

# Written Language Errors of Dysgraphic Children Aged 9-12 Years In Inclusive Classrooms

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## Abstract

Dysgraphia is a writing disorder that is often found in children in elementary school. Dysgraphia children are usually called children with special needs or stupid because they are slow in conveying their thoughts through writing. The attitude towards dysgraphia children by teachers and parents is still very lacking and often considered trivial. Therefore, parents and teachers must act actively in learning children's written language. The purpose of this study is to analyze the form and characteristics of written language errors of dysgraphia children aged 9-12 years in the Inclusion Class and to find out the appropriate method for learning written language for dysgraphia children in the Inclusion Class. This research used the qualitative method. The results showed that written language errors in each child were different in terms of the shape of the letters, the thickness of the writing, and the error patterns experienced by each child. The error that is often found in child 1 is the replacement of reflected letters. Child 2 is writing letters upside down. Child 3 is the replacement of consonants. And child 4 is the addition of letters. To help children with dysgraphia learn, various methods of learning are needed, which need to be practiced continuously.

**Keyword:** *Dysgraphia; Psycholinguistics. Writing error; Written Language of Children.*

## Introduction

Writing is one of the basic activities in language. Writing activities will usually be taught by parents when the child has entered the age of 5-6 years when the child will enter elementary school. Meanwhile, parents start teaching children to write when the child is still in the period when the child enters the Play Class or Kindergarten. Writing is one of the things that children need to master when they are in the acquisition and development period of children's language. According to Mar'at (2005:35), humans have a system of language use, a system that can explain for example how humans can convey thoughts with words (language production) and how humans can understand the "content of thoughts" or the meaning of a sentence that is spoken or written (language perception).

According to Sumarsono and Partana (in Anjani, Siregar 2023), general linguistics looks at language structurally, which includes structural, which includes the field of sound structure, phonology, morphology, sentences, and discourse. The ability to write is closely related to the shape of the letters and how they are written. Children's writing activities not only need to be carried out in learning activities at school, but also still need to be trained when children learn at home with parents because it can improve

the quality of children's written language to be more optimal. However, when children have started school, parents sometimes neglect and pay less attention to children's learning patterns and only rely on teachers at school. In fact, some children often have difficulty capturing what is conveyed through reading or writing learning. Sometimes, these children also usually forget the shape of the letters and how to write the letters. Children who have difficulty in writing are called Dysgraphia. According to Abdurrahman (in Suhartono 2016: 110) there are three types of common obstacles that often occur in children, namely children who experience problems in writing (dysgraphia), children who experience obstacles in learning to read (dyslexia), and children who experience obstacles in counting (dyscalculia). Difficulties that can hinder a child's learning process can be influenced by various factors. These factors include intelligence and health factors. However, most children who experience learning difficulties are suspected of having a neurological dysfunction as the cause. Children with dysgraphia need special education services so that in the learning process, they can learn more.

One form of disorder experienced by children in language skills is dysgraphia. According to Suhartono (2016:109), children who experience learning difficulties with dysgraphia have the same physical and psychological characteristics as other children. However, in terms of the learning process, dysgraphic children experience delays in writing. Dysgraphia children look normal in other motor skills, it's just that they are unable to put their thoughts into writing. Therefore, children who have delays in writing, reading, and other special needs children have their class, namely the inclusion class. Some schools in Indonesia provide for children with special needs. But there are still not many and evenly distributed in each region.

According to Sunanto (in Suhartono, 2016) Children with special needs who can be accepted in inclusive elementary schools are children who have abnormalities in learning, but can still be helped specifically in their learning. There are 9 types, namely (1) blind / children who have visual impairments, (2) deaf / children who have hearing impairments (3) deafness, experiencing limb/movement abnormalities, (4) gifted children (have extraordinary abilities and intelligence), (5) tunagrahita (mental retardation), (6) slow learners (slow learners), (7) children who have specific learning difficulties, (8) children who have communication disorders, and (9) tunalaras / children who experience emotional and behavioral disorders. Meanwhile, children with autism, drug victims, children with chronic illnesses, and others, if they are forced to be accepted in inclusive schools, can be assisted by partnering the school with other institutions that have expertise for children with these special disorders.

