

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In today's interconnected world, effective communicative skills, particularly in writing, are essential for success in various academic, professional, and social contexts. As noted by Harmer (2004), writing serves multifaceted purposes, ranging from conveying information to persuading and expressing ideas.¹ In today's digital age, where written communication plays a central role in academic discourse, professional correspondence, and social media interactions, the ability to articulate thoughts effectively through writing is indispensable.

In society, writing is viewed as a means of preserving knowledge, documenting history, and expressing thoughts and emotions. Effective writing fosters communication, enhances critical thinking, and contributes to intellectual development.² This shows that proficient writing is associated with not only education but also social progress, emphasizing its importance beyond the classroom setting.

Beyond its role in academia and social interactions, writing serves as a bridge between generations, ensuring that cultural and religious wisdom is preserved. In Islamic tradition, writing is regarded as a sacred tool for transmitting divine knowledge and scholarly insights. One of the Islamic scholars (*Ulama*), Imam Ash-Shafi'i once said:

“الْعِلْمُ صَيِّدٌ وَالْكِتَابَةُ قَيْدُهُ فَقَيِّدْ صُيُودَكَ بِحَبْلِ وَائِقٍ”

¹ Jeremy Harmer, *How to Teach Writing* (Edinburgh: Pearson Longman, 2004).

² Ye Tao and Jianbin Yu, “Cultural Threads in Writing Mastery: A Structural Analysis of Perfectionism, Learning Self-Efficacy, and Motivation as Mediated by Self-Reflection in Chinese EFL Learners,” *BMC Psychology* 12, no. 1 (2024).

Which translates: “*Knowledge is like a hunted animal, so secure your hunt with writing.*” This concept was demonstrated when Abu Bakr, upon the suggestion of Umar bin Khattab, instructed Zaid bin Thabit to compile the Quran from the accounts of the companions so that it could be transcribed and preserved. This decision was driven by the fact that many *huffadz* (memorizers of the Quran) had fallen as martyrs in battle. This historical event highlights the importance of documenting knowledge to ensure its preservation through writing.³

The significance of writing is also mentioned in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). From ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr and Anas bin Malik, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

“فَيُذَوِّا الْعِلْمَ بِالْكِتَابَةِ”

(Shahih Al-Jami’, no. 4434. Shaykh Al-Albani classified this hadith as sahih)

Which translates: “*Tie (Preserve) knowledge with writing*”, this hadith reinforces the notion that writing is not merely a functional skill but a responsibility in knowledge dissemination.⁴ Writing is thus seen as an act of preserving wisdom and contributing to the collective intellectual heritage of the community. By ensuring accuracy and coherence in writing, students fulfill this principle in contemporary educational settings.

Furthermore, the Qur’an also underscores the importance of writing. In Surah Al-Alaq (96:4-5), Allah states:

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤) عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)

³ Anton Ramdan, *Jurnalistik Islam* (Jakarta: Shahara Digital Publishing, 2015).

⁴ Anton Ramdan, *Jurnalistik Islam*.

Which translates: “*Who taught by the pen, taught man that which he knew not*”, this Qur’anic verse emphasizes writing as a divine gift and highlights its role in human intellectual and spiritual advancement.⁵ This perspective aligns with the modern educational imperative of mastering writing to facilitate learning and self-expression.

Through the perspectives of both modern educational theories and Islamic teachings, writing emerges as a crucial tool for learning, knowledge preservation, and intellectual development. This demonstrates that writing is not only a technical skill essential for academic success but also holds profound significance in social and religious contexts.

Just as early Islamic scholars emphasized the written word for preserving religious and intellectual heritage, today’s learners must develop writing proficiency to contribute effectively to academic, professional, and religious discourse. In other words, given writing’s profound role in societal, academic, and religious contexts, it is crucial to equip students with the skills to write effectively. This highlights the need for effective teaching strategies that ensure students can communicate their ideas with clarity and precision.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore how effective the intervention, *i.e.*, The Feynman Technique, as a teaching strategy, could contribute to reducing students’ writing errors, thereby further discussion heavily underscores the impact of the intervention on the classroom setting.

