

Lexical and Structural Challenges in Indonesian EFL Learners' Narrative Writing

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the lexical and structural challenges faced by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in writing narrative texts in English. The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka, a high school located in the rural area of East Nusa Tenggara. The method used is qualitative descriptive with analytical techniques based on Jacobs' writing assessment rubric, which covers five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The results showed that errors in the use of vocabulary (44%) and grammar (50%) were the most dominant problems, followed by weaknesses in the organizational aspects and mechanics of writing. These errors reflect the limited lexical and grammatical mastery of students, as well as the negative influence of the mother tongue and the lack of exposure to authentic English use. This research confirms that writing skills should be understood as a complex process of negotiating meaning, not just a technical skill that can be acquired through mere repetition. These findings also emphasize the importance of contextual, adaptive, and needs-based approaches to writing learning, especially in areas with limited access to education.

Keywords: Lexicon, Narrative, Pedagogy, Remote, Structure.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to write in English is one of the most complex productive competencies in foreign language learning, especially for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners in Indonesia. Compared to listening, reading, or speaking skills, writing requires mastery of more integrated linguistic aspects,

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ranging from morphology, syntax, semantics, to pragmatic (Alfaruqy et al., 2022; Toba et al., 2019). One form of writing that is commonly taught at the intermediate level is narrative writing, which not only requires the ability to arrange ideas chronologically, but also requires skills in choosing and using the right vocabulary (lexical) and sentence structure (structural) to build a coherent and communicative storyline (De Wilde, 2023; Putra et al., 2022; Yuskar, 2021). This challenge is even more significant in the context of Indonesian education, where English learning is often limited by limited time, resources, and exposure to the authentic use of English in daily life (Erlangga et al., 2025). In many cases, students only interact with English in a limited way in the classroom, so the process of internalizing the language system, especially with regard to writing skills, does not develop optimally (Hassen et al., 2024; Luquin & García Mayo, 2024; Nur & Ramadhani, 2025).

Several previous studies have identified that the difficulty of Indonesian students in writing narratives in English stems from various factors, including the negative influence of mother tongue transfer (L1), lack of contextual vocabulary mastery, and partial and mechanistic grammatical understanding. In the context of narrative writing, students often experience obstacles in using the past tense, organizing compound sentences, and connecting ideas logically using temporal and causal conjunctions (Bardianing et al., 2023; Halim et al., 2016). On the lexical side, improper word selection, the use of synonyms that do not match the register, and limitations in diction variations are dominant problems (Falihah et al., 2022). In addition, interference from the structure of the Indonesian language also often appears, such as the omission of to be, plural form errors, and the use of inappropriate word sequences in English (Ayu & Nurweni, 2023; Pudim et al., 2015). Although these studies make an important contribution to the general understanding of the difficulty of writing in English as a foreign language, most of them have been conducted in urban contexts or in schools with relatively complete learning facilities. Meanwhile, studies that specifically explore lexical and structural challenges in narrative writing by EFL students in schools located in areas with limited access to education are still very limited. Until now, there has not been much research that has highlighted in depth the context of secondary education in rural areas such as SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka in East Nusa Tenggara, which geographically and socially has its own challenges compared to schools in urban centers. This gap is the basis for the need to conduct this research, to provide a more complete and representative picture of the dynamics of the difficulty of writing narratives in the context of EFL in Indonesia in a more geographically and pedagogically diverse manner.

This research gap is important to be addressed, because understanding the writing challenges faced by students in remote areas can broaden our perspective on the dynamics of foreign language acquisition in diverse socio-cultural contexts. In addition, it is important not to simplify the writing challenge as a mere technical problem that can be overcome with

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repeated practice, but rather as part of the complex process of negotiating meaning between the target language structure and the student's linguistic experience (Al Hosni, 2013; Almuwakkil & Alshakhi, 2022), . Therefore, this study aims to comprehensively investigate the types and forms of lexical and structural challenges faced by EFL students in writing narrative texts, by taking the case at SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka. The qualitative case study approach is used to uncover in depth how students structure their narratives, the types of errors that arise, as well as how those errors reflect their linguistic understanding and communicative strategies.