Symptoms that often appear in dysgraphic children when writing according to Julie Kendell and Deanna Stefanyshyn (in Suhartono, 2016), can be divided into 10, namely: 1. Strong verbal ability but poor writing skills 2. Many punctuation errors or even do not use punctuation at all. 3. Many spelling mistakes or there can also be inverted writing 4. There are inconsistencies in the use of uppercase and lowercase letters. 5. Letter size is irregular, changing shape, large and small, upright and italic. 6. There is unfinished (omission of letters or words). 7. There are inconsistencies in the use of pages, spaces (between words), between letters, and the use of margins. 8. There are errors in holding the pencil. 9. Talking to oneself while writing. 10. When writing or copying very slowly.

There are several studies similar to this research, namely research on a thesis written by Mei Ninda Sari from Airlangga University 2019 entitled *Kesalahan Penulisan Pada Anak Disgrafia Di Sekolah Inklusif Galuh Handayani Surabaya: Kajian*

**Psikolinguistik** This study describes basic word writing errors, and compound word writing in dysgraphia children at Galuh Handayani Surabaya Inclusive School, and explains the supporting factors that cause dysgraphia. The data sources in this research are 1 grade 1 student, 1 grade 2 student, and 2 grade 5 students.

Similar research was also conducted by Sofi Siti Fuadah, et al. In 2023 entitled Analisis Gangguan Menulis (Disgrafia) Pada Anak Dengan Perspektif Psikolinguistik This study used the subject of 1 child aged 6 years. This study covers the results of writing before writing practice and after writing practice using continuous writing practice. The next research is a study written by Sulistiyaning Putri Utami in 2019 entitled Bahasa tulis pada anak dengan gangguan disleksia (kajian psikolinguistik). This study, explains the forms of children's written language which are described according to their respective types using 1 data subject, namely an 8-year-old child.

The inability to write in dysgraphic children is often seen as abnormal and different. Dysgraphic children are also the same as other children. It's just that these dysgraphic children have difficulty in expressing it through writing and there are often errors in the writing. This research can help to describe the forms of writing experienced by dysgraphic children in inclusive classrooms. Parents and teachers rarely even realize that dysgraphic children are not stupid and lazy children who do not want to learn. However, if parents and teachers play an active role in helping, then the child will develop better. This study can help find out the right and effective writing learning methods for dysgraphia children in inclusive classes to make children better at writing.

Based on the description above, this study examines two things, namely the form of written language errors by dysgraphia children aged 9-12 years in the Inclusion Class, as well as appropriate and effective methods for learning written language for dysgraphia children in the Inclusion class.

## **Method**

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. According to Isnaniah, (2013) says that qualitative description is used to describe language forms to interpret their various functions and meanings. This study aims to describe the written language errors of dysgraphia children in inclusion classes in grades 2 and 4, the data of this study were obtained from the results of respondents' writing by asking children to write five dictated sentences; /Aku bermain bola/, /Ibu membeli sayur di Pasar/, /Adi menjenguk Budi/, /Gajah memiliki 4 kaki/, /Susi berjalan di Taman/.

The data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, documentation, and observation. Interviews were conducted with teachers and parents of the research subjects. The documentation used is the result of taking written language data from the research subject. The observation technique used was to see the behavior of children when interacting with their friends at school and during classroom learning. The place for collecting data for this research is located at SDN Parakan 01 Bogor Regency, especially in the Inclusion Classroom and at the research object's house around the school. The time of this research began on May 21, 2024 to June 23, 2024.

