

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

In English language learning, mastery of English writing skills is one of the important competencies that must be achieved by students at the junior high school level, because writing is a productive skill that reflects students' ability to organize ideas, use language structures, and convey messages in writing. Within the framework of the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, writing recount texts is one of the types of texts that must be taught in grade VIII, because this text trains students to convey personal experiences chronologically with a clear structure, namely orientation, events, and reorientation. Furthermore, writing is not merely transferring spoken language into written form, but rather a complex process involving planning, drafting, revising, and editing according to the purpose, audience, and context (Hyland, 2022).

Furthermore, the ability to write recounts requires not only mastery of vocabulary and grammar, but also the ability to organize ideas logically and use appropriate cohesion and coherence. At the junior high school level, this skill forms the basis for developing other types of writing, such as narrative, descriptive, and procedural texts, so it is important to build it gradually and systematically. Developing writing skills is one of the main objectives of English language learning in junior high school, because writing is a productive

skill that requires a deep understanding of language structure and the ability express ideas in writing (Al-Jiboury, 2024),

However, in actual classroom practice, many eighth-grade students still have difficulty writing recount texts. Some common problems that are often found include: incomplete text structure, inconsistent use of tenses (especially the simple past tense), illogical sequence of events, and sentences that are too short and lack description. Khoiriyah and Pertiwi (2021), in their study found that EFL students often experience difficulties in writing English texts because they must simultaneously master grammatical accuracy, appropriate vocabulary, coherence, and cohesion. Yahrif (2025) explains that the errors made by eighth-grade junior high school students in narrative writing mainly include incorrect use of tenses (especially incorrect use of the present tense), subject-predicate agreement, sentence structure, and spelling.

Various studies show that students' difficulties in writing are often related to a lack of discipline and low motivation in learning to write. In this context, teachers play an important role not only as conveyors of material, but also as classroom managers responsible for shaping students' learning behaviors and attitudes. One strategy that teachers still often use in managing classrooms and improving discipline is the use of punishment. Punishment is understood as a form of consequence or penalty given to students when they violate rules or do not meet learning requirements.

Punishment is part of classroom discipline and is often associated with giving negative feedback. Negative feedback, when given appropriately and

proportionally, can help students recognize their mistakes and improve their academic performance (Hattie and Timperley, 2007) and (Shute, 2008). In line with this, Lewis (2001) emphasizes that classroom discipline, including the application of punishment, is closely related to student learning responsibility and learning effectiveness. However, on the other hand, some experts also warn that punishment that is not educational in nature has the potential to reduce student motivation and self-confidence, especially in productive skills such as writing (Hyland, 2001).

The use of physical punishment not only has a short-term impact on student compliance, but also risks causing negative effects on children's behavioral and attitudinal development (Straus, 1991).

In an effort to improve the quality of students' writing, teachers often use various forms of disciplinary action, including punishment when students produce very poor writing that does not match the assignment given. Common forms of punishment include asking students to copy the recount text several times, rewriting assignments outside of class hours, or giving additional assignments. Karmilawati, Azizah, and Saleh (2020), stated punishment is an unpleasant consequence intended to correct student behavior, and teachers use punishment as a tool to reduce negative behavior so that it is not repeated.

Several studies show that punitive punishment can actually reduce students' motivation to learn, especially in writing skills that require creativity and confidence. Students who are frequently punished for poor writing tend to develop negative attitudes toward English and avoid writing activities. Charles

and Senter (2006) state that physical punishment such as hitting, forcing students to squat, or giving physically exhausting tasks is not recommended because it focuses on inflicting pain rather than fostering understanding and responsibility. Punishment is no longer appropriate in modern educational contexts, as it can negatively affect students' psychological well-being and learning motivation (Wardhani, 2021). Instead, educational punishment such as academic tasks, corrective feedback, or logical consequences is considered more effective and human.



Figure 1.1 Physical Punishment Administered by Teacher to Student

The researcher collected data from initial observations of English teachers and students in the eighth grade at SMP Free Methodist 2 Medan. The researcher conducted observations through classroom discourse observation during recount text learning. In an initial observation conducted in the eighth-grade class at Free Methodist 2 Private Junior High School in Medan, the researcher found that teachers used corporal punishment during English lessons, particularly during the activity of writing recount texts. In this lesson, the teacher asked students to write a two-paragraph personal recount text about an unforgettable personal experience during school vacation. Before the

writing activity began, the teacher explained the definition of a recount text, its generic structure, language features, and the use of the simple past tense.