Thus, the main question to be answered in this study is: "What are the lexical and structural challenges faced by EFL students in writing narrative texts at SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka, and how are these challenges reflected in their writing?" In addition to answering this question, this study also aims to formulate pedagogical implications that can be applied in teaching English writing in secondary schools that have similar conditions, in order to develop a more adaptive, needs-based, and contextual teaching model. The results of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to applied linguistics studies, especially in the study of interlanguage and error analysis, as well as enrich the treasure of literature on the dynamics of foreign language learning in Indonesia, especially in areas that have been less affordable in academic research.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the lexical and structural challenges faced by EFL students in writing narrative texts. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to delve deeply into the meanings, experiences, and linguistic barriers that students experience in the writing process. In line with the view Creswell (2014) Creswell (2009), qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning given by individuals or groups to a social or humanitarian problem. The subject of this study is grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka, East Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara, who were chosen purposively because the school represents the educational context in rural areas with limited English learning facilities. A total of 30 students from one class were designated as participants after the researcher obtained permission from the school and subject teachers.

Data collection is carried out through the provision of a writing test as the main instrument. The researcher prepared four types of narrative text topics that are in accordance with the genre in the curriculum, namely fables, fairy tales, folktales, and myths. Each student is asked to choose one of these topics and write a narrative text in English independently in class without the help of a dictionary or electronic device. The data collection process is carried out in three stages: class selection, implementation of writing assignments, and collection of writing results. The instruments used in this study are

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writing assignment sheets that have been prepared by the researcher and writing assessment rubrics that refer to five components according to Jacobs (1981), i.e. content, organization, vocabulary, language usage, and mechanics. Each aspect in this assessment rubric is analyzed to identify the most dominant forms of error and how they represent students' linguistic challenges.

The data that has been collected is analyzed descriptively through several stages, namely classification of writing results based on topic, scoring using assessment rubrics, identification of lexical and structural errors (e.g. errors in the use of past tense, compound sentence structure, diction selection, and conjunctions), and interpretation of emerging error patterns. This analysis aims to uncover the interlanguage characteristics of students and the negative influence of mother tongue transfer in the construction of English narrative texts. This research also pays attention to ethical aspects in its implementation. Written permission is obtained from the principal and subject teacher before data collection is carried out. The goal, advantages, and methods of the study are explained to students who agree to participate, and they are also told that the research process and data utilization are carried out in an open and transparent manner. Their participation is voluntary without affecting academic grades or relationships with teachers. Thus, this research not only meets academic standards in design and implementation, but also upholds ethical principles in educational research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of data obtained from students' writing tests, and the analysis of students' texts, several problems were found that students faced in writing narrative texts. These problems can be summarized in the following table.

Table 1:

Percentage score per aspect

Aspects	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Vocabulary	0% – No students used words perfectly.	23% – error in vocabulary.	33% – error in word choice.	44% – error in unclear writing.
Grammar	0% – No students had perfect grammar.	43% – Few errors, good sentence structure.	50% – Many errors, fair control.	7% – Many errors, fair control.
Mechanics	0% – No students had perfect spelling,	23% – Few mistakes in mechanics.	67% – Frequent mistakes in mechanics.	7% – Many errors, unclear writing.

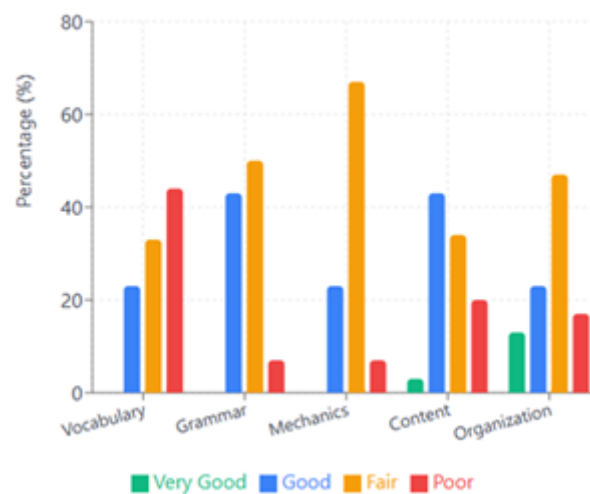
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	punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing.			
Content	3% – All ideas relevant, many supporting details.	43% – Mostly relevant ideas, some details.	34% – Some relevant ideas, few details.	20% – Limited relevant ideas, very few details.
Organization	13% – Well-structured, complete narrative structure.	23% – Mostly structured, missing one part.	47% – Loosely organized, missing two parts.	17% – Disorganized, missing all structure.

The problems faced by students dealing with their vocabulary were classified into very good category, good category, fair category and poor category. In vocabulary, 23% were classified as good, 33% as fair, and 44% as poor. For grammar, 43% were good, 50% fair, and 7% poor. Mechanics showed 23% good, 67% fair, and 7% poor. In terms of content, only 3% were very good, 43% good, 34% fair, and 20% poor. Meanwhile, for writing organization, 13% were very good, 23% good, 47% fair, and 17% poor. Overall, the most significant problem in vocabulary is the poor category, which shows some errors and a lack of vocabulary used. Figure 1 shows that students had trouble with many parts of narrative writing, including grammar, mechanics, content, and organization, but to different degrees of severity.