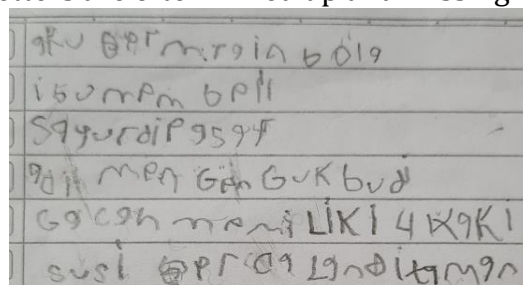
The data analysis technique used by researchers is carried out in several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, data verification, and conclusions. The results of the study were analyzed by summarizing, selecting key points, focusing on important things to look for themes and patterns, and discarding unnecessary ones.

## Results

### Written Language Errors of Dysgraphia Children

#### Child 1

Child 1 is male, he was born in Bogor on October 7, 2015. He is currently in the 2nd grade of elementary school in the inclusion class. According to the teacher's information, the child often falls asleep in class, but when asked the child is always correct and alert in answering various questions, child 1 also often talks and laughs by himself in class, but the child can still socialize with other children well. According to information from the guardian, the child often stays up late to play with gadgets and the child tends to be quiet. In terms of writing, the child is fluent and superior to others in learning to copy or dictate, the child is quite active when the class is questioning. According to the teacher, the results of the child's writing are not neat, the shape of the letters is small, and the letters are often mixed up and missing.



Pict 1. Child writing result 1

From the findings obtained from child 1 in sentence 1, namely, the addition of the vowel /e/ in the word 'bermain' child 1 wrote it into /Bermeain/. In addition, writing errors are seen in the form of capital letters that do not fit in place, namely in the word 'bermain' which should use lowercase letters on the letter /B/.

In the findings of the second sentence, the writing of child 1 has no errors, but the writing of the letter shapes is irregular and the writing of letters is very thin, with the use of not using spaces between sentences. In the third sentence, a writing error was found in the word 'menjenguk' to /mengeguk/. This writing error on the letter /j/ to /g/ is a writing error of replacing consonant letters by replacing letters that are almost the same shape.

The error in the fourth sentence can be seen in the writing error on the word 'gajah', child 1 wrote it as /gacah/. This writing error is a reverse reflected error, which replaces the letter /j/ with the letter /c/. The letter shapes in writing the letters /j/ and /c/ are very similar. The writing has inconsistency in the use of capital letters in the word 'has. The writing of the letter /l/ becomes /L/.

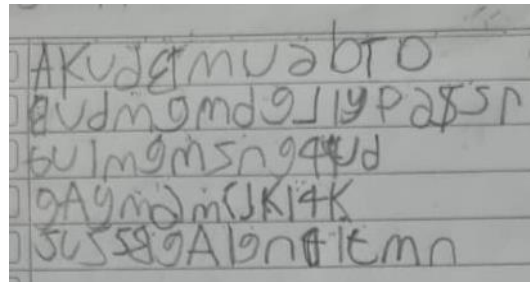
The writing error in the fifth sentence is the same as in the previous sentence. In the writing of the letter /j/ into /c/ in the sentence 'walking' becomes /bercalan/. As well as the inconsistent use of capital letters on the letter /l/ to /L/ in the same word, namely /berjalan/ to /bercaLan/.

Based on the results of this exposure, the pattern of writing errors made by child 1 is the use of inconsistent capital letters and the replacement of consonant letters /j/ with letters /g/ or /c/. The writing results of child 1 display small letter shapes and thin pencil pressure, as well as dirty writing results.

#### Child 2

Child 2 is a child who cannot speak (Tuna Wicara) who is male. Child 2 was born in Bogor on October 28, 2011, and is currently in grade 2 in the inclusion class.

