THE STUDY OF ERRORS COMMITTED BY THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 10 DENPASAR IN ENGLISH WRITING

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Abstract

This study was focused on analyzing the types, the sources and the management of errors committed by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs. This research was designed descriptive qualitatively through an observation. The data for the types of errors were collected by assigning students to write descriptive and narrative paragraphs. The data for the sources of errors were collected through Focus Group Discussion. Whereas, data for the management of errors were collected through a process approach in writing. The obtained data were analyzed descriptively in term of types and sources of errors. The first research finding shows seven errors namely title of the paragraphs, the topic sentence, the development of paragraphs, the coherence, the diction, the grammar, and the mechanics. The second finding shows the four sources of errors namely absence of knowledge about writing indicators, less practice in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs, forgetting about grammatical rules, spelling and the usage of the words. Some errors are unclassifiable based on previous criteria. The third finding shows that the types and sources of errors remained the same, however the number of students committed and reasoning such errors are reduced. The findings imply the necessity for the teacher to implement process approach in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs. Meanwhile, the students should gain knowledge about writing indicators, and practice in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs. Moreover, future researchers need to find other alternative aside from process approach in managing errors more efficiently and effectively.

Keywords: Process Approach, Sources and Types of Errors, Writing

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a productive skill. Based on the curriculum content, writing is considered as an important language skill in learning English. It emphasizes on the competition both standard and basic competencies achieved in teaching and learning process. The competency standard that has to be acquired by the students is the ability to communicate in oral and written forms based on social context by using the target language fluently and accurately in an interactional discourse and a monolog which involves discourse in terms of descriptive, narrative, procedure, report, news items, anecdote, exposition, explanation, discussion, commentary and review with varied interpersonal, ideational and textual meaning (Depdiknas, 2003:18). The specified indicators for basic competency in writing for the eighth grade students at SMP include the followings:

1. The title which describes about the general content of the whole text.
2. The topic sentence which specifies a particular idea or information that should further be developed and
arranged according to the text genres.

(3) The development which enlarges the topic sentence using supporting sentences in order to form a suitable paragraph.

(4) The arrangement which organizes the topic sentence and supporting sentences into a coherent writing entity.

(5) The diction which clarifies the usage and meaning of word, phrase, idiom or sentences appropriately.

(6) The grammar which adjusts the correct structure of sentences according to the standard grammar of English.

(7) The mechanics which illustrate the correct and appropriate uses of punctuation and capitalization.

The students should concern with those seven indicators in writing a text. If they made errors in those indicators, their writing competency would consider as low writing competency.

The students of SMPN 10 made errors in learning English, especially in writing skill. It can be seen from one example of students’ writing as the preliminary observation as follows.

"Niall Horan"

1) Niall Horan. He is 2) the one of One Direction. He lives in Irelandia. He was born on 13th September 1993. His religion is 3) Kristen.

He has 4) an amazing hair. He has 5) a brown eyes. He has awesome voice. He’s good at playing guitar and making songs. I love everything about him.”

(A sample of a student’s descriptive writing in SMPN 10 Denpasar, 2014)

This paragraph showed that some errors occurred in the students’ writing. Some of the errors were: 1) Niall Horan, it was an error in making a topic sentence in which students should make a simple, affirmative and active sentence not a phrase; the, the use of the was not appropriate because the can be used after repetition or for something absolute, this was called as grammar error; 3) Kristen, the student should not use Indonesian word in writing English text, so they committed errors in diction; and other errors that can be found in the paragraph above.

The students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar also had problems to develop sentences and in mechanics. Some students commonly had difficulty to develop sentences for the second paragraph. They only can write one or two developing sentences out of four developing sentences. The students also made errors in using mechanics. There were no commas or full stops on the right place in some students’ written text. Because of this, the students who were actually able to develop four sentences seems like to write one sentence. The wrong position of the commas also made the students committed errors in mechanics. The errors were found in capitalization too. There are some words written in small letters which actually should be written in capital letters.

Some of the students also made errors in writing the title of the sentences. They were able to write the topic sentence and developing sentences but can not write the title. They wrote the title not in one word or one phrase.