During the writing process, the teacher reviewed the students' work and found that some students were still struggling to construct recount texts effectively. The errors identified included the incorrect use of the simple past tense such as using the present tense in a recount text verb form errors, limited vocabulary, and an incomplete generic structure. Additionally, some students were unable to arrange events in chronological order and did not use time connectives like "first," "then," and "finally," making the story less coherent and difficult to understand.

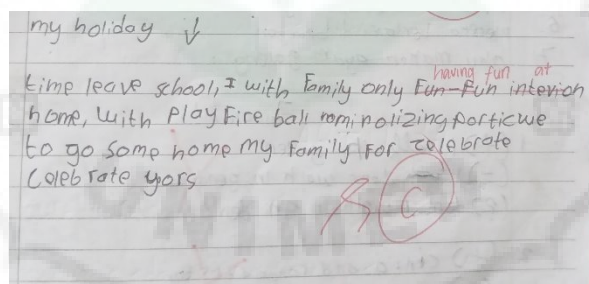


Figure 1.2 Students With Grammar Errors

One student received special attention because his writing was deemed to contain too many errors and did not follow the teacher's instructions. The student wrote some short sentences with numerous grammatical errors and did not follow the structure of a recount text correctly. When the teacher checked the student's writing, he administered a physical punishment by pinching the student's ear in front of his classmates, as seen in the initial observation data. The teacher administered this punishment spontaneously

This phenomenon is of significant concern because physical punishment was administered in response to the student's academic errors in an English writing activity. This situation indicates that physical punishment is still employed in the learning process, despite the theory by Charles and Senter (2006) emphasizing that punishment in education should be educational and non-physical. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the types of teacher's punishment and the process of their application in teaching students to write recount texts in the 8th grade at SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan.

However, previous studies have generally addressed teacher's punishment within a broader educational context, such as classroom discipline, student behavior management, or the application of rewards and punishments in learning in general. Research specifically examining the types and processes of teacher's punishment in the context of teaching writing recount texts in English classes, particularly at the junior high school level, remains limited. Additionally, there is a discrepancy between the theory of Charles and Senter (2006), which emphasizes the use of educational and non-physical disciplinary approaches, and initial observational findings indicating that physical punishment is still applied in classroom teaching practices. These conditions indicate a research gap that requires further investigation. Therefore, this study is important because it aims to analyze the types of teacher's punishment and the process of its application in the teaching of writing recount texts. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the implementation of teacher's punishment in English language learning and to contribute to the

application of more appropriate classroom discipline practices in the learning process.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the above background, the problem of the study in this thesis is:

1. What are the types of teacher's punishment in teaching writing recount text at grade VIII SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan?
2. How is the process of teacher's punishment in teaching writing recount text at grade VIII SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the issues mentioned above, this study has two objectives, namely:

1. To analyze the types of teacher's punishment in teaching writing recount text at grade VIII SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan.
2. To investigate the process of teacher's punishment in teaching writing recount text at grade VIII SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

In English language learning, there are four skills that students must master, namely writing, reading, listening, and speaking. This study will focus on students' writing skills. This study will focus on the types of punishment used by teachers in grade 8 at SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan. On the other

hand, this study also focuses on how English teachers in grade 8 at SMP Swasta Free Methodist 2 Medan punish students in teaching them to write recount texts.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions, as follow:

1. Theoretical Significances

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of English language learning studies, particularly those related to teacher's punishment and recount text writing skills. This study supports Creswell's (2018) view that educational research needs to provide empirical evidence regarding classroom learning practices. The results of this study are also expected to reinforce behaviorist theory, which states that teacher responses, including educational punishment, can influence student behavior and learning outcomes (Skinner, 1953).

2. Practical Significances

a. For English Teachers

This study is expected to serve as a consideration for English teachers in applying punishment appropriately and proportionally as part of classroom management, particularly in teaching recount text writing.

b. For the Students

For students, this study is expected to increase awareness of the importance of discipline and responsibility in the writing learning

process, so that their ability to write recount texts can develop more optimally.

c. For Future Researchers

This study can be used as an initial reference for future researchers interested in studying teacher's punishment or English writing skills in different contexts and variables.

