

## Improving The Writing Skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh Teachers Through a Blog-Based Autobiographical Technique Workshop

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### Abstract

Improving skills should be a concern for educators to support student abilities, but not all educators pay attention to the importance of improving skills. One of them is in terms of writing for teachers at the Vocational High School level. At Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, which is a Vocational School that has majors including Computer Network Engineering, Multimedia, and Software Engineering (Broadcasting), with the sophistication of this IT-based school, of course, it already has facilities in the field of Information and Communication Technology that are qualified. The type of research used is in the form of School Action Research (PTS). School Action Research is an amalgamation of action research. Action research was developed with the intention of finding solutions to social problems. Action research begins with a systematic study of a problem. The results of the study are used as the basis for developing a work plan (action) in an effort to overcome the problem. The conclusion obtained from the research on improving the writing ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers through blog-based autobiographical techniques is that there is an increase in the writing ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers after attending a workshop on blog-based autobiographical techniques. Teachers' motivation to improve their writing skills also increased, and enthusiasm for using blog or website media to be more optimized.

**Keywords:** autobiography; writing skills; workshop; blog

### A. INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of the times, human needs are also no less developed. Human life at this time is very dependent on the use of technology and the internet so that the data obtained can be found anywhere, anytime, and from anyone (Francis, 2019). This matter makes data dissemination very easy and fast when compared to previous generations. The development of technology and the internet can actually have a positive impact if utilized wisely (Francis, 2019). Like Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, they created a school website as proof that they are keeping up with the times, especially since Vocational High School in Payakumbuh holds the title of technology and information school.

The hope is that having their own school website will make it easier for them to disseminate information that is important for the public to know.

Education in the future tends to be flexible, more open, and easily accessible to anyone who needs it regardless of status, position or profession, one's gender status whether male or female, one's age whether children, parents, teenagers, adults, or educational experience, and will continue to grow in the form of online learning systems or distance learning that allows for mutual interaction and collaboration through networks or the internet (Kocak, 2021). Evidence of the implementation of online or distance learning systems has been carried out or experienced by

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all schools in the world, especially in Indonesia, due to the Covid-19 pandemic for the last few years.

The use of technology and the internet also has a major impact on the field of education, especially in the daily learning process. The more sophisticated technological developments today make teachers and students able to search for teaching materials and materials from anywhere, anytime, and from anyone (Razak, 2018). It can even be predicted in the future that the education and learning system of teachers and students in the classroom will be maximized by using an online platform (Breddermann, 2018).

Ability comes from the word "capable," which means power, able to do, or can (Graham, 2019). The definition of ability is a general term associated with the ability or potential to master a skill or thought itself (Köller, 2019). Ability is something that is owned by a person to perform the tasks and work assigned to him (Tusyanah, 2019). In writing skills, after the research team conducted initial interviews with teachers or educators of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, there are still many of them who have not really mastered writing skills even though they realize how important it is to master writing skills, in addition to equipping students as well as for promotion.

The culture and habit of writing are inherent in the duties of teachers or other educators. Writing can start before, during, and after learning (Costantini, 2020). The goal of improving teachers' abilities is to lead to professionalism. The responsibilities of teachers are getting heavier due to the increasing demands of society. In the end, teachers must adjust themselves and hone their abilities so that they can provide the best service for students. Among teachers and educators, writing ability is a problem. This is caused by several factors, such as low motivation, limited motivators, many learning tools that must be prepared, limited publication media, and low stimulus to cultivate writing. These things make it difficult to produce works that are worthy of publication (Erenler, 2019).

According to Wale (2021), writing ability is the ability to express ideas, opinions, and feelings to other parties through written language. The accuracy of expressing ideas must be supported by the accuracy of the language used, vocabulary, and grammatical and spelling usage. According to Castillo-Cuesta (2021), writing ability is one of the productive and expressive language skills used to communicate indirectly and not face-to-face with other parties. Meanwhile, according to Haidari (2020), the definition of writing ability is an activity of conveying messages (communication) using written language as a tool or medium. Based on this concept, it can be said that writing is an indirect communication in the form of transferring thoughts or feelings by utilizing graphology, language structure, and vocabulary using symbols so that it can be read as what is represented by these symbols.