Those errors needed to be managed in order to make the students increase their writing competency. If not the students’ writing competency will remain low and their score in writing skill will low too.

Therefore, the writer would like to identify types of error made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 especially in Class VIIIC and VIIIE that are known as the weak class in writing skill. The types and sources of error classify based on indicators of writing on syllabus and Brown’s (2007) theory.

Based on the investigation and the previous studies, the researcher found what types and sources of error that students had. The types of errors based on seven indicator of writing competency that are failed to achieve by the students. The sources of error classified based on Focus Group Discussion. A focus group discussion (FGD) is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or
experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest (Stewart and Shamdasani: 1990). The group of participants is guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves. A solution to manage those errors by applying a management strategy which is called process approach.

A process approach means teaching the writing process explicitly that is concerned primarily with the content, organization, word choice, spelling, punctuation and etc. It also means to shift away from product and only focus on process of writing. It emphasis on collaborative process such as peer interaction and teacher-student interaction. There are 5 steps in using process approach: 1) Pre-writing, 2) Drafting, 3) Revising, 4) Editing and 5) Publishing (Diliberto, 2013).

This approach involves among the students' interaction and teacher-student interaction. The students are expected to be active in peer interaction and feel free to ask the teacher’s feedback if it is necessary. The peer interaction made the students realized the errors they made and perhaps made them not to create the same errors again.

Based on the explanation above, then, a study was conducted in order to investigate, the types of error committed by the students was based on relevant theories. The framework used in the current study was based on writing competency of Indonesian curriculum that mentioned the seven types of errors in producing written text, they are title, topic sentence, developing sentences, coherence, diction, grammar and mechanics. Theory of Brown et al.(2007) is used to distinguish four sources of errors: absence of knowledge, forgetting, lack of practice and unclassifiable.

Descriptive research design as stated by (Labaree, 2013) can be used in a study to help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem. It can not convincingly answer to the questions of why. It is commonly used to acquire information that relate to the current status of the phenomena or to describe the existing condition of a circumstance.

Therefore, this design was used in this study, because its aimed to describe the errors that occured on students’ writing. The description about what errors occured and how the errors usually happened was based on the analysis of the data from students’ writing. In order to manage the students’ errors in writing, a process approach as a management strategy was applied.

There were three stages in this step of research. They were preparation, implementation and finalization of the research. The three stages were as follows.

1. The Research Preparation

The researcher designed the lesson plans and writing tasks for class VIII C and VII E. The students should write descriptive
and narrative texts in English. After that, the researcher asked permission to the headmaster of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar and setting up the schedule of the research. The research ran in May 2014. The researcher used regular schedule in replacing the real English teacher in both classes. There were five meetings for each descriptive and narrative texts. Each meeting had 80 minutes for time allotment.

2. The Research Implementation

The researcher introduced the process approach in the first 3 meetings since it is not familiar for the students. The teacher used process approach in teaching students writing descriptive and narrative texts in English. The fourth meeting was used to apply the process approach, to make sure that the students were able to follow the five steps in the process approach.

3. The Research Finalization

The writing tasks were given in the last meeting. The students should write descriptive and narrative texts in English. It is said as the finalization phase. The result of this writing tasks was then analyzed. The instrument used in this study was in the form of writing task. It was given in order to collect the students' writing. First, the students were asked to write once for descriptive and narrative texts. Then, the researcher analyzed their writing based on the purpose of this study.

These were the steps that was done in collecting the primary data:
1) Visiting the Field. 2) Collecting Students' Writing. 3) Doing Focus Group Discussion. 4) Using the management of error (process approach).

The collected data were analyzed by descriptive qualitatively. The analysis to the types of error that committed by the students was based relevant theories. The framework used in the current study was based on indicators of writing. Brown et al. (2007) distinguished four sources of errors: absence of knowledge, forgetting, less practice and unclassifiable.

This study was conducted in SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar and 93 students from two classes (VIIIC & VIIIE) were chosen as the subject of the research. Those students were asked to write two kinds of genre text, descriptive and narrative texts. There were two sessions of collecting the students’ writing, the first session was before applying the process approach and the second session was after applying the process approach. Each text consisted of one title and 2 paragraphs, which each paragraph consisted of 5 sentences. Each paragraph consisted of 1 topic sentence and 4 developing sentences. So each student produced 20 sentences and two titles per session.