According to the teacher, the child never makes a sound while at school, but the child can socialize and play with his classmates well. According to the parents when interviewed, when the mother gave birth to child 2 could not cry and did not grow hair until now. When the child was a baby, the child was easily sick with fever and vomiting, but now the child is healthy. When at home, the child rarely plays with their peers, the child tends to often play with parents (fathers) and often helps with heavy work of their own accord. In writing copying, the child can do it well and the writing is quite neat, but sometimes the word at the beginning of the sentence is often omitted. In terms of dictation, the child cannot follow well and tends to be original in writing each letter.



Gambar 2. Child writing result 2

In the data obtained in sentence 1 found in the findings of this study, the reverse or reflected writing error is found in the letter /b/ becoming the letter /d/ in the word 'bermain'. In addition, writing errors are seen in the word 'play' to /dErmua/, and in the word 'bola' to /bro/, this writing is unclear and has no meaning, there are only a few letters that are correct, and do not have a clear pattern.

The pattern of writing incompetence in the second sentence in the second child's findings is seen in all words and letter forms in the sentence. This second sentence is 'Ibu pergi ke Pasar'. However, all words have errors that write words that are unclear and have no meaning. Child 2 wrote 'Budmgmdgliypassr'. There are only a few correct letters, and there are some letters with reversed writing, namely the letter /B/ to /B reversed/ and the letter /L reversed/, and the letter /e/ to /g/ which is one of the reflected reversed writing errors. However, the word 'Pasar' only has a letter substitution error, namely the letter /a/ becomes the letter /s/ to become /Passr/.

The writing error in the third sentence is quite similar to the second sentence, which is unclear and meaningless. The third sentence is 'Adi menjenguk budi' which becomes /buimemsngaud/. In this sentence, it does not explain anything, only the irregular replacement of letters, and the writing has no distance or space between words.

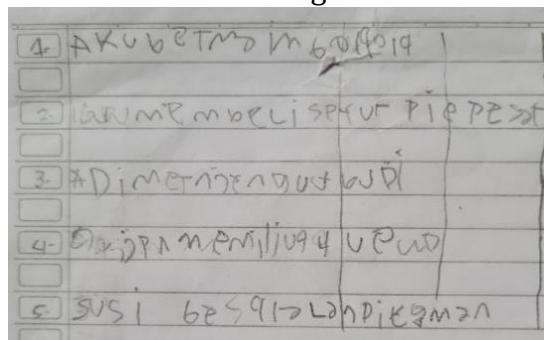
The writing pattern found in the fourth sentence is also similar to the third sentence. in the sentence 'Gajah memiliki 4 kaki'. Child 2 writes it as /gaymamijiki4k/. The result of writing this sentence does not have spaces between words which makes the sentence unclear and meaningless.

The next writing error in the fifth sentence is similar to the error pattern in the second sentence. This sentence is 'Susi berjalan di Taman' which becomes /sussBgAlgnDitmN/. The second child's writing error occurs in the replacement of vowels in the word /Susi/ to /Suss/, besides that, the replacement of letters also occurs in the word 'berjalan' to /BgAlgn/. In the writing of /BgAlgn/ there is an inverted letter writing or reflected in the letter /B/ which is written as /B facing left/ and the letter /e/ becomes /g/ as in the second sentence. Letter omission errors also occur in this sentence, namely in writing 'Taman' into /tmn/ which omits the vowel /a/.

Based on the results of this exposure, the errors that occur in child 2 writing are the writing of letters that are unclear so that they do not have meaning, the writing of letters that are reflected by writing letters upside down, omitting vowels and consonants, and replacing letters that should not be. The result of Child 2 writing displays a large letter shape but is aligned with the book line, capital letters that are still mixed up. Just like child 1, child 2's writing also tended to be dirty and the pencil pressure was too thick.