Figure 1:
Percentage Score per Aspect in Students' Narrative Writing Assessment



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According to this study, students at SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka had trouble writing narrative texts, especially when it came to vocabulary, grammar, mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphs), content, and organization. Many students were unable to create a comprehensive narrative framework, come up with pertinent ideas, and provide adequate evidence to support them. This condition shows that they still need a lot of help with their writing.

Teachers are encouraged to employ more structured learning techniques, such as step-by-step writing assignments, vocabulary games, idea development exercises, and group revision and feedback, to enhance these abilities.

This study's limitations include the fact that it was limited to a single school, employed a qualitative methodology without a pre-post test design, and lacked a comparison group. More schools and respondents must be included in future studies, which should employ an experimental design and evaluate the efficacy of particular pedagogical interventions like project-based learning models or digital media.

Among all the students, 7 (23%) were classified into *good* category out of 30 students. These students were able to choose their words quite well, and their writing was mostly clear. From the 30 students, one student with the initials DDL as representative because of the good quality of his writing.

(Student 1,13/01/2025/No.1)

In a villag live alife kancil who is famous for bein clever. one day kancil felt fery hungry and the farmers field planted with cucumber. with a roar. He Dicide to steal some some cucumber's infitrated the field strated picking cucumbers it until he finaly fill asleep In the middle of of the field. whe the farmer come and saw the mouse dee sleeping he become agry and because the mouse deer often stole his cucumber. The farmer then put up a scarecoro, in his fieldto scare away the mouse deer the next day the mouse der returned to the field and saw the figare of a scarecrow not afraid the mouse der approached and kicked him, but his leg was stuck saw the mouse der trapped.

The reason the why the student categorizes it as good is due to the presence of several misspellings in the vocabulary. For example, "Villag" should be corrected to "Village," "alife" should be revised to "a life," "bein" should be changed to "being," "Fery" should be amended to "Very," "cucumber" should be pluralized to "cucumbers," "infitrated" should be replaced with "entered," "finaly" should be corrected to "finally," "Fill" should be changed to "fell," "Whe" should be revised to "When," "agry" should be corrected to "angry," "scarecoro" should be amended to "scarecrow," "Field" should be changed to "field," and "figare" should be corrected to "figure." Furthermore, "scarecro" should also be revised to "scarecrow."

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However, they still made a few of errors in vocabulary and word forms, from the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials VO as representative because of the few small mistakes in vocabulary of his writing.

(Student 3,13/01/2025/No.3)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. One day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field plante with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and started picking cucumbers one by one. He enjoye the cucumbers so much that the farmer felt uneasy in the middle of the field. When the farmer came and saw the mons deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer had stolen his cucumbers. The farmer then put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. The next day, the mouse deer returned to the field and saw the figure of the scarearo. Instead of being afraid, the mouse deer approached and touched him, but his leg got trapped. Seeing the mouse deer trapped, the farmer felt happy and caught him."

The reason why the writer categorizes it as small mistake is due to the presence of several misspellings in the vocabulary. For example, "theic" should be corrected to "their," "was" should be changed to "were," "very hungry" should be revised to "very hungry," "plante" should be amended to "planted," "enjoye" should be corrected to "enjoyed," "mons" should be replaced with "mouse," "becaus" should be changed to "because," "scarearo" should be corrected to "scarecrow," and "figur" should be revised to "figure."

Even though these mistakes did not completely change the meaning of their sentences, they may have made the writing less smooth and natural. Meanwhile, 10 students (33%) were classified into in the *fair* category from the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials MB as representative because of the fair category in vocabulary of his writing.

(Student 4,13/01/2025/No.4)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. On day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmers field plated with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and fronted pilking cucumber one by one. He enjoys the cucubers so much that he finely fare asleep in the middle of the fiery. When the former came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer often stole his cucumber. The former than put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. Than next day, tha mose deer".

The reason why the writer categorizes it as fair category is due to the presence of several misspellings in the vocabulary. For example: "dear" should be corrected to "deer," "Famou" should be revised to "Famous," "Fel" should be changed to "felt," "Plated" should be amended to "planted," "Cucubeber" should be corrected to "cucumbers," "Pilking" should be replaced with "Picking," "Ferr" should be changed to "Fell," "Lame" should be revised to "came," "Argry" should be corrected to "Angry," "Frarted" should be amended to "fretted," and "Moyes" should be changed to "mouse."