In that sense, according to James (1986) in Sa’adah (2020), Writing is one of the four essential English language skills that should be thoroughly mastered in schools, universities, and other areas where writing proficiency

⁵ Siti Kurniawati Khoirunnisa’, “Urgensi Menulis Dalam Al-Qur’an Surat Al-‘Alaq Ayat 1-5” (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2021).

is required.⁶ Through writing, the author offers content that may hold value for the readers, creating a form of communication between the two. Carina (1991) similarly notes that writing functions as a type of social interaction, where one person writes and another reads.⁷ Grenville (2001) underscores the importance of considering the intended context and purpose of writing, highlighting the need for clarity and coherence in communication.⁸

Consequently, in school, writing is a crucial skill for students learning English as a foreign language, as schools play a vital role in teaching writing skills which are essential for academic success. Through writing, students can convey their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and experiences to their audiences. It is a skillful activity that engages students' knowledge, ideas, and critical thinking.

However, writing is often seen as a complex skill because it demands a significant level of effort and concentration from students, especially those studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL), who face the challenge of acquiring proficiency in written communication to navigate diverse linguistic environments. It requires an understanding of linguistic conventions, coherence, and context.⁹

This complexity is reflected in the real classroom setting, where students often struggle with the basic aspects of writing due to various instructional and motivational constraints. Based on the result of the pre-observation at the selected school, *i.e.*, MTs Al-Jauharotunnaqiyyah, it was found that the English learning process in the classroom was not running

⁶ Annisa Raudatus Sa'adah, 'Writing Skill in Teaching English: An Overview', *Educasia*, 5.1 (2020), pp. 57–73.

⁷ Peter Carina, *Basic Writing: A First Course* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).

⁸ Kate Grenville, *Writing from Start to Finish: A Six-Step Guide* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001).

⁹ John Norrish, *Language Learners and Their Errors* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1983).

effectively. Many students paid little attention to the teacher's explanation and were observed engaging in unrelated activities such as chatting or sleeping during lessons. When given exercises, most students tended to copy from their peers, indicating a lack of active engagement and critical thinking. This directly affected their writing skills, as most students constructed text merely by relying on vocabulary books provided by the teacher, without a proper understanding of sentence structure. Consequently, their writing often lacked grammatical accuracy and clarity. Furthermore, students' reluctance to participate, mainly due to making mistakes or embarrassment, resulted in a passive learning environment, especially in writing activities, which require active engagement.

Moreover, the teaching method applied by the teacher relied solely on teacher-based instruction. The absence of varied teaching strategies and the lack of integration of technology further emphasized the one-way nature of instruction. Based on these conditions, this study focuses on improving students' writing skills as a response to their limited ability to express ideas effectively and coherently in written form.

Additionally, the selected school, *i.e.* MTs Al-Jauharotunnaqiyyah, implements the 2013 curriculum, therefore, the object of this study is designed aligning with one of the curriculum's objectives, that is, to achieve proficiency in comprehending and writing various text genres.

In the Indonesian educational curriculum, specifically in curriculum 2013, junior high school students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in various text genres, encompassing descriptions, recounts, reports, procedures, narratives.¹⁰ Thus, students in Indonesia often encounter

¹⁰ Kammer Tuahman Sipayung et al., "Generic Structure of Descriptive Text Written English Language Learner and Teachers," *Linguistics and Culture Review* 5, no. 3 (2021): 1636–1650.

challenges in their compositions due to the distinct linguistic features inherent in each text genre. These challenges manifest in the form of errors, as students grapple with understanding and applying the specific language conventions associated with each genre. Therefore, this research aims to find the solution to those problems by specifically analyzing the students' writing skills in text genres. This research narrows the focus by only analyzing the students' writing skills in the report text as it requires not only a description of certain phenomena or things, but also a factual explanation, and information about their characteristics, and behavior

In addition to that, Sipayung et al. (2021) stated that focusing on the text in teaching writing highlights the importance of organization in addressing the key issues in writing.¹¹ In this sense, this approach is particularly relevant in the context of teaching text genres. Additionally, there are fourteen different text genres, including narrative, descriptive, recount, explanatory, spoof, argumentation, report, news item, anecdote, procedure, hortatory, discussion, and review.¹² Each of these genres possesses specific characteristics related to its social function, generic structure, and lexicogrammatical features.¹³

Therefore, teaching writing at the junior high school level involves guiding students in effectively communicating information through written text. In this process, teachers' creativity plays a crucial role. They must be capable of teaching various types of writing using diverse methods and media to engage students and enhance their learning experience.