Autobiography or Autobiography is derived from the Greek, namely, *autos* which means self; *bios* which means life and *graphein*, which means writing. Definition of Autobiography is writing which contains experiences, history, or a person's life journey from childhood to the present, which is written by himself (first person point of view). An autobiography is an essay written by the learner himself about his life history until now, covering his entire past life or only one or two aspects of his life (Imaniah, 2019). Autobiography, or what some call Autobiography, is a character's life history written by the character himself, sometimes together with other people. This type of writing is made based on the story of the character's life journey, according to what has been told. Many things can be told about the character, from childhood to proud times.

Improving skills should be a concern for educators to support student abilities, but not all educators pay attention to the importance of improving skills. One of them is in terms of writing for teachers at the Vocational High School level. At Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, which is a Vocational School that has majors including Computer Network

Engineering, Multimedia, and Software Engineering (Broadcasting), with the sophistication of this IT-based school, of course, it already has facilities in the field of Information and Communication Technology that are qualified.

Based on preliminary interviews with teachers who teach at Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, preliminary data was obtained that the lack of Human Resources in terms of publication caused the lack of information on the Vocational High School in Payakumbuh website. When viewed on the school website, there are many information rubric tabs, including school profiles, school history, department profiles, and so on, but there are still many empty rubrics. This is due to the lack of maximum teacher ability in writing for the Vocational High School in Payakumbuh website. After an initial review, it is known that the writing skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers are still not good. In addition, the ability of teachers to manage school websites is also recognized as non-existent. This made researchers interested in conducting research for the development of information media at Vocational High School in Payakumbuh.

The majority of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers were very enthusiastic about attending the workshop held by the research team because they felt they really needed the knowledge to improve their writing skills, especially in managing or utilizing the website provided by the school. The teachers hope that if they are able to manage the website well, it will help publish their work and the work of the students. The aim is to hone their skills and promote school activities as well as the school, students, or teachers themselves.

The school has facilitated the website for the benefit of the school's progress. The role of teachers and students is expected to be able to manage the website by filling in the rubric tabs. It can be a collection of articles, 5W + 1H news, literary works, school promotions, and so on. For this reason, the researcher wants to conduct a workshop on autobiographical

techniques to improve the writing skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers for the betterment of students, schools, and teachers themselves.

In this study, researchers saw the lack of ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers in writing and utilizing the school website. Whereas if teachers have good writing skills, they can equip students related to write as well and utilize the school website for publication media, and later, it will also be good for the progress of the school as a form of promotion. For this reason, the researcher wants to further examine how the ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers to write using blog or website media and what factors influence the teachers' interest in writing. We strive to improve the ability of teachers by providing workshops and teaching them how to create a blog and utilize the blog.

## **B. IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS**

The type of research used is in the form of School Action Research (SAI). School Action Research is an amalgamation of action research. Action research was developed with the intention of finding solutions to social problems. Action research begins with a systematic study of a problem. The results of the study are used as the basis for developing a work plan (action) in an effort to overcome the problem.

Action research is a form of self-reflection research conducted by participants in social situations (including education) to improve their own practices (Chevalier, 2019). There are two main points in action research, namely improvement, and involvement. This will direct the purpose of action research into three areas, namely; (1) to improve practice; (2) for professional development with the intention of increasing practitioners' understanding of their practice; (3) to improve the circumstances or situation in which the practice is carried out. School Action Research can be interpreted as an action research on matters that exist within the scope of education, in this case, the school. Its nature

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requires immediate action, carried out repeatedly through steps, making plans (plan), implementing (action), observation (observation), and reflection (reflection), up to a predetermined state limit.