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The largest group of the students, 13 out of 30 (44%), classified into *Poor* category. These students had the most difficulty in choosing the right words for their writing. They made many mistakes in vocabulary and word forms, which likely affected the clarity of their writing. When students used incorrect words, their sentences can become unclear or difficult to understand. This suggests that these students need extra support and practice in vocabulary development. Since a large number of students belong to this category, it is important to focus on improving their word choice through vocabulary exercises, reading activities, and guided writing practice. These findings show that while some students had a fairly good understanding of vocabulary, many still need to work on their word use to improve their writing skills. Of 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials SG as representative because of the poor category in vocabulary of his writing.

(Student 11,13/01/2025/No.11)

In a forest, live one mouse-deer who was farmous for being clever. One day, the mouse-deer falt so hungry and wanting looking for food on the other side of the river. Howeve, there was a grop of crocodies there who instinctively ate anyone who tried crossing the rive. mouse-deer think fast and get a clever idea. He approache the crocodies end said, Hi, Crocodies! King of the Forest want to for grop theirs can coun your number. he want to give a gift to you.crocodile crocodile who curiou also agre end lin up in the rive the mouse deer then sai "cemon I wil count you "

The reason why the writer categorizes it as fair category is due to the presence of several misspellings in the vocabulary. For example, Farmous should be *famous*, Howeve should be *however*, crocodies should be *crocodiles*, end should be *and*, grop should be *group*, coun should be *count*, agre should be *agree*, lin oup should be *line up*, sai should be *said*, wil should be *will*.

The problems faced by students dealing with their grammar were classified into very good category, good category, fair category and poor category. The analysis of students' grammar shows that none of the students were classified in the very good category, meaning no one used the correct grammar. However, 43% were categorized into good category, indicating they made errors and had good sentence structure. Meanwhile, 50% of the students were categorized into fair category, they used some errors and only fair category of grammar. 7% fell into the poor category, indicating they committed errors and their writing had so many grammar mistakes that it was difficult to understand. Overall, these results showed that some students had a basic understanding of grammar, but the others still need to improve their grammar. Compared to the Previous study,((Husnayaini et al., 2021) argue that there are two sources of errors, such as: interlingual error and intralingual error. Interlingual error is an error made by the students because of the influence of L1 language elements Whiles, intralingual error occurs when students break the use of words or grammatical items of the target language, because they have not yet mastered the.

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Among the students writing, 13 (43%) were classified in the *good* category. These students showed a good understanding of grammar and sentence structure, making only a few errors. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials VO as representative because of the good understanding of grammar and sentence structure of his writing.

(Student 3,13/01/2025/No.3)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. One day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field planted with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and started picking cucumbers one by one. He enjoyed the cucumbers so much that the farmer felt uneasy in the middle of the field. When the farmer came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer had stolen his cucumbers. The farmer then put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. The next day, the mouse deer returned to the field and saw the figure of the scarecrow. Instead of being afraid, the mouse deer approached and touched him, but his leg got trapped. Seeing the mouse deer trapped, the farmer felt happy and caught him.

Below the writer presented examples of errors in grammar that can be categorized as 'good' along with their corrections. Although there are mistakes, these examples provide an opportunity to understand and improve the correct use of grammar: In a village there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever, should be *In a village, there lived a mouse deer that was famous for being clever*; The mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field plank with cucumbers should be *The mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field planted with cucumbers*; One by one he enjoyed the cucumbers so much, should be *One by one, he enjoyed the cucumbers so much*.

Their mistakes were minor and did not significantly affect the clarity of their writing. However, these small errors still indicate areas for improvement. Meanwhile, 15 students (50%) were placed in the *Fair* category, meaning they made many grammatical errors. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials NR as representative because of the fair category understanding of grammar and sentence structure of his writing.

(Student 6,13/01/2025/No.6)

In a viltag, live allife kancil who is Famous for bein claver. one day, kancil Felt Fery hungur and Saw the Farmer's field Planted with Cucumber. with a roar he decided. to Steal Some cucumber infiltrate the Field and Straed Pickin Cucumber one by one. he enjoyed cucumber it untill he finally fell asicep in the midle of the Field when the farmer came and Saw the mous deer Sieping, he beçam agry because the mouse deer often Store his cucumber the Faruer then Put ap a Screcrow in his Field to scare away the mous deer the next day the mous deer returned to the Field and saw the figare a Scarecrow no a Fraid, the mous deer approached and bic ked him but his leg was stuc saw the mous deer trappe.