¹¹ Sipayung et al., "Generic Structure of Descriptive Text Written English Language Learner and Teachers."

¹² Linda Gerot and Peter Wignell, *Making Sense of Functional Grammar*, 1st edn (Sydney: Antipodean Educational Enterprises (AEE), 1994).

¹³ Linda Gerot and Peter Wignell, *Making Sense of Functional Grammar*, 1st edn.

However, at MTs Al-Jauharotunnaqiyyah Cibeber private junior high school, since the teacher's teaching strategy relies solely on the lecture method to deliver the lesson content, this teaching approach does not effectively help students overcome their difficulties with mastering and applying writing rules, leading to common errors in students' writing, which can be seen in their writing content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics errors. Given the limited resources and ineffective teaching strategies implemented at the school, the Feynman Technique is chosen as a suitable teaching strategy because it promotes deep understanding and active student participation. Through this technique, students are expected not only to replicate information but to truly understand and internalize it, thereby improving the quality of their writing.

Therefore, this research focuses on the application of the Feynman Technique in reducing writing errors on EFL Students' report writing, as an alternative pedagogical strategy that involves teaching by breaking down complex ideas into simple, understandable terms.

Various relevant previous studies have demonstrated that the Feynman Technique is an effective learning strategy, providing a strong foundation for its selection as the independent variable in this research. Englevert et al. (2021) highlighted the technique's ability to promote deep conceptual understanding through a constructivist, autodidactic, and heutagogical approach, which fosters learner autonomy and self-regulation.¹⁴ Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2023) confirmed the effectiveness of the Feynman Technique in teaching English grammar test scores, thereby supporting its application

¹⁴ Englevert P Reyes et al., "Feynman Technique as a Heutagogical Learning Strategy for Independent and Remote Learning," *Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal* (2021), <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4721-1123>.

in language learning contexts that require active student engagement.¹⁵ Furthermore, Adeoye (2023) emphasized the technique's success in helping slow learners overcome academic challenges through the use of analogies and self-testing, reinforcing the notion that academic achievement is not solely determined by learning speed but by the effectiveness of the learning strategy employed.¹⁶

Although the studies provided by Englevert et al (2021), Nguyen et al. (2023), and Adeoye (2023) give valuable insights into the Feynman Technique's effectiveness as a learning strategy, there are also notable limitations, such as, Englevert et al. may struggle with the narrow focus on the autodidactic and heutagogical approach. Nguyen et al. highlight the technique's success in teaching English grammar and do not consider other language skills. Meanwhile, Adeoye emphasizes the benefits for slow learners but may overlook its applicability to a broader student population.

Considering its strengths and limitations, the Feynman Technique is chosen as the independent variable due to its strengths in promoting deep comprehension, fostering learner autonomy, and enhancing academic performance, yet, this study also addressed the studies' limitation by investigating whether the Feynman Technique not only promotes autonomy in learning nor only improves grammatical skills, and fosters active learning in slow learners, but also focuses on the broader educational field, specifically in relevant with English writing by highlighting the use of the Feynman Technique in reducing the students writing errors *i.e.* Content,

¹⁵ Nguyễn Thị Hồng Minh and Nguyễn Minh Giang, "Using Feynman Technique in English Grammar Teaching and Learning at High Schools," *TNU Journal of Science and Technology* 228, no. 4 (2023): 311–319.

¹⁶ Moses Adeleke Adeoye, "From Struggle to Success: The Feynman Techniques' Revolutionary Impact on Slow Learners," *Thinking Skills and Creativity Journal* 6, no. 2 (2023): 125–133.