### Child 3

This child was born in Bogor, on December 29, 2013, the child is male. Based on pregnancy history information from parents, when the mother was pregnant, the mother did not realize her pregnancy until 5 months of pregnancy, and during pregnancy the mother experienced electric shock until she was hospitalized, thus affecting the fetus. Child 3 is the second of two children. When the baby was born, the child grew healthily. However, when the child learns to speak, the child has difficulty in pronunciation (speech delay) and according to the mother's information, the child can only speak fluently when the child is in grade 3. According to the teacher at school, when learning, the child is easy to accept lessons, but after a while, the child has forgotten what he learned earlier. In terms of writing, the child can write independently but only in terms of copying. When dictated, the child finds it difficult and forgets how to form letters and how to write them and needs to be guided.



Pict 3. Child writing result 3

From the data obtained, the first sentence written by Child 3 has several errors. The errors owned by Child 1 are quite diverse. Child 3's writing errors can be seen from the mistake in writing the letter 'n', the error occurred in the word 'bermain' by changing the letter /n/ to the letter /m/. In addition, child 3's error can also be seen from the addition of letters that are written repeatedly in the word 'bola'. Child 3 wrote it with more than one letter /l/.

In the second sentence obtained from the findings of child 3's writing, there are some similar errors as in the first sentence. The errors contained in this second sentence are writing reversed letters that are almost the same shape or mirrored, namely in the vowel /a/ into the letter /e/ in the word 'sayur', and in the word 'pasar' into /pesar' and changing the letter /d/ into the letter /p/ in the word 'di'. In addition, the same error is also seen in the addition of the vowel letter /e/ which should not be present in the word 'pasar', but the child writes the word as /epesar/.

The pattern of writing errors in replacing letters that are almost the same shape is also seen from the data results of the third sentence. That is replacing the letter /k/ with the letter /t/ in the word 'menjenguk' to become /mernjengut/. The writing error in adding consonant letters in the first sentence is also seen in the third sentence, namely the addition of the letter /r/ in the word 'menjenguk' to become /mernjenguk/.



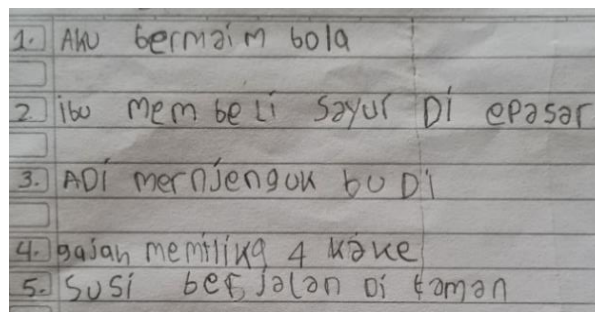
The writing errors in the fourth sentence show more letter substitutions and reverse writing errors or are reflected with the same letter. More letter replacement errors than before, in the word 'gajah', child 1 wrote it into /gajpn/, namely replacing the vowel /a/ to /u/ and replacing the vowel /a/ to /p/, the result in writing this word becomes unclear and has no meaning. Other letter substitutions are also seen in the word 'memiliki' to /memiliua/ and in the word 'kaki' to /uowo/. The pattern of writing errors reflected in the letter /h/ in the word 'gajah' is replaced by the letter /n/ which has almost the same shape.

The writing error in the fifth sentence has one error that is different from the previous errors, which is the omission of letters. This letter omission is found in the word 'berjalan', but child 1 only writes /bejalan/. In this sentence, there is only one error.

Based on this explanation, it can be seen that the pattern of writing errors often made by child 1 contained in the first sentence to the fifth sentence, namely, writing errors in replacing vowels and consonants and writing errors in adding letters that should not be. In addition, child 1's writing has no distance between words or irregular spaces, dirty writing results, large and misaligned letter shapes, and the use of capital letters that are still mixed up.

#### Child 4

Child 4 was born in Bogor on 03 April 2014, a female, who is currently in grade 4. The child is very normal and according to the teacher at school, the child is very active in socializing with her peers. In writing ability, the child's writing is neat but the shape of the letters is quite large. When dictating the child still needs help to be mentioned per letter, and when copying the child can copy quite well but only the use of space is irregular.