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Below the writer presented examples of errors in grammar that can be categorized as 'fair category' along with their corrections. Although there are mistakes, these examples provide an opportunity to understand and improve the correct use of grammar: in a viltag, live allife Kancil who is famous for bein claver should be *In a village, lived a life Kancil who is famous for being clever.* One day, Kancil feit fery hungr and saw the Farmer's Field Planted with cucumber. should be *One day, Kancil felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field planted with cucumbers.* With a roar he decided to Steal Some cucumber, infiltrate the Field and strated pickin cucumber one by one. should be *With a need to roar, he decided to steal some cucumbers, infiltrate the field and started picking cucumbers one by one.* He enjoyed cucumber it untill he finally fell asiccep in the midile of the field when the farmer came and saw the mous deer Sieping. should be *He enjoyed cucumber until he finally fell asleep in the middle of the field when the farmer came and saw the mouse deer sleeping.* Even though they had some understanding of sentence structure, their mistakes were frequent and may have affected the readability and coherence of their writing. This suggests that they need further practice in applying grammar rules correctly. This is the wrong grammar and the fix below:

The smallest group, consisting of only 2 students (7%), fell into the *Poor* category. Their writing was dominated by grammatical errors, showing little or no control over sentence structure. From 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials YWH as representative because of the poor category understanding of grammar and sentence structure of his writing.

(Student 15,13/01/2025/No.15)

The story of maling kundang comes from west Sumatra and tells the story a youth named maling kundang who live with motho, thoir live in mado smart and for soarch live made smart mother don't and work succeeded in becoming a trader marry a beautiful woman when returning".

Below the writer presented examples of errors in grammar that can be categorized as 'poor' along with their corrections. Although there are mistakes, these examples provide an opportunity to understand and improve the correct use of grammar: The Story of the maling Kundang should be *The complete Story of Maling Kundang*

These students likely faced the problems with forming correct sentences, which made their writing difficult to understand. Since only a few students are in this category, it suggests that most students have at least a basic grasp of grammar, but many still need support in refining their accuracy. Overall, the results highlight the need for more focused grammar instruction, with special attention to students in the *Fair* and *Poor* categories, to help them develop better control over sentence structure and reduce errors in their writing.

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The problems faced by students dealing with their mechanics were classified into very good category, good category, fair category and poor category. No students were classified into the very good category, meaning none of the students used correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or paragraphing. 23% were classified into good category, showing they made few mistakes in mechanics. The majority, 67%, were classified as fair category, indicating they had frequent mistakes in mechanics. 7%, were categorized in the Poor category, meaning they had many errors and unclear writing. This shows that students need to improve their basic writing mechanics to enhance the quality of their writing, so the students can be better in writing the narrative texts the absence of students in the highest category suggests that there is a need for improvement in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing to ensure clear and correct writing (Sinaga & Ramadhani, 2021).

Among the students writing, 7 students (23%) were placed in the *good* category. These students made only a few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials VO as representative because of the good category of his writing.

(Student 3,13/01/2025/No.3)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. One day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field planted with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and started picking cucumbers one by one. He enjoyed the cucumbers so much that the farmer felt uneasy in the middle of the field. When the farmer came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer had stolen his cucumbers. The farmer then put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. The next day, the mouse deer returned to the field and saw the figure of the scarecrow. Instead of being afraid, the mouse deer approached and touched him, but his leg got trapped. Seeing the mouse deer trapped, the farmer felt happy and caught him."

Below are examples of errors in punctuation and spelling, along with their corrections.

Spelling

Theic should be *their*, was should be *were*, very hungry should be *very hungry*, plank should be *planted*, enjioye should be *enjoyed*, mons should be *Mouse*, becaus should be *because*, scare arow should be *scarecrow*, figur should be *figure*, an cought should be *and caught*.

Punctuation

"One day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmer's field planted with cucumbers." Use periods consistently at the end of sentences. Their writing was mostly clear, but the small errors may have slightly affected the overall presentation.

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Meanwhile, 20 students (67%) were in the *Fair* category, meaning they made frequent mistakes in these mechanical aspects. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials LD as representative because of the fair category of his writing.

(Student 2,13/01/2025/No.2)

In a forest live one dear which famous deqt. One day, der feel very hunmy and want to look for eat on the side other river. However, in there theres is group crocodi which ready prey anybody which try traverse river. Der think fast and get ida deqt. He approac crocodi and said, "Hey crocodile! King foras loan you for gator eager is we can geter nomber. Het woun for jou a jift."The conirus. Roadik agril and lined up in the river. The hunsa der the said crocodie cant you one bi one spence bine ut detty in the whenkar whik coimving mokeber bimen ok and crocodia wind lined up the monye der mangrand.

