

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN RECOUNT TEXTS

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Abstract

The research aimed to investigate the students' ability and to explore the students' difficulties in writing recount text. This research used a case study, the research design was presented using descriptive qualitative method. The subject of the study was the first year students of MA NW Nabi' Nubu' Kekait which consists of 25 students. Writing test and interview were the instrument of the research. The result of the study showed that the mean score of students was 69.92. It means that the students' ability in writing recount text was poor. There were three students (12%) got below 60 and categorized as poor. Ten students (40%) got 61-70 categorized poor. Nine students (36%) got 71-80 categorized average, and three students (12%) categorized very good. Meanwhile, having analyzed the students' ability in each of the writing aspects. Vocabulary and organization were categorized good to average whereas content, grammar, and mechanic were fair to poor category. Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded the students found it difficult in grammar, content, and mechanic. It is suggested for English teacher should give the students more practice in writing to improve their content and grammar in writing recount text.

Keywords: *Writing, Recount Text, Generic Structure*

INTRODUCTION

In this era, English has become a tool to communicate with other people all over the world. It was known as an international language. In Indonesia, it was part of the education curriculum since 1945 and declared as the first foreign language taught at school. English was taught from Junior high school to University students. There were four skills in English namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Writing is one of the skills should be mastered by the students. It can help the students think creatively. Students can interact with academic writing, especially recount texts. In writing recount

text, students can master the generic structure language features, content, organization, vocabulary and mechanic. Students are able to understand the function of writing (Mohamad & Moses, 2019).

Writing is one of the most important and useful skills for educational success (Tillema, 2012), alongside its association with literacy that draws the government's attention to increase and improve the literacy level in Indonesia. It is reported that Indonesia's Literacy ranked 60 out of 61 countries (Sulistiyono, 2016). This indicates that literacy in this country is in crisis even though writing has been demanded in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. In this regard, many complain that writing practice and assignments for students in Indonesia are inadequate. This phenomenon denotes the necessity to keep on improving students' writing skills.

In writing, a good idea is essential in order to produce a composition or written material (Syamsuri, Muhsin & Nurmayani, 2016). If students do not have ideas, they will get bored and disinterested in writing. For writing subject, students must have ideas about what they will write and how far they know about the topic sometimes they have to choose one theme and then decide on one topic, finding the appropriate word to express an idea (Anderson & Anderson, 1997 in Muhsin, 2017).

Writing is one of English language skills to express or to transfer thoughts and feelings. It is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling through written form. Therefore, it is important for students who study a language to learn writing in order to help them communicate in the written form. In senior high school, writing is learning the types of texts including recount text (Mohamad and Moses, 2019).

In School-Based Curriculum 2013, there are some kinds of text that students of Senior High School need to learn, one of them is Recount Text. It is the text which is so close to the students' life it usually tells a personal experience. Recount text is a piece of text that retells past events, usually in the order in which they happened. The purpose of a recount text is to give the audience a description of what happened and when it happened (Cholipah, 2014). Cakrawati (2018) also stated that recount is a development of a sequence of events and in recount, the writer is arranging past experience. The purpose of recount text is to tell what happened or to retell events for the purpose of informing and entertaining.

Recount text, among other texts embodied in Core Competency and Basic Competency, is supposed to be mastered by students. This type of text is defined as a text retelling an event or occurrence in the past in chronological order (Anderson, cited in Pertiwi, 2013). It functions to give readers or audience information about the event (Gerot & Wignell, 1995; Derewianka & Jones, 2013; Coogan, cited in Siswita & Al Hafizh, 2014). Besides, Derewianka and Jones (2013) argue that the organization structure of recount texts include orientation that provides background information; record of events which tells chronological steps; and comment which expresses response from the writer. In addition, types of recount texts vary as Holandyah (cited in Permatasari, 2016) affirms that recount texts can be personal, factual and imaginative.

In writing a recount text, a paragraph should achieves coherence when the sentences proceed in a sequence that supports one point at a time. For example, when a student wants to recount about his past experience, then he or she should have background knowledge about his or her experience such as when and where did the event happened. However, students still have difficulty in writing. Among others are low interest, lack ability, structure, vocabulary and punctuation as well as producing coherent, fluent and extended a piece of writing (Misbah et al, 2017).

The study related to this research was conducted by Hariyadi *et.al* (2018) that found 18 students or 55% in the good category, 9 students or 27% in the excellent category, 5 students or 15% in the as satisfactory category, 1 student or about 3% in the unsatisfactory category. They concluded that students' ability to write recount text at ten grade students of SMAN 11 Jambi is good. Another research conducted by Siahaan (2013). She found some students have been able to write a semantic structure of recount text using appropriate linguistic features. But there are still students who are confused, so that it is needed to improve their skills to write recount text.

METHOD

The study used qualitative research. It is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The

final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell: 2016).