The research subjects targeted in this School Action Research are the teachers of SKMN 4 Payakumbuh. This research was conducted from January 2022 to June 2022. This school action research has stages of determining the focus of the problem, action planning, implementation of actions, observation and data collection, and reflection. The research data source used, namely, primary data is the first data source where data will be generated (Groenland, 2019). Data is collected directly from the source in the form of direct responses from informants who can be passed through interviews and observations. Primary data is also called original data or new data. This data is also obtained directly in the field by researchers who are closely related to this research, as the subjects in this study are people who are informants in this study, namely the relevant teachers. Then secondary data is the second data after the primary data source. Secondary data is data arranged in the form of documents and references that researchers obtain from universities. Secondary data is supporting data for researchers obtained from readings or reports of previous researchers, usually in the form of library archives. Secondary data is the second data after primary data sources. In this secondary data, researchers are literature from books, the internet, and journals related to the problems that researchers take.

Action at the stage of determining the focus of the problem Before a problem is determined/formulated, it is necessary to cultivate the attitude and courage to question, for example, Is the initial competence of teachers in writing adequate? After the problem is formulated operationally, it is necessary to formulate alternative actions to be taken. Alternative actions that can be taken can be formulated in the form of action hypotheses in the sense of conjectures about changes that will occur if an action is taken, such as process-

oriented strategies for improving teachers' writing skills can improve teachers' writing skills.

At the stage of implementing the action, aspects of the action plan (scenario) carried out are observation, seeing the situation and conditions that occur at Vocational High School in Payakumbuh. Interview, This interview was conducted in several stages. The first stage is pre-research to ensure the situation and conditions that occur. Then the second stage is an interview that has been made beforehand when the research is carried out.

The third interview was conducted after the blog-based autobiography technique workshop to find out the benefits of the workshop assistance that had been carried out. Module, after obtaining data from the interview, the researcher made a module entitled autobiographical/autobiographical writing techniques then the module was given to the teachers of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh. Workshop, this assistance was carried out two times. The first stage assists in writing autobiographies. The second workshop assistance is to facilitate blog-based autobiography writing techniques, in which, in this case, teachers are not only enriched in writing techniques but also by utilizing blogs.

Observation and Data Collection, this stage runs simultaneously during the implementation of the action. Observations were made while the action was in progress, both taking place at the same time. The reflection stage is intended to thoroughly review the actions that have been taken, based on the data that has been collected, and then evaluate in order to improve the next action.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Vocational High School in Payakumbuh is an accredited secondary vocational technology and information school located at Jalan Koto Kaciak, Padang Sikabu Village, Lamposi Tigo Nagari District, Payakumbuh City, West Sumatra. Geographically, the location of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh is at the foot of Mount Sago.

Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, which is under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture, currently has four departments, namely TKJT (Computer, Network, and Telecommunication Engineering), DKV (Visual Communication Design), RPL (Software Engineering) and Game, and Broadcasting. The number of educators in the Vocational High School is around 68 people. Vocational High School in Payakumbuh also has its own website, but the rubric is still a lot empty and has not been optimized for use by teachers and students as internal parties of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh.

Vocational High School in Payakumbuh is indeed a school that prioritizes technology. There are several majors owned by Vocational High School in Payakumbuh which are related to technology and information, as explained by the Public Relations of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh. Based on the results of the interview with the Public Relations of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, the school even has its own website. It only needs to maximize the use of its website. Writing is something that is important for educators to master. To improve students' abilities, teachers must first improve their abilities. In the future, a person's writing ability is very necessary, especially in the world of work, writing demands are very important, and the teacher's job is to equip his students with such abilities.

The ability to write is very important for educators in order to create students who are literate in writing. There are many strategies to improve teachers' writing skills, especially now that writing can be publicized in online media, which is very practical, it will become easier. There are weblogs, social media, and the like. These media can be utilized to improve the writing skills of educators. There are many strategies to improve teachers' writing skills. The writing skills of teachers will not only be useful for themselves, but they can also be very useful for their students because the teacher's job is to provide the knowledge he has to the children he educates. Of course, an educator has a desire for his

students to have more ability in writing so that it becomes a provision later when they have entered the world of work.