Organization, Language Use, Vocabulary, and Mechanics in their report text.

While the Feynman Technique has been widely applied in science for learning complex concepts, its application to improve writing accuracy as a teaching strategy in EFL contexts has not been extensively explored. Therefore, based on the previous relevant studies, this research is intended to elaborate on whether the Feynman Technique is also applicable in the educational context through a Pre-Experimental Research.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the observation conducted by the researcher in the Al-Jauharotunnaqiyah Cibeber private junior high school, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, particularly class of grade 9, struggle with writing accuracy. The problem can be seen due to the teacher's teaching approach –traditional teaching – that does not support active learning. This teaching approach, that is teacher-centered teaching strategies, may not sufficiently address students' difficulties in mastering and applying writing rules, leading to persistent writing errors, which leads to the common errors in students' writing, such as content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. The urgency of this problem can lead to the student's inability to reach certain goals set in the objective of the material.

Thus, this study is needed in order to explore alternative teaching techniques, such as the Feynman Technique, to improve students' ability to reduce errors and enhance clarity in writing.

C. Problem Formulation

Based on the problem above, the research question for this study is:

Is the Feynman Technique effective in reducing writing errors among EFL students' report writing?

D. Limitation of the Problem

- a) The lack of a control group in this pre-experimental design means the study focuses solely on the changes observed within the selected group. This design is appropriate for an initial exploration of the Feynman Technique's effectiveness, providing a foundation for further research.
- b) This paper specifically only concentrates on written communication (writing skills), which entails the ability to organize ideas or information into sentences or paragraphs.

E. Objective of the Study

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of the Feynman Technique in reducing writing errors on EFL students' report writing.

F. Significances of Study

a) Theoretical Benefits

This research can contribute to the development of theories regarding methods for teaching English writing as a foreign language (EFL). By focusing on the Feynman Technique, this study can enhance understanding of how specific learning strategies influence students' writing skills, particularly within the EFL context.

b) Practical Benefits

The result of this study can serve as a guide for teachers and educators in selecting and applying effective teaching methods to improve students' writing skills. It can help in designing learning activities that are more engaging and effective.

G. Organization of Writing

To provide a clear and structured framework for the research, this section is intended to explain the organization of the paper, which includes elaborating on the content in Chapters I, II, III, IV, and V:

Chapter I involves the writing of the study's background, which mentions the researcher's reason for choosing the research topic. Identification of the Problem establishes the context by focusing on the matter of the study. Problem Formulation narrows the scope into specific and a researchable question. Limitation of the Problem ensures clear boundaries of the study. The Objective of the Study clarifies the goals of the research. The Significance of Study highlights the study's contribution. And the organization of writing provides a roadmap for readers to follow the discussion systematically.

Chapter II consists of the literature review which explores the theory which is used by the researcher. Definitions and further elaboration of the Feynman Technique, Writing Skills, Purpose and Goal of Writing, Differences between Writing Errors and Writing Mistakes, Criteria of Good Writing, Components of Writing Assessment, and Text Genre: including Report Text, are also provided in this section.

Chapter III consists of the research methodology which outlines the systematic approach and techniques used to conduct the study and how the data is collected, this includes the place and time of research, the research method, the research variables, the population and sample of the research, the research instrument, the data collection technique, the data analysis, the scoring system, and the research hypothesis. In this study, the data is in the form of the students' report text performed during the pre-test and the post-test, the data then is presented based on the errors that occurred: Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use, and Mechanics. To show the

differences between the pre-test and the post-test, a scoring system must be conducted, in this study, the tests are scored based on a rubric. The process of how the Feynman Technique was implemented is elaborated in this section.

Chapter IV includes an elaboration of the data and its analysis. This section discussed the data that was analyzed and scored from the previous section to provide an in-depth understanding of the topic.

Chapter V presents the conclusions and recommendations of the research. In this chapter, the researcher summarizes the findings from the analysis and offers suggestions for the readers that open opportunities for further research.