggi in Writing Short Message”.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was descriptive method that described student’s problems in writing short message. According to Gay (1987:189), descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Gay (1987:189) also says that descriptive research is useful in investigating many kinds of educational problem. This research was designed to analyze the students’ problem in writing short message.

According to Gay (1987:102), the population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalized. The population of this research was the second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi. The total number of population members was 131 students. They were divided into five classes; VIII.A, VIII.B, VIII.C, VIII.D, VIII.E.

The researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample. Gay (1987:110) says that cluster random sampling is a sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected, and all the members of selected groups have similar characteristic. The sample was selected randomly because all members of second year students at SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had the same chance to be the sample. They had the same syllabus, teaching materials and time allocation.

To select the sample, the names of each class were written on small pieces of paper and put them into a box. After shaking them, two of classes were chosen, and the class VIII.A and VIII.B were the sample of this research.

The instrument of this research was writing test. The students were asked to write a short message by choosing one of the given topics in 40 minutes. The topics were:

- a. A short message for an appointment.
- b. A short message for cancellation of an appointment.
- c. A short message for a school OSIS meeting.
- d. A short message for cancellation of school OSIS meeting.
- e. A short message for giving information or instructions.

Then the researcher explained about what the students have to do to avoid the mistake in doing the test.

A good test should be valid and reliable. A test is valid if it measures what it is supposed to be measured. Siregar (2012:162) states that one of the test validity is content validity. To see the validity of the test, the researcher used content validity, it means the test should be constructed based on the curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials.

According to Gay (1987:135), reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. To find out the reliability of the test and to minimize the subjectivity in scoring, the researcher used inter-rater technique. It means the researcher uses two assessors. They are the researcher and Digo Afria. The researcher chose him because he has good result in writing and grammar subjects. To calculate the coefficient correlation, the researcher used the Pearson Product Moment formula (Arikunto, 2009:72) as follow:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} = the coefficient correlation between first and second assessor.

$\sum xy$ = the total number of students who had problems.

n = the total number of students.

x = the average number of students who had problems identified by the first assessor.

y = the average number of students who had problems identified by the second assessor.

Finally, the researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation based on Arikunto's idea (2009:75) as follows:

.81 – 1. = very high correlation

.61 – .80 = high correlation

.41 – .60 = moderate

.21 – .40 = low correlation

.00 – .20 = very low

In this research, the correlation coefficient of the test was (.99). It was significant because the value of r -calculated (.99) was bigger than r -table (.235) with df $N-2$ and $\alpha = .05$. The correlation coefficient was very high correlation, based on the degree of correlation of coefficient which is categorized by Arikunto above.

The data of this research were the students' problems in writing short functional text in the form of short message. The procedures in data collection were as follows:

1. The researcher gave direction to the students to do the test clearly.
2. The researcher distributed the test to the students.
3. The researcher copied the students' answer sheets. The original one is for the first assessor and the other one for the second assessor.
4. The researcher and the second assessor read the students' writing and identify the problems based on the criteria below:
 - a) The students have problems in writing the addressee of short message if they do not use comma after the addressee and do not use capital letter at the beginning of the addressee and for the name of people.
e.g. - Dear Ginny,
Comma is always used after the addressee (Burt, 2003:125) and name of people always begin with capital letter (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:7). The salutation begins with a capital letter (Burt, 2003:121).
 - b) The students have problems in writing the content of short message if they do not write both of the important point (what, when and where the appointment and meeting will be done) and clear instruction in the short message.
 - c) The students have problems in writing the sender of short message if they do not use capital letter at the

beginning of the sender and for the name of people.

e.g. - Sincerely yours,
- Vivian

- d) The students have problems in using grammar if they make mistake in the sentence pattern, the use of incorrect to be, pronoun, auxiliary and verb.
e.g. - **My mom are sick**, so I have to accompany her to see the doctor.
- **She are** very busy today.
- **I can't to come** to your house this afternoon.
- e) The students have problems in vocabulary if they use the inappropriate words, such as the incorrect used of noun, verb, adjective and adverb. e.g:

The incorrect one	The correct one
We provide social agenda in Payakumbuh.	We will do social agenda in Payakumbuh.

- f) The students have problems in mechanic do not capitalize the first letter at the beginning of the sentences, do not capitalize the first letter after end punctuation (.), do not capitalize the pronoun I, and do not use period end punctuation (.) at the

end of sentences and do not use appropriate comma in the sentences.

5. Then, the researcher gave check “ ” to the kinds of problem that the students have in writing short message by using the table.