Teachers at Vocational High School in Payakumbuh already know a little about writing, but they have never done it before. Even though the school has its own website, if teachers and students can utilize the website, it will certainly add to the progress of the school. The ability to write is indeed very important for teachers in order to be able to create students who are also adept at writing. Especially in the current era, writing is the most important capital to be pocketed first. Everything is now written. Any type of writing should be able to be mastered. After all, writing and information technology cannot be separated. For this reason, Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, which is titled a technology and information school, should be able to write a blog-based autobiography or maximize the school website with good writing.

### **Teachers' Ability in Autobiography Writing Techniques**

Autobiography and writing are interrelated. If teachers are proficient in writing autobiographies, it is hoped that they can also teach students about them (Porto, 2019). In addition, teachers are the place where students model and motivate themselves. If the teacher turns out to have the ability to write, then students will immediately feel like they also have the ability to write. Autobiography has actually been unwittingly written by anyone who has ever written his life story, but of course, a good and correct Autobiography must be in accordance with the characteristics and guidelines for writing (Li, 2021). As well as writing an Autobiography must be a real experience of oneself, and there are sometimes a person is difficult to remember well the story of his past (Painitz, 2019).

Writing an Autobiography is actually easy, and sometimes, without realizing it, someone often does it. It may be that he does not understand and does not know that what he is writing is actually Autobiography. Although the truth is that Autobiography is that simple,

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but still writing an autobiography requires techniques that have been arranged and are needed in doing perfect autobiographical writing (Brown, 2019).

Writing an autobiography is writing about your experiences in life, be they successes or failures (Ying, 2019). Although what is written, for example, about failure, usually what is told is positive or has a positive impact on the reader or provides an overview, lessons, and also inspirational stories (Valtonen, 2021). The educators at Vocational High School in Payakumbuh stated that they had written an autobiography, but it was a long time ago, and they admitted that the quality of their writing was not good and they still needed to learn more to improve their writing skills.

The following are the results of researcher interviews with a number of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers, saying that writing an autobiography is like writing life experiences, both about successes and failures. Regarding whether or not they have ever written an autobiography, they have, but it was a long time ago, they have forgotten, and the writing is still not good. An autobiography is writing that contains a person's journey, starting from life history and experiences (Adji, 2021). Regarding whether or not one has ever written an autobiography, surely someone has written one. Believe it or not, our ability to describe ourselves well is already an asset in writing an Autobiography (Angeloch, 2021). Writing an autobiography or life story for others to read and learn from, especially if in life you have experienced difficult times to success, there is a certain technique in writing an autobiography so that readers can be interested and take lessons (Mahgoub, 2022). In addition, writing an autobiography is writing life experiences, whether or not the informant has ever done it, but only scribbles without knowing the techniques or rules (Vargas, 2021).

Another informant said that writing Autobiography is telling about yourself, telling your life history from birth to knowing the world until now (Saade, 2021). Quite often make works, autobiographical writings,

especially on Facebook social media. There are indeed many works that tell about Autobiography. Writing your own history or life experience, I've made it, but I don't know the technique. Writing an Autobiography is writing oneself (Painitz, 2019). If he has advantages and there is something he wants to describe that he is like this and there are positive things that can be taken by others, it is Autobiography (Tanskanen, 2023).

Based on the answers of the six informants, they are almost the same. Each of them knows that writing an autobiography is writing about their own life experiences. The informants also stated that they had written an autobiography, but without knowing the technique, they just wrote it. Autobiographical writing is writing about life experiences that have been lived. Honing and improving writing skills by writing an autobiography is the simplest step and is expected to have a positive impact on improving writing skills (Lillie, 2022).

In this blog-based autobiography writing process, it is expected that there will be an improvement in the teacher's writing ability from the previous one, especially in utilizing blog media to improve writing skills. Then how to choose an interesting main topic so that Autobiography writing is read by people, find brainstorming, the steps needed by writers in remembering childhood trips, and whether our Autobiography writing is edited by people. What is the history of blog writing, and what is AdSense?