Every single sentence of the students’ writing was analyzed by using writing rubric errors. The rubric consisted of codes based on 7 indicators of writing. Those indicators are:
1. Title (T)
2. Topic Sentence (TS)
3. Developing Sentences (DS)
4. Coherence (CH)
5. Diction (DC)
6. Grammar (Gr)
7. Mechanics (Mc)

The criteria of the seven indicators of writing were completed by adding “Not” to make the error found obviously in every criteria, the detail was as follows.

1. Not Title (T)
   a) Not 1 word (NTwrd)
   b) Not 1 phrase (NTph)
   c) Not Umbrella (NTUM)

2. Not Topic Sentence (NTS)
   a) Not Simple (NTSs)
   b) Not Affirmative (NTSfa)
   c) Not Active (NTSact)

3. Not Developing Sentence (NDS)
   a) Not 1st sentence (NDS1)
   b) Not 2nd sentence (NDS2)
   c) Not 3rd sentence (NDS3)
   d) Not 4th sentences (NDS4)
   e) Not 5th sentences (NDS5)

4. Not Coherence (NCH)
   a) Not Coherence between Title and Topic Sentence (NCHTS)
   b) Not Coherence between Topic Sentence and Developing Sentence 1 (NCH1)
   c) Not Coherence between Developing Sentence 1 and Developing Sentence 2 (NCH2)
d) Not Coherence between Developing Sentence 2 and Developing Sentence 3 (NCH3)
e) Not Coherence between Developing Sentence 3 and Developing Sentence 4 (NCH4)

5. Not Diction (NDC)
a) Not Spelling (NDC-Sp)
b) Not Usage (NDC-Usg)

6. Not Grammar (NGr)
a) Not Conjunction (NGr-Conj)

b) Not Tenses (NGr-Ts)
c) Not Subject-verb agreement (NGr-S-vba)
d) Not Pronoun (NGr-Pro)
e) Not Preposition (NGr-Prep)
f) Not Article (NGr-Arc)

7. Not Mechanic (NMc)
a) Not Punctuation (NMc-Pct)
b) Not Capitalization (NMc-Cap)

Table 1. Frequency of Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Legends</th>
<th>Codes of Errors</th>
<th>Salience</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Total Salience of Types of Error</th>
<th>Total Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of Error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>One word</td>
<td>NTwrd</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.64 %</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One phrase</td>
<td>NTph</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.19 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Umbrella</td>
<td>NTum</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.24 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Topic Sentence</td>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>NTSS</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3.96 %</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affirmative</td>
<td>NTSa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.15 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>NTSact</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.64 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Developing Sentences</td>
<td>1st sentence</td>
<td>NDS1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.68 %</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd sentence</td>
<td>NDS2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.37 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3rd sentence</td>
<td>NDS3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.76 %</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4th sentence</td>
<td>NDS4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.79 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>Topic Sentence</td>
<td>NCHTS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.68 %</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st Developing sentence</td>
<td>NCHDS1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.83 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd Developing Sentence</td>
<td>NOHDS2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.07 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd Developing sentence</td>
<td>NCHDS3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.9 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4th Developing sentence</td>
<td>NCHDS4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.73 %</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the table of Frequency of Errors 1, it could be seen that the errors on students' writing of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar in the first data were found in every criteria of the seven indicators of writing. The table shown in detail that the lowest errors found in writing Topic Sentence (NTSa) with 0.15 % of all errors percentages. Meanwhile, the highest errors were found in Grammar especially in Tenses (NGr-Ts) with 632 errors or 30.9 % of all errors percentages. In general, based on the main errors of the seven indicators of writing, the table shown the lowest errors were found in Title (NT) with 1.07 % of all errors percentages. The highest errors were found in Grammar (NGr) with 45.9 % of all errors percentages.