Pict 4. Child writing result 4

From the data obtained from child 4 in the first sentence, there is only one error, which is in the word 'bermain' into /bermaim/. This writing error is the replacement of writing letters that are almost the same, namely the letter /n/ to the letter /m/. In this sentence, some letters are not consistently written, namely the letter /a/ in the word 'bermain' and the letter /a/ in the word 'bola'.

The error in the writing of the second sentence is the addition of letters that should not be there, namely the addition of the vowel /e/ in the word 'Pasar' to become /epasar/, just like the mistake made by Child 3 in sentence 2. However, the writing of capital letters that are still mixed up is in the middle of the sentence.

The pattern of writing errors in the third sentence result is the same as the second sentence result, namely the addition of words. The addition of letters is found in the word 'menjenguk' which adds the consonant letter /r/ to /mernjenguk/. The letter /r/ is similar to the letter /n/ found in the letter after it.

The writing error found in the fourth sentence is the replacement of the vowels found in the word 'memiliki' which changed the consonant letter /i/ to the letter /a/, and the word becomes /memilika/. In addition, this vowel substitution is also seen in the word 'kaki' to /kake/, this writing error is replacing the vowel letter /i/ to /e/.

Based on the explanation of the findings, Child 4 has the same repetitive pattern, namely the addition of letters and the replacement of vowels and consonants. Child 3 has a neater writing than the other children, but there is inconsistency in the writing of the letter /a/ which often changes. Child 4 also found similar things with child 1 and child 2, namely the writing of capital letters that are still mixed with lowercase letters.

### Patterns of Writing Disability in Dysgraphia Children

No	Pattern of Incompetence	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4
1.	Vowel addition	√	√	√	√
2.	Consonant letter addition		√	√	√
3.	Vowel substitution		√	√	√
4.	Consonant letter substitution	√	√	√	√
5.	Wrong direction in reflected consonants	√	√	√	
6.	Reverse in writing letters.		√		
7.	Omitting vowels		√		
8.	Omitting consonant letters		√	√	
9.	Writing arbitrarily		√	√	
10.	Random capital letter writing	√	√	√	√

Table 1. Patterns of Writing Errors

Based on the table, the patterns of dysgraphia children's writing disabilities are as follows:

1. Child 1 has four inability errors in writing, namely the addition of vocal letters, replacement of consonant letters, wrong direction in reflected consonants, and random capital letters.
2. Child 2 experienced ten writing disabilities, namely the addition of vowels, addition of consonant letters, replacement of vowels, replacement of consonant letters, misdirection in reflected consonants, omission of consonant letters, arbitrary writing and random capitalization.
3. Child 3 has eight writing disabilities, namely addition of vowels, addition of consonant letters, substitution of vowels, substitution of consonant letters, misdirection in consonants reflected, misdirection in consonants reflected, omitting vowels, omitting consonant letters, arbitrary writing and random capitalization.
4. Child 4 has five writing disabilities, namely: vowel addition, consonant addition, vowel substitution, consonant substitution, and random capitalization.



## **Discussion**

Dysgraphic children are children who find it difficult to express their opinions or thoughts through writing, which sometimes teachers and parents are less aware of the signs of dysgraphic children.

The writing errors made by Child 1 to Child 4 are the same as the types of difficulties that arise in dysgraphic children proposed by Yusuf et al (in Suhartono 2016), namely too slow in writing; wrong direction in writing letters and numbers; too oblique; inconsistent distance between letters; dirty writing; inaccurate in following horizontal lines; illegible letter or number shapes; improper pencil pressure (too thick or too thin); writing size is too large or too small; inverted shapes (like looking in a mirror).