Below are examples of errors in punctuation and spelling and capitalization along with their corrections.

Spelling Errors

der should be *deer*, hungr should be *hungry*, ida should be *idea*, dogy Should be *dodgy*, aproac Should be *approach*, fores Should be *forest*, wan Should be *want*

bi Should be *by*, Monye Should be *Mouse*

Punctuation Errors

No space after periods and commas

Example: One day, der feel very hunmy and want to look for eat on the side other river. However, in there.

Correct sentence: *One day, the deer felt very hungry and wanted to look for food on the other side of the river. However, in there.*

Lack of commas in direct speech

Example: hey crocodile! king foras loan you for gator eager is we can geter number.

Correct sentence: *Hey, crocodile! The king of the forest has sent me to gather numbers.*

Capitalization Errors

Capital letter at the beginning of a sentence

Example: in a forest live one dear which famous dodgy should be *In a forest lived a famous deer.*

Capital letter for names and titles

Example: king forest should be *King Forest*

Capital letter for pronouns in direct speech

Example: hey crocodile! should be *Hey Crocodile!* These errors were noticeable and could make their writing less readable or harder to follow. These students likely need additional practice and attention to detail in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing to improve their writing's clarity.

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The smallest group, 2 students (7%), were in the *poor* category, where their writing was dominated by errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials MB as representative because of the poor category of his writing.

(Student 4,13/01/2025/No.4)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. On day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmers field plated with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and fronted pilking cucumber one by one. He enjoys the cucubers so much that he finely fare asleep in the middle of the fiery. When the former came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer often stole his cucumber. The former than put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. Tah next day, tha mose deer"

Below are examples of errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling, along with their corrections.

Capitalization

mouse dear should be *mouse deer* (Must be consistent in using "deer," not dear).

one day should be *One day* (The first word in a sentence must start with a capital letter).

Felt Very hungry should be *felt very hungry* (The "V" in "Very" does not need to be capitalized).

Farmers field should be *farmer's field* (The word "farmer's" must have an apostrophe to indicate possession).

Plated should be *planted* (the correct word is "planted" to mean "was grown").

Punctuation

in a village there lived a mouse deer should be *in a village, there lived a mouse deer.* (A capital letter is needed at the beginning, and a comma after "village"

one by one ha enjoy the cucubeber should be *one by one, he enjoyed the cucumbers.* (A comma is needed after "one by one").

when the former came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry should be *When the farmer came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry.* (A capital letter is needed at the beginning).

"The former than put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer should be *farmer then put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer.* (A period is needed at the end of the sentence).

These frequent mistakes likely made their writing difficult to understand or less professional in appearance. The presence of this small group suggests that, while most students faced the problems with mechanical aspects, only a few had more severe issues. Overall, these results highlight that the majority of students needed focused attention and practice in the

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basic mechanics of writing to improve their accuracy and presentation. The results obtained in this study showed the weakness of the students in mastering the grammar and the ability to use the punctuation and to crosscheck the spelling and conventions among the students on the first semester in writing the narrative text. Based on the results mentioned earlier, the researchers suggest that the students must study more to increase their knowledge in grammar, and also do exercise

The problems faced by students dealing with their content were classified into very good category, good category, fair category and poor category. In terms of content, only 3% of students' writings were classified into the very good category all ideas relevant, many supporting details. 43%, were classified as good category indicating that most of their ideas were relevant but lacked strong supporting details. Meanwhile, 34% were classified into fair category, meaning their writing had some relevant ideas but did not develop them well. Lastly, 20% were classified as poor category indicating that their writing had very few relevant ideas and lacked necessary details. This shows that many students need to improve their ability to explain and support their ideas in writing.

From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials RF as representative because of the very good category of his writing.

(Student 25,13/01/2025/No.25)

“Story of malin kundang from west Sumatra and tells story of young mand name malin kundang who lives with his mother mande rubaya , in a fishing village.after his father left him ,they live in poverty malin intelligent and ambitious decided to emigrate search a better life ,even though his mother did not agree.After struggling and working bar sucesfully becom a rich trader and marry a beautiful woman when returning to his howmtow an a magnificen ship, mande rubayah very happy and run to gret him .However then malin after forget lineage ,not to know and consider as a poor”.

Their writing was strong because they gave many supporting details that helped explain and develop the main ideas. This shows that the student could fully develop their thoughts and provide a clear and complete explanation of the topic. However, since only one student was in this category, it suggests that many others have room to improve in how well they support and develop their ideas in writing.