The teachers of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh have more or less understood the big concept of writing in a simple way. Informants stated that they got their knowledge about writing from online media without ever attending writing seminars or workshops because the school itself does not have special seminars or workshops to improve writing skills. Neither seminars nor workshops are held outside because they are busy, so teachers do not have time to improve their writing skills. Informants stated that online media is actually easier and more practical to be used as a source of knowledge about writing and can

be accessed anytime and anywhere, and is not limited by time. Writing an autobiography has been done by Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers for a period of time that they admitted a long time ago, and the quality of the writing is still very poor.

### **Improving Teachers' Writing Skills During the Blog-Based Autobiography Writing Process**

For teachers, writing skills must be mastered so that later they can also improve the writing skills of students (Kayaalp, 2020). As previously explained, writing skills are very necessary and important for students to master, especially in the world of work (Parra, 2019). In this era, anything requires writing skills. Therefore, the task of teachers as educators who educate, provide knowledge, and nurture their students must master many skills and abilities or multi-talent, especially the writing skills mentioned earlier. The teacher's writing ability is very influential on the progress of students and schools because if the teacher's writing ability is qualified, the student's writing ability can also be improved and bring students to develop in the field of writing. Being a writer makes one's knowledge increase, and one is able to know the world more broadly. Moreover, writing is something that cannot be separated from life. If the ability to write increases, it will bring things around also increase.

Researchers distributed Autobiography E-Modules and video tutorials for blog creation. In the process of writing a blog-based autobiography, it is hoped that there will be an improvement in the teacher's writing ability from the previous one, especially in utilizing blog media to improve writing ability. Regarding Autobiography, some of them are how to choose an interesting main topic so that autobiographical writing is interesting to read, the steps that the autobiographical writer must take to find the journey of life in his childhood if he does not remember it, the history of the emergence of writing on blogs and the AdSense obtained by blog writers. The easiest writing is to write down anything that has been experienced or done. Therefore, the more

varied our life experiences, the more things we can write about. Continue to train sensitivity to various phenomena around you. A sensitive and critical attitude can be trained by mobilizing all the potential of the five senses that God has given. Frequently look for sources of knowledge about writing, including attending writing seminars or workshops. Diligently upload writings on blogs or websites to hone your writing skills.

Blog itself is one of the alternative media to improve the quality of education, especially in improving writing skills (Ismail, 2020). From blogs, teachers can hone sharing information and learning materials more interestingly. Outside of teaching materials, teachers can upload exam questions and student assignments. And most importantly, the writing skills of educators are developed. Sometimes in improving writing skills, there are various obstacles faced, especially for educators or teachers. In addition to having to teach students and take care of the family so that they do not have time or have difficulty dividing time to improve their abilities, especially writing skills (Michailidis, 2022).

During the process of improving the ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers to write blog-based autobiographies, the teachers looked very enthusiastic. Researchers assisted teachers in understanding autobiographical writing and how to write it. Then continued by assisting teachers in creating personal blogs with the aim and hope that teachers will be able to publish their autobiographical writings on the blog and be able to manage the school website and teach it to students.

### **Benefits of the Mentoring Workshop on Blog-Based Autobiography Writing Techniques**

Everyone has their own hobbies and abilities. Some are able to process sounds, able to process words, able to process body, and many more. However, what happens if all that intelligence is not written down? As the saying goes, "People can be clever as high as the sky, but as long as they don't write, they will disappear from society and from history.

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Writing is working for eternity." The ability to write is a skill that must be possessed by an educator or teacher. It is important because writing is an activity that will often be done and needs to be done. The ability to write for teachers has many benefits and uses. Teachers are used to teaching, but in this digital era, where the world of education continues to develop, the teacher's ability is not only determined by how he teaches well but also by his work. For teachers, improving their writing skills is also useful for improving their own quality.

According to the educator of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, actually, an educator or teacher must have good writing skills because these abilities can be shared with students and can be utilized later for the students themselves and the progress of the school. Teachers' writing skills are very influential on students and schools. With teachers' writing skills, they can bring schools extraordinary developments. However, based on the informant's statement, writing activities at school do not exist, so the teacher's role in supporting these activities is also absent. According to the informant, because in the past few years, the school was implemented online, the school only focused on subjects and did not pay attention to writing knowledge.