To analyze the data, the researcher used the procedures as follow:

1. The researcher checked the table that indicate student's problem on each aspect of writing short message.
2. The researcher counted the number of students who have problems on each aspect of short message.
3. The researcher counted the percentage of the students who have problems on each component of writing short message by using formula by Arikunto (2005:187) as follow:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of the problems

F = Frequency of the students

N = Total sample

4. And the last, the researcher concluded the number of students who have problem in writing short message. If it is more than half (50%) students have problems, it means that this class has problem.

But, if it is less than (50%), it means this class doesn't have problems.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

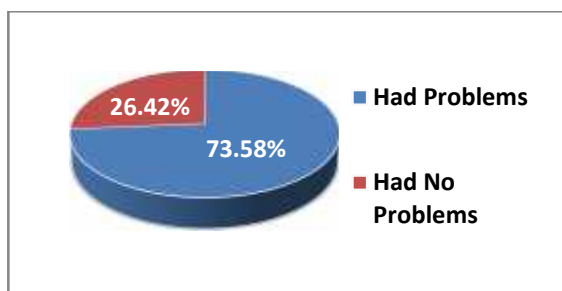
Findings

The purposes of this research are to know and to describe the students' problems in writing short message. Therefore, the researcher presents the findings of the research as follow:

The Students Problems in Writing Short Message

The result showed that after analyzing the data in general, it was found that the students had problems in writing short message. In general there were 39 students (73.58%) who had problems in writing short message. In detail there were 33 students (62.26%) who had problems in writing addressee, 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing content, 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing sender, 31 students (58.49%) who had problems in using grammar, 13 students (24.53%) who had problems in using vocabulary, 42 students (79.25%) who had problems in applying mechanic. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1 below:

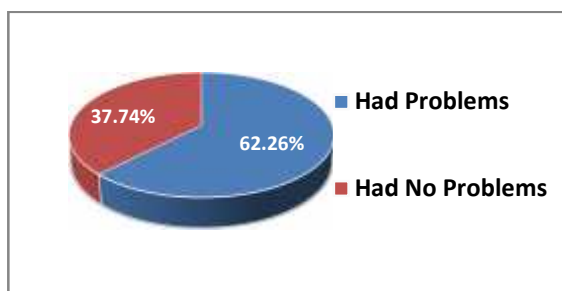
Diagram 4.1:
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Writing Short Message



The Students' Problems in Writing Addressee of Short Message

This part presents the students' problems in writing addressee of short message. The researcher found 33 students' (73.58%) who had problems in writing addressee of short message. Based on the indicator in analyzing the data, the students were said having problems if the percentage of students who had problems were 50%. It means the students had problems in writing addressee of short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.2 below:

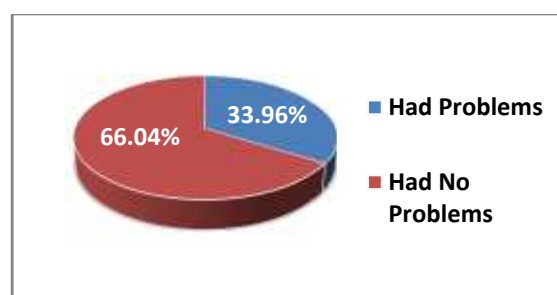
Diagram 4.1.2
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Writing Addressee of Short Message



The Students' Problems in Writing Content of Short Message

The researcher found 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing content of short message. It means the students had no problems in writing content of short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.3 below:

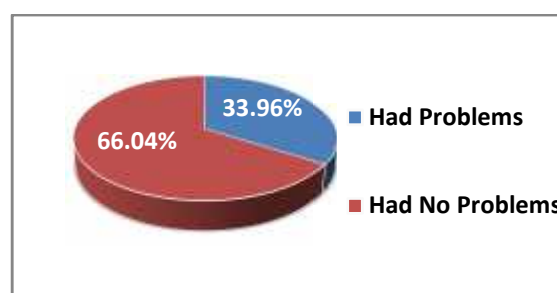
Diagram 4.1.3
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Writing Content of Short Message



The Students' Problems in Writing Sender of Short Message

The researcher found 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing sender of short message. It means the students had no problems in writing sender of short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.4 below:

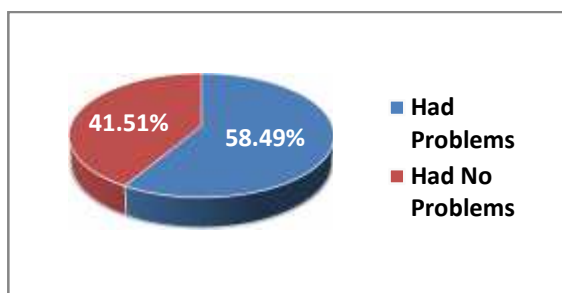
Diagram 4.1.4
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Writing Sender of Short Message