A larger group, 13 students (43%), were in the *good* category. These students included most of the ideas that were relevant to the topic and added some supporting details to explain the main points. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials LD as representative because of the good category of his writing.

(Student 2,13/01/2025/No.2)

In a forest live one dear which famous deqt. One day, der feel very hunmy andwant to look for eat on the side other river. However, in there theres is group crocodi which ready prey anybody which try traverse river. Der think fasts and get ida deqt. He approac crocodi

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and said, "Hey crocodile! King foras loan you for gator eager is we can geter number. Het woun for jou a jift." The conirus. Roadik agril and lined up in the river. The hunsu der the said crocodie can't you one bi one spence bine ut detty in the whenkar whik coimving makeber bimen ok and crocodia wind lined up the monye der mangrand"

Their writing was generally on the right track, and while they provided some details, it wasn't as fully developed or detailed as in the good category. This means that these students are doing a good job of staying on topic, but they may need to add more examples or explanations to make their ideas clearer and stronger. They are on the right path but could still improve by focusing more on developing their ideas fully.

Examples of "good" story changes are shown as follows. These changes are intended to improve the narrative's quality and guarantee proper grammatical usage, enabling the story to be communicated more effectively and clearly:

In a forest, there lived a clever deer known for his quick wit and intelligence. One day, feeling very hungry, the deer decided to search for food on the other side of a wide river. However, he was aware that a group of crocodiles lay in wait, ready to prey on anyone who attempted to cross. Determined to find food, the deer thought quickly and devised a clever plan. He approached the crocodiles, who were lounging in the sun, and said, "Hello, crocodiles! I have a favor to ask. If you allow me to cross the river, I promise to give you a special gift." Intrigued by the deer's offer, the crocodiles agreed and lined up in the water, eager to see what the gift would be. The clever deer then proposed, "You can take me across one by one, and I will count how many of you there are." As each crocodile took the deer on its back, he cleverly jumped from one to another, counting them as he went. "One, two, three..." he counted, all the way to the last crocodile. The deer continued to leap across their backs until he finally reached the other side of the river. Once safely on the shore, the deer turned back and called out to the crocodiles, "Thank you for your help! Now I know how many of you there are!" The crocodiles, realizing they had been outsmarted, were left confused and frustrated. With a triumphant smile, the clever deer trotted away, satisfied with his successful adventure and grateful for his quick thinking that had saved him from becoming a meal. From that day on, the deer was not only known for his cleverness but also for his ability to outsmart even the most fearsome predators.

In the fair category, 10 students (34%) had some ideas that were relevant to the topic, but they included fewer supporting details. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials YJ as representative because of the fair category of his writing.

(Student 7,13/01/2025/No.7)

The story of the thief kundang comes from Sumatra barat and separated a young man name maling kundang who lives with his mother, mande rubayah. In village fisherman

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after his father left im thay live in povert, smart and ambitions mailing in scare of an initially disagreed. after struggling and working hard, tieves managed to become rich trders and marry a beautiful momen. when returning ton his bometown on a magnificent ship, mande rubaya very happy and ran to greet him hower malin who has forgotten bis origins, refused to recognize his mother and considered her a beggar feel labulted mande rubaya pray that his son will get punishment”.

Their sentences sometimes only partially supported the main ideas, and this made the writing less clear or convincing. Some of their ideas might not have been entirely related to the topic, and their explanations didn't provide enough information to back up the main points. This group would benefit from learning how to develop their ideas better and include more details that connect directly to the topic.

Examples of "fair" story modifications are shown as follows. These changes are intended to improve the narrative's quality and guarantee proper grammatical usage, enabling the story to be communicated more effectively and clearly:

A poor young man from West Sumatra named Malin Kundang became a prosperous merchant, but upon returning to his hometown, he refused to acknowledge his mother. Malin's ship was destroyed by a storm brought on by his mother's prayers, and he was punished for his conceit by becoming stone. This tale serves as a reminder of the value of honoring one's parents and remembering one's roots.

Six students (20%) were rated as Poor in the assessment category due to their lack of pertinent ideas. As an illustration of this category, a student with the initials ML was chosen. To make their writing more understandable and persuasive, many students still need to work on expanding their ideas and providing evidence.

13% of the students' writing fell into the Very Good category (complete and clear structure), 23% into the Good category (fairly organized but still missing one section), 47% into the Fair category (loose flow and missing two important sections), and 17% into the Poor category (disorganized and lacking a clear structure). As an illustration of the Very Good category, the student with the initials RG was selected. These results show that developing narrative structure skills is necessary to make concepts more logical and understandable.