The type of this research is a case study and uses a descriptive design. It focuses on a particular phenomenon in the school. It is conducted to investigate a condition or other phenomenon of which the result represented in a report. Therefore this study is called analysis because it tries to analyze objectively about students' ability in writing recount text. Vocabulary, mechanics, content, grammar and organization are the focus of the study. The subject of the research was the first year students of MA NW Nabi' Nubu' Kekait which consisted of 25 students. There 15 male students and 10 female students. The procedures of collecting the data are observation, writing test, interview, and documentation. In analyzing the data, there are five aspects of writing recount text namely content, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and organization. In addition, the students and teacher's interview are used to know how well the students' ability on writing recount text.

RESULTS

The result of students writing score, students' ability in writing recount text. Based on the results of the analysis of 25 students' in composing writing score of recount text of the first year students of MA NW Nabi' Nubu' Kekait, there were 10 students or (40%) were categorized as poor, 9 students (36%) were categorized as average, and 4 students or (16%) were categorized as very poor, 2 students (8%) were categorized as very good .The Students' score in writing recount text were based on the five aspects of writing. There are the contents, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The result was showed as follows in table:

Table 1. Students's Score in Writing Recount Text

N o	Students	Vocabular y (20)	Mechanic (5)	Organiza tion (20)	Gramma r (25)	Conte nt (30)	Total Score (100)
1.	A	18	4	17	20	25	84
2.	B	17	4	17	22	24	84
3.	C	18	4	19	20	24	82
4.	D	16	4	16	17	19	72
5.	E	16	4	16	17	19	72
6.	F	18	4	18	18	22	76
7.	G	17	4	17	18	22	74

8.	H	16	3	17	17	19	72
9.	I	18	4	17	17	22	74
10.	J	17	4	17	18	22	74
11.	K	17	4	16	17	20	72
12.	L	16	3	16	17	20	72
13.	M	14	3	14	17	16	64
14.	N	15	4	16	17	18	70
15.	O	14	3	14	16	15	62
16.	P	15	3	15	17	18	68
17.	Q	15	3	14	17	17	66
18.	R	15	3	14	16	16	64
19.	S	15	3	15	16	17	66
20.	T	15	3	16	16	18	68
21.	U	15	3	16	17	19	70
22.	V	16	3	16	16	19	70
23.	W	14	2	13	15	14	58
24.	X	13	2	13	15	13	56
25.	Y	13	2	13	15	15	58
Total Score							1.748
Mean Score							69.92

Based on the table above, there are three students who have a very good score as well as three students who have very poor score. Besides, there were ten students who have poor level and nine students have the average level. Finally, the mean score of the students were 69.92. The following table showed the students' achievement in writing recount text.

Table 2. Students' Score Level

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
91 - 100	Excellent	0	0%
81 - 90	Very good	3	12 %
71 - 80	average	9	36 %
61 - 70	Poor	10	40 %
Below 60	Very poor	3	12 %
Total		25	100 %

Rubric Score adopted by Heaton in 1998

From the score above, the analysis of students' writing score is 69.92. It was categorized to be poor in average. There were three students (12%) got score 81-90 (very good), three students (12%) got below 60 (very poor), 9 students (36%) got score 71-80 (average), and ten students (40%) got 81-90 (very poor).

Students' ability in writing recount text

Next step the writer analyzed the data in each aspects to find out which aspects are good and which aspects are weak. The students' ability in creating recount texts could be seen from the total scores which the students achieved for all aspects. The results of the analyses were based on the Heaton J.B (1998) level. Futhemore, after to be more focus on analyzing the students' ability in each aspect or writing in terms of the content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. The analysis of each aspect distributed in form of table as follows :

Table 3. Content

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
30 - 27	Excellent to very good	0	0 %
26 - 22	Good to average	7	28 %
21 - 17	Fair to poor	12	48 %
16 - 13	Very poor	6	24 %
Total Score		25	100 %

From this table, it showed the students' ability in writing recount text the average score is (48%), and it can be seen from students' ability of aspect content is categorized as fair to poor..

Table 4. Organization

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 18	Excellent to very good	2	8 %
17 - 14	Good to average	20	80 %
13 - 10	Fair to poor	3	12 %
9 - 7	Very poor	0	0 %
Total Score		25	100 %

From this table, it showed the students' ability in writing recount text the average score is (80%), it can be seen from students' ability of organization was categorized as good to average.

Table 5. Vocabulary

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 18	Excellent to very good	4	16 %
17 - 14	Good to average	19	76 %
13 - 10	Fair to poor	2	8 %
9 - 7	Very poor	0 %	0 %
Total Score		25	100 %

From this table, it shows the students' ability in writing recount text the average score is (76%), and it can be seen from students' ability of vocabulary was categorized as good to average.

Table 6. Grammar

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
25 - 22	Excellent to very good	1	4 %
21 - 18	Good to average	5	20 %
17 - 11	Fair to poor	19	76 %

10 - 5	Very poor	0	0 %
Total Score		25	100 %

From this table, it shows the students' ability in writing recount text the average score is (76%), and it can be seen from studnets' ability of grammar was categorized as fair to poor.