The Students' Problems in Using Grammar in Writing Short Message

The researcher found 31 students (58.49%) who had problems in using grammar in writing short message. It means the students had problems in using grammar in writing short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.5 bellow:

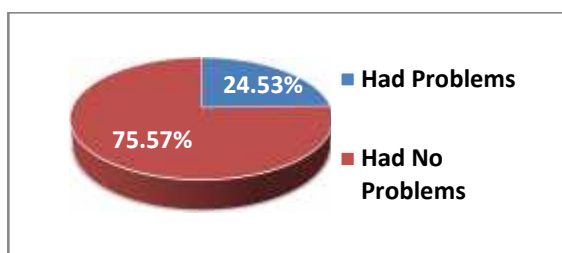
Diagram 4.1.5
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Using Grammar in Writing Short Message



The Students' Problems in Using Vocabulary in Writing Short Message

The researcher found 13 students (24.53%) who had problems in using vocabulary in writing short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.6 bellow:

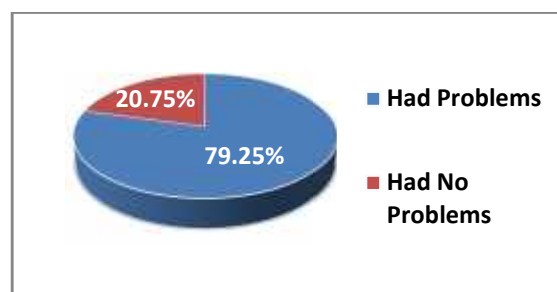
Diagram 4.1.6
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and No Problems in Using Vocabulary in Writing Short Message



The Students' Problems in Applying Mechanic in writing Short Message

The researcher found 42 students (79.25%) who had problems in applying mechanic in writing short message. In order to make it clear, see Diagram 4.1.7 bellow:

Diagram 4.1.7
The Percentage of Students Who Had Problems and Had No Problems in Applying Mechanic in Writing Short Message



Discussions

Based on the result of the research in general, in general the students have problems in writing short message. There were 39 students who have problems and 14 have no problems. In detail, the students have problem in writing addressee, in using grammar and in applying mechanic, but they have no problems in writing content, sender and in using vocabulary.

The Students' Problems in writing Addressee of Short Message

Based on the criteria of checking students' problems in writing addressee of short message, the students were said

having problems in writing addressee if they did not use comma after the addressee and did not use capital letter at the beginning of the addressee and for the name of people. In order to be clear, see the example below:

A short message for an appointment

Dear, Tania

Are you okay Thursday, I will come to your office, on thursday to speak my big planning about new product. I will phone you before going to your office.

Rini

From the example of short message above with the topic were a short message for an appointment, the students had problems in writing addressee of short message. The student had mistake in using comma, the student wrote “*Dear, Tania*” but the correct one was “*Dear Tania,*”

The Students’ Problems in Writing Content of Short Message

The students were said having the problems if they did not write both of the important point (what, when and where the appointment and meeting will be done) and clear instruction in the short message. Even though 35 students had no problems in writing content of short message, 18 students still had problems with it. To know the problems the students did in writing content, see the example below:

A Short Message for a School OSIS Meeting

Dear Agung

What do you can OSIS meeting this saturday? we provide bakti social go to situjuh payakumbuh after prayer zuhur.

Roby

Explanation:

1. *When (time): Saturday (the student did not mention the time. only mention the day).*
2. *Where (place): (the student did not state the clear place).*
3. *Activity : Social*

In the example above, the students had problems to write the content of short message. The student did not mention the complete information, he did not mention the time and the place for meeting.

The Students’ Problems in Writing Sender of Short Message

The students were said having problems if they did not use capital letter at the beginning of the sender and for the name of people. Even though there were 35 students who had no problems in writing sender of short message, 18 students still had problems with it. To know the problems that the students did in writing content, see the example below:

A short message for an appointment

Dear: Dinda
Are you free this Sunday? I want to go to the market with you. I will come to your house on Sunday morning. are you okay?

*You just beautiful style
 i'm waiting....*

From: salsa

Explanation:

In the short message above, the student had problems in writing sender of short message. The students write “*From: salsa*”, while the correct one is “*Salsa*”.