Based on the objectives of this study, namely describing the forms and characteristics of written language errors of dysgraphic children aged 9-12 years in the Inclusion Classroom and knowing the appropriate method for learning written language for dysgraphic children in the Inclusion Classroom. Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing the form of writing errors made by dysgraphic children. The results of data analysis found ten patterns of errors made by dysgraphic children as described.

Special treatment is needed for these dysgraphic children in learning which is impossible for children to be left to practice alone and requires special guidance from parents and teachers at school. The right teacher or therapist is needed to train dysgraphic children, especially children with speech delay or speech impairment. However, some methods are suitable for training the writing skills of other dysgraphic children and dysgraphic children who have special needs.

### **Effective writing learning methods for dysgraphic children**

Children with dysgraphia have different backgrounds, but in children of the same age when entering elementary school, the inability to write will be seen when they occupy grade 1. Teachers and parents must be more aware of the abilities and obstacles possessed by each child. The obstacles that dysgraphic children have are of course also very different, it can also be seen from the results of the exposure that has been explained previously. Of course, dysgraphic children can be changed over time, but dysgraphic children cannot be left to learn alone, they need special guidance and painstaking by teachers at school and parents at home.

Here are some methods that teachers and parents can use to train children with writing difficulties by the characteristics of children in the Inclusion Class, namely:

1. Understand the child's situation and feelings. Sometimes dysgraphic children often feel inferior and shy towards their superior peers. Therefore, parents and teachers should not compare with other children. Instead, children with dysgraphia need more support to increase their confidence and enthusiasm for learning.
2. Provide a pleasant learning atmosphere. With a comfortable atmosphere, children can also learn more focused and may also occasionally give praise to children's achievements no matter how small so that children do not feel inferior and discouraged.
3. Practice memorizing the shape of the alphabet, from vowels to consonants. Memorizing the shape of the alphabet can be done while singing or something else so that the child can easily remember. Because most of these dysgraphic children forget the shapes of letters and are often confused. By memorizing the shapes of the alphabet, the child is easy to write.

4. Tracing writing practice. Tracing letters can help children remember how they experience writing letters directly with the right shape and size. This activity can be done by connecting dots, drawing lines, and tracing directly according to the shape of the original letter. This tracing exercise can be done regularly and continuously until the child develops in writing with the appropriate letter shape.
5. Do the exercises regularly. Do writing exercises regularly and teach them according to the interests and things that children are interested in so that children are not easily bored and remain enthusiastic in learning to write according to the level of difficulty at home and school.

The influence of a supportive environment and the closest people who have a positive impact on children is also very influential in the development of dysgraphia children. With people who help and motivate children with dysgraphia, children are encouraged and not inferior in learning to write. However, professional therapists and teachers are also needed for children who have other deficiencies to train in writing language and other competencies.

## **Conclusion**

The results of data analysis in the written language errors of dysgraphic children aged 9-12 years in the Inclusion Class showed some of the same error findings in several children but showed different writing error results. This is because the writing ability of each child is different. The errors found from the four children who made the most writing errors were child 2, this is likely due to the child being a child with a speech impairment who has limitations in receiving literacy learning. Also, the child who has fewer errors is Child 2.

In the findings above, it was found that writing errors were often made by child 1, namely the replacement of consonant letters /j/ with similar and inverted letter forms, namely the letters /g/ and /c/. Errors are often made by Child 2, namely the replacement of consonant letters writing inverted letters on the letters /e/ and B/, and writing arbitrarily. The pattern of writing errors often made by child 3 is the replacement of consonant letters and writing letters reflected upside down, on the vowel letter /a/ to /e/. The errors that often occur in Child 4 are the replacement of vowels /a/ to /e/, and the replacement of consonant letters.

The role of parents and teachers is very important for children's written language learning. Special treatment is needed for dysgraphic children, especially for children who have special needs. Parents and teachers need to be painstaking to implement children's written language learning such as memorizing letter shapes, writing tracing, and regular practice with continuous development of children's writing.

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