(Student 5,13/01/2025/No.5)

In a village, lived one mouse deer which was famous for being dodgy. One day, the mouse deer fel very bugry and saw a field farmer wich plante cucumber. With his stomach rumbling, he decided to steal a number of cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and start picking cucumber one by one. He enjoyed the cucumber so much that he fell asleep in the middle of the field. When the farmer came and saw the mouse deer sleepin, he was angry because the mouse deer ofte stol his cucumber. The farme then put up a scarecrow in his fiel to scare the mouse deer. The next day, the mouse deer returne to the field and saw

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the figure of a scarecrow. not scar, the mouse deer approached and kicked, but his leg got trappe. Seeing the mouse deer trapped.

These students wrote well-organized stories that were perfectly structured and easy to follow. Their compositions contained all the important parts of a narrative text, including orientation (introduction of the story), complication (the problem), resolution (the solution to the problem), and coda (the lesson or moral of the story). These students showed a strong understanding of how to organize their ideas logically and effectively. Since this group is small, it suggests that most students still struggle with fully organizing their writing.

A slightly larger group, 7 students (23%), were in the *good* category. Their writing was fairly well-organized and generally coherent, meaning their ideas were connected and easy to follow. From the 30 students, the writer categorized one student with the initials LD as representative because of the good category of his writing.

(Student 2,13/01/2025/No.2)

In a forest live one dear which famous deqt. One day, der feel very hunmy and want to look for eat on the side other river. However, in there theres is group crocodi which ready prey anybody which try traverse river. Der think fasts and get ida deqt. He approac crocodi and said, "Hey crocodile! King foras loan you for gator eager is we can geter number. Het woun for jou a jift." The conirus. Roadik agril and lined up in the river. The hunsa der the said crocodie can't you one bi one spence bine ut detty in the wbenkar whik coinving mokeber bimen ok and crocodia wind lined up the monye der mangrand.

The story felt unfinished because some students omitted a crucial component of the narrative structure, like the resolution or coda. Although their ideas were actually fairly well-organized, the writing was less impactful because one element was missing. The author used a full tale about a cunning deer that was able to fool a group of crocodiles in order to cross a river to demonstrate this point. The narrative structure is complete, and the story makes good use of grammar and vocabulary.

The largest group, comprising 14 students (47%), was classified as Fair. The plot was hard to follow because of their loose writing and poor idea connections. This category was represented by one student, MB.

(Student 4,13/01/2025/No.4)

In a village, there lived a mouse deer who was famous for being clever. On day, the mouse deer felt very hungry and saw the farmers field plated with cucumbers. The mouse deer infiltrated the field and fronted pilking cucumber one by one. He enjoys the cucubers so much that he finely fares asleep in the middle of the fiery. When the former came and saw the mouse deer sleeping, he was angry because the mouse deer often stole his cucumber. The former than put up a scarecrow in his field to scare away the mouse deer. Tah next day, tha mose deer.

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The majority of students only write one section of the narrative structure, omitting two crucial elements. Some write about the difficulties without introducing the characters and setting, or they just write an introduction without elaborating on the problem and its solution. The narrative is unclear because of these flaws. The author gives a full account of a cunning mouse deer that successfully deceives a farmer and enters his field in order to improve comprehension. This tale exhibits a logical narrative framework as well as proper vocabulary and grammar usage.

Additionally, five students (17%) were classified as Poor due to their disorganized and illogical writing. A single student with the initials ML was chosen to serve as this category's representative. Overall, the results demonstrate that many students still require assistance when writing entire narrative sections in order to make their writing more organized and comprehensible.

CONCLUSION

According to this study, SMA Negeri 1 Poco Ranaka students still struggle greatly when writing narrative texts, especially when it comes to vocabulary, which is followed by grammar, writing mechanics, content, and text organization. These challenges lead to writing that is frequently ambiguous and illogical. Few students are able to generate pertinent concepts and build a full narrative structure. These findings suggest that students still need close supervision to improve their writing abilities. The emphasis should be on expanding vocabulary, comprehending text structure, and honing writing techniques. It is recommended that educators use structured learning techniques like vocabulary games, idea development exercises, scaffolding writing assignments, and group revision and feedback. The study's limitations include the fact that it was limited to a single school and employed a qualitative methodology without a comparison group or pre-post test design. It is advised that more research be done using experimental designs in more schools to assess the efficacy of particular pedagogical interventions, such as the use of digital media or project-based learning models.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

Stanislaus Guna: Conceptualization; Methodology; Project administration.

Ferdinandus Kande: Investigation; Data curation; Review & Editing.

Yustus Sentus Halum: Software; Validation; Funding acquisition.

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