Table 7. Mechanic

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
5	Excellent to very good	0	0 %
4	Good to average	11	44 %
3	Fair to poor	11	44 %
2	Very poor	3	12 %
Total Score		25	100 %

From the table above, it showed the students' ability in writing recount text the average score was (44%), and it can be seen from studnets' ability of mechanic was categorized as fair to poor as well as good to average. Finally, the aspects of content, grammar and mechanic was categorized fair to poor while vocabulary and organization was categorized good to average.

After correcting students written test, it can be stated that generally students ability in writing recount text are in poor category. The mean score of the students was 69.92. It can be seen from number of the students who are in poor category is the biggest one. There were 3 students (12%) got score 81-90 (very good), 9 students (36%) got score 71-80 (average), 10 students (40%) got score 61-70 (poor), and 3 students (12%) got score below 60 (very poor).

Futhemore, after trying to be more focus on analyzing the students' ability in each aspect or writing in terms of the content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. Students' ability each of those aspect grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic in fair to poor category. It can be seen from number of the students who are in fair to poor category is the biggest then the other category.

Besides the five aspects, content was one of the problems faced by the students. In writing the text, some ideas are relevant to the topic the sentence, still the supporting sentences were not related to the main idea. Several problems were also found in the expression of ideas. The second one was grammar. Actually, the students' writing were comprehensible. However, recount text used past tense and this became the problems in terms of grammar. Such as '....when we go home, we buy bread. So, we return on foot. Should be'... when we went at home, we bought a bread. So,we returned on foot..

According to teacher's point of view of the interview, students found it difficult in grammar. Most of the students still did not know when to use simple past in sentences. For example, we visited some places, but the student wrote "we visit some place". In addition, most students could not differentiate between regular and irregular verbs. This issue made the students miswriting the recount text. In the aspect of organization, students found it hard to determine the generic structure of the text. They were able to write the orientation, however they could not correlate with the events even with the reorientation of the text.

The teacher also said that some students lack of punctuation, capitalization and spelling. In this aspect, most students are not able to put punctuation marks, capital letters and correct spelling. This aspect is also one of the aspects that really need to be considered in writing a recount text. The most important punctuation marks that are considered in writing are commas, periods, periods, semicolons, semicolons, apostrophes, quotes, hyphens.

In addition, based on students' interview, they found it difficult to use past tense in writing. They said they were confused when to use past tense and past participle. Also they did not know how to make a sentence well. It leads them not to know how to use punctuation, coma, and period. The result is that the sentences were too long without coma or period. More practices are important to make them easier in writing a paragraph.

Discussion

The study described how the students' ability in writing recount text. The students writing have low ability in terms of content, grammar, and mechanics are fair to poor category in each aspect. It can be seen from the students' mean score was 69.92 or in a

poor category. Moreover, there were twelve students in a poor category (48%) of the content aspect, nineteen students (76%) of the grammar, and eleven students (44%) of mechanic were in a poor category as well. These become the biggest issues for the students even though recount text had been studied since junior high school. Sometimes the students had problems in writing it. It is because in writing recount text, the students should be aware in using the schematic structure of recount text including orientation, record of events, and reorientation (Anderson & Anderson, 1998). Besides, the students should apply the linguistic features of recount in their text, including specific participants, circumstance of time and place, first person, additive conjunction, material process, and past tense (Gerot & Wignell, 1995 in Saepulloh, 2020). So those three aspects are the problems of the students in writing recount text.

Analyzing the students ability in writing in terms of the content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. Students' ability in the aspect of content, grammar and mechanic were in a fair to poor category. While vocabulary and organization are in a good to average. There are 12 students (48%) in a fair to poor category in term of content, 19 students (76%) in a fair to poor category in term of grammar, 11 students (44%) in fair to poor in term of mechanic. On the other hand, 19 students (76%) in good to average in term of vocabulary, and 20 students (80%) in a good to average in term of organization.

This indicates that, students' ability in writing is poor and need improvement as well as more practises and exercises. This is inline with Tooley's opinion about writing which stated that writing is a complex subject; there is no "one right way" to teach it. He also added that the teaching of writing is a multifaceted subject that does not come with a manual. As writing was considered as a complex and multifaceted subject, so it certainly involves a number of theories, strategies, and approaches to enhance the quality of writing. Due to the complexity of writing, teacher should make students aware that learning writing is not an instant process. Writing is not only a matter of grammar and vocabulary. There are many factors that should be considered both in learning and teaching writing (Tooley, 2009 in Saepulloh & Salsabila, 2020). And there are any number of ways in which to write, there are any number of ways in which to teach writing

Based on the research result above, there are some problems of students' difficulties in writing recount text at MA NW Nabi' Nubu' Kekait. The result of the test and

interview shows the difficulties that most of the students do not completely the three issues of writing namely the students found it difficult in arranging the sentences, the students were lack of mechanic, and they did not master grammar and the tenses as well.

CONCLUSION

Writing recount text was one of the skills that should be mastered by the students. Still, it became the issues for the students. Many students at MA NW Nabi' Nubu' found it difficult to write a recount text. They found it hard to use grammar, mechanic and organization in writing. Based on the results of the study, the researchers concluded that there were still many students who had difficulty writing recount texts properly and correctly. Especially by using the