In addition, according to the informants, the school does not pay much attention to and monitor teachers' writing skills. Although teachers' writing skills still need to be improved, according to informants, teachers still motivate students to love writing and learn about writing. However, according to the informants, teachers are sometimes too busy teaching certain subjects to think about improving their writing skills.

Of course, a teacher wants his students to be proficient in writing, so the teacher must first hone and improve his ability to write so that he can educate his students. Also, the demand for promotion is that a teacher must be able to write scientific papers. Actually, the ability to write for a teacher is as important as a mother breastfeeding her baby. When teachers write, their abilities and knowledge

can color teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The ability to write is very important for teachers. Teachers are great people who are able to give birth to a relay of success for others who have been forged through a process full of loving touches.

### **Factors Affecting The Interest and Writing Skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh Teachers**

Writing is a language skill that is considered the most difficult because it is called the peak ability of a person to be said to be skilled in the language (Fernandes, 2020). Writing is also a productive and expressive activity that requires the writer to have broad insight (Selwyn, 2020). The teacher's writing ability is very influential on the progress of students and schools because if the teacher's writing ability is qualified, the student's writing ability can also be improved and bring students to develop in the field of writing (Shahsavari, 2019). Being a writer makes one's knowledge increase, and one is able to know the world more broadly. Moreover, writing is something that cannot be separated from life. If the ability to write increases, it will bring things around also increase. There are actually several factors that affect interest and writing skills. For example, if a writer has a strong interest, he will make every effort to improve his writing skills. Then motivation, available facilities, and tools.

Sometimes in improving writing skills, their various kinds of obstacles faced, especially for educators or teachers, in addition to having to teach students and take care of the family so that they do not have time or have difficulty dividing time to improve their abilities, especially writing skills.

Based on the answers from the informants, the majority of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers are almost the same. They do not have much interest in writing and still need to be improved. It is also known that the factors that influence the interest and writing skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers are the lack of school monitoring and never attending writing seminars or workshops. But the most important

thing is the lack of attention from the school regarding improving teachers' writing skills. From the answers of these informants, they both answered that interest, motivation, available facilities, and tools were influencing factors. Indeed, people who usually write often start with interest and then motivation. People who are interested or like to write will be enthusiastic about everything that smells of writing and be able to motivate themselves to become better writers.

The role of schools in helping to improve teachers' writing skills is also very important, as well as monitoring the writing skills of teachers then later teachers who will motivate and direct students on how important writing skills are.

#### **D. CLOSING**

##### **Conclusions**

The conclusion obtained from the research on improving the writing ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers through blog-based autobiographical techniques is that there is an increase in the writing ability of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers after attending a workshop on blog-based autobiographical techniques. The teachers' motivation to improve their writing skills has also increased, and they are enthusiastic about using blog or website media to be more optimized.

The teachers of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh have more or less understood the big concept of writing in a simple way. Based on the informants' statements, they stated that they gained knowledge about writing from online media without ever attending a writing seminar or workshop. Regarding Autobiography, some of them are how to choose an interesting main topic so that autobiographical writing is interesting to read, the steps that the autobiographical writer must take to find the journey of life in his childhood if he does not remember it, the history of the emergence of writing in blogs and regarding AdSense obtained by blog writers. According to the educators of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, actually, an educator or teacher

must have good writing skills because these abilities can be shared with students and can be utilized later for the students themselves and the progress of the school. The writing ability of teachers has a big influence on students and schools. With the writing ability of teachers, it can bring schools extraordinary developments.

##### **Suggestion**

According to the teachers of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh, the majority of teachers there are almost the same. They do not have much interest in writing and still need to be improved. It is also known that the factors that influence the interest and writing skills of Vocational High School in Payakumbuh teachers are the lack of school monitoring and never attending writing seminars or workshops. But the most important thing is the lack of attention from the school regarding improving teachers' writing skills. From the answers of these informants, they both answered that interest, motivation, available facilities, and tools were influencing factors. Indeed, people who usually write often start with interest and then motivation. People who are interested or like to write will be enthusiastic about everything that smells of writing and be able to motivate themselves to become better writers.

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