The Students’ Problems in Using Grammar in Writing Short Message

The students were said having problems in using grammar if they make mistake in the sentence pattern, the use of incorrect to be, pronoun, auxiliary and verb. In fact, most of the students had problem in using grammar in writing short message. In order to be clear, see the example bellow:

A Short Message for Giving Information or Instruction

Dear Aynul,

Do you sick yesterday? Hm. Yesterday, Mrs.Mila giving information.

*Tomorrow, we are going to bring one book, **two pen**, ruler, eraser, pencil and mukena. And tomorrow, we are going to back home at 12.00. and tomorrow the last day of school. At Agust 10th, we are going to back to school. Don’t forget.*

Rifa

Explanation of students’ problems in using grammar in Short Message

The incorrect one	The correct one
<i>Do you sick yesterday?</i>	Were you sick yesterday?
<i>Yesterday, Mrs.Mila giving information.</i>	Yesterday, Mrs. Mila gave information.
<i>Two pen</i>	Two pens

The Students’ Problems in Using Vocabulary in Writing Short Message

The students were said having the problems in using vocabulary if they use the inappropriate words, such as the incorrect use of noun, verb, adjective and adverb. In fact, the students had no problems in using vocabulary in writing short message. Even though there were 40 students had no problems in using vocabulary in writing short message, 13 students still had problems with it. To know the problems the students did in writing content, see the example below:

A Short Message for a School OSIS

Meeting

Dear Agung

What do you can OSIS meeting this saturday? we provide bakti social go to situjuh payakumbuh after prayer zuhur.

Roby

Explanation:

in this short message, the student had problems in using vocabulary, the student use the word “*provide*” in the sentence, while the appropriate word is “*do*”.

The Students’ Problems in Applying Mechanic in Writing Short Message

The students were said having problems in applying mechanic if they do not capitalize the first letter at the beginning of the sentences, do not capitalize the first letter after end punctuation (.), do not capitalize the pronoun I, and do not use period (.) at the end of sentence and do not use appropriate comma in the sentences. In order to be clear, see the example bellow:

dear ridho and friends

*Hello, **How** is your Life? **are** you free this sunday? **we** will meeting about OSIS at school. **we** come at school at 09.00 am. **do** you can go to this meeting? Just that the information. Thank’s*

Rafif

Explanation of students’ problems in applying mechanic in writing short message

The incorrect one	The correct one
How	how
Life	life
are	Are
sunday	Sunday
do	Do

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of analysis, it can be concluded that in general the students have problem in writing short message. In specific, the conclusions of this research are:

1. The second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had problems in writing addressee of short message. It was supported by the fact that there were 33 students (62.26%) who had problems in writing addressee of short message.
2. The second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had no problem in writing content of short message. It was supported by the fact that only 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing contents of short message.
3. The second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had no problem in writing sender of short message. It was supported by the fact that only 18 students (33.96%) who had problems in writing sender of short message.
4. The second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had problem in using grammar in writing of short message. It was supported by the fact that only 31 students (58.49%) who had problems in using grammar in writing short message.

5. The second year students of SMP Islam Al – Ishlah Bukittinggi had no problem in using vocabulary in writing short message. It was supported by the fact that 13 students (24.53%) who had problems in using vocabulary in writing short message.

6. The second year students of SMP Islam Al –Ishlah Bukittinggi had problem in applying mechanic in writing short message. It was supported by the fact that 42 students (79.25%) had problem in applying mechanic.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions, the researcher gives suggestions to teachers, students, and further researcher as follows:

1. For the teachers, the second year students had problems in writing the addressee of short message in writing short message, so researcher suggests the teacher should give more explanation clearly about how to write addressee correctly. The teacher should give more exercise about grammar in order to write short message correctly. By having more exercises the students can realize, understand and minimize the problems that they have in using grammar. The researcher also suggests the teacher to explain the correct used of mechanic with the strategy that the students can understand easily about the material.

2. For students, the researcher suggests the students to do more practicing in writing the correct addressee, not only in the school but also do practicing at home. Because the students had problems in using grammar, so the researcher suggests the students to do more exercise about grammar such as sentence pattern, the use of to be, pronoun, auxiliary and verb. In order to write short message correctly. The researcher also suggests the students to have writing practice, especially in applying mechanic. By practicing routinely, the students can improve their ability to write, and minimize the problems that they have in writing.

3. For the further researcher, by having the result of this research, the researcher suggest the next researcher to find out another problems that the students have in writing, especially in writing short message. The researcher suggests the next researcher to find out the learning strategy to solve the students' problems in writing short message.

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