Table 2. Frequency of Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Reasons of</th>
<th>Percentages of</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1&quot; Data</td>
<td>2&quot; Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Absence of Knowledge (SAbK)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forgetting (SFor)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Less Practice (SPrac)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unclassifiable (SUc)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the table frequency of sources above, it could be seen that the lowest source of the errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar was unclassifiable with 3.2 % of all sources. Then it followed by forgetting with 10.8 %. The highest source of the errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri...
10 Denpasar was less practice with 46.2% of all sources. Actually, less practice and absent of knowledge have not different so much. It could be seen that the source of the errors caused by absence of knowledge was about 44.23% of all sources.

Table 3. Frequency of Errors 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FREQUENCY OF ERRORS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Based on the table of Frequency of Errors, it could be seen that the errors committed by the students after applying the process approach were decreased in every criteria as well as the seven indicators of writing. But, there was different result for each error. The table showed in detail that the lowest errors found in 2 different indicators, they were topic sentence that was not in an affirmative form (NTSa) with 0.05 %, and developing sentence 1 & 2 with 0.05 % of all errors percentages. Meanwhile, the highest errors were found in Tenses of Grammar (NGr-Ts) with 12.9 % of all errors percentages. In general errors, based on the main errors of the seven indicators of writing, the table shown the lowest errors were found in Title (NT) with 0.64 % of all errors percentages. The highest errors were found in Grammar (NGr) with 20.8 % of all errors percentages.

The frequency of the students committed errors also reduced: error in title from 12.9 % to 4.3%, error in topic sentence from 38.7% to 12.9%, error in developing sentences from 37.6% to 26.7%, error in coherence from 22.6% to 6.45%, error in diction from 78.5% to 58.1%, error in grammar from 98% to 92.5% and error in mechanics from 60.2% to 18.3%.

By looking at the findings above, it could be seen the types of errors on writing committed by the students. The terms of errors were based on the seven indicators of writing: 1) Title; 2) Topic Sentence; 3) Developing Sentence; 4) Coherence; 5) Diction; 6) Grammar; and 7) Mechanics. After giving the first writing task for the students, and analyzing the result of the students' writing, it was found the errors in each indicator of writing. Findings showed the percentages of each error: 1) Title = 1.07 %; 2) Topic Sentence = 4.8 %; 3) Developing Sentence = 6.6 %; 4) Coherence =4.3 %; 5) Diction = 15 %; 6) Grammar = 45.9 %; and 7) Mechanics = 16.3 %.

As mentioned above in the table 2 Frequency of Sources, four categories of sources were used: 1) absence of knowledge; 2) forgetting; 3) less practice; and 4) unclassifiable. The analysis of interview showed “less practice” with 46.2% was the dominant source of errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar in writing.

Those result meant that the students made the errors, especially on Grammar because they did not practice their knowledge very much. They were already taught the theory of a lesson, but they rarely apply the theory or less practice the theory. By doing less practice, they were not sure how to use the theory when they were asked to use. It made them creating the errors in writing. In this case, the teacher needed to be involved to give the students tasks to practice the theory. The more the students did practice, the less they did the errors on writing. For example: when they are taught the lesson about Present Tense, they need to apply the structure of this tense, probably everyday. They need to know when they should use this tense. Moreover, the teacher needs to give tasks about this tense, probably directly or indirectly.

After knowing the types and the sources of errors made by the students, the process approach was used as a management strategy. This strategy was expected to manage the errors on the students’ writing. The third research problem was answered after the used of process approach.

As mentioned above in findings, the process approach was able to manage the errors on the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar. The types of errors based on the seven indicators of writing in general calculation got the reduction in frequency of errors. It was proven from the finding of this study.

So, the difficulty of the students to write the Title of their texts were helped by using the process approach. It could be
seen from the first step of this strategy (pre-writing). It made the students easier to create a Title because they already knew what they were going to write in general. It was different from the previous writing task in which the students did not create the Title before knowing the ideas of the topic. Therefore, the steps of the process approach really help the students to manage the errors that they made in the previous writing task.

The reduction in frequency of errors was found as well in Developing Sentences. It was different from the previous writing task in which the students could not achieve the target of writing (4 Developing Sentences for each Topic Sentence). Some of the students were able to develop only 2 sentences after the Topic Sentence in the previous writing task. But, after implementing the process approach, the students were able to develop the sentences more than 2 sentences. Only some of them still failed to achieve the target of writing task. It meant that the steps in the process approach helped students to develop the sentences. It was because the students already knew the ideas that were going to develop. Before writing, the students could evaluate their list of ideas to make sure that the ideas were related to the topic or not. It helped them to develop the right sentences after the Topic Sentences.

There were also reduction of errors of Coherence on the students' writing as well. It could be seen in the result of the second analysis of errors in which some of students writing could relate each other than the previous writing task. It was because the steps of the process approach leaded the students to relate the first sentence to the next sentence. When drafting, the students could evaluate the list of ideas. Because of this step, the students could realize whether the first idea until the next idea were related to the topic or not. It made them easier to relate between the Title to Topic Sentence, and or Topic Sentences to Developing Sentences.

Moreover, Diction, Grammar and Mechanics got the reduction of errors as well because of the process approach. In every step of this strategy, the students were reminded to make sure the use of Diction, Grammar and Mechanics. Because this strategy has five steps: 1) Pre-writing, 2) Drafting; 3) Revising; 4) Editing; and 5) Publishing; it could help the students to check in every single step about the use of Diction, Grammar and Mechanics in their sentences. Therefore, the steps of the process approach really helped the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar to manage the errors on writing.

As mentioned in a theory stated by Diliberto (2013) that the process approach is developed as a metacognitive strategy for written expression, to assist students in planning and writing compositions by modifying a highly structured, step-by-step procedure that focus on process not product. This is intended to enable students to generate and organize ideas in simple paragraph form. Based on this theory, it could be seen that it was right that this strategy could help the students in writing. So, the errors were able to manage on the two types of texts.

The result of this study supports a previous research conducted by Al-Buainain (2006). He stated that the highly recommended possible way to teach learners to write is to get them to read and write, then, write and read and revise and rewrite and edit again and again, drafting and re-drafting, self correction and how to employ the strategy of making comparisons within their own use of language to develop fluent writing.

It also supports the study by Hasan & Akhand (2010) who wrote an article on approaches to writing in ESL/EFL context. They examined the effects of product and process approach to writing on learners' performance and found the advantages of using a product-process approach to gauging the effects of writing tasks were appraised.

The result of this study has same result of Al-Buainain's research and Hasan & Akhand's research in which the students showed improvement in the length of writing Descriptive and Narrative texts.
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
This study was focused on analyzing the types, the sources and the management of errors committed by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs. This research was designed descriptive qualitatively through an observation.

The data for the types of errors were collected by assigning students to write descriptive and narrative paragraphs. The data for the sources of errors were collected through Focus Group Discussion. Whereas, data for the management of errors were collected through a process approach in writing. The obtained data were analyzed descriptively in term of types and sources of errors.

The first research finding shows seven errors namely title of the paragraphs, the topic sentence, the development of paragraphs, the coherence, the diction, the grammar, and the mechanics. The second finding shows the four sources of errors namely absence of knowledge about writing indicators, less practice in writing descriptive and narrative paragraphs, forgetting about grammatical rules, spelling and the usage of the words. Some errors are unclassifiable based on previous criteria.

The third finding shows that the types and sources of errors remained the same, however the number of students committed and reasoning such errors are reduced.

Therefore, it is suggested that the English teachers of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Denpasar in the academic year 2013/2014 should think to use the process approach in teaching the students, especially in writing subject. Teachers also need to make sure their students comprehend the subject, the indicators of writing, and any texts that are taught to avoid the occurrence of errors on students' writing. Teachers need to give feedback in every single error of students, especially in writing. By giving feedback for students, students can realize their errors, and it will reduce the errors in next writing. It is suggested to make sure to teach students about the material first before asking them to write, because the absence of knowledge was one of sources of errors found in this study.

The result of this study was expected to be beneficial for any educational element because it was about the errors that were found on students' writing, Descriptive and Narrative texts. The result of this study is expected to be beneficial for other researchers. For researches who want to conduct similar study in analysis of errors, in writing, in applying strategy, the result of this study can be used as the empirical review to conduct the bigger study. The indicator of writing can be used as a basic analysis to analyze errors in writing for the further study. Moreover, the process approach can be used as a strategy to manage errors in writing, to improve students' competency in writing, and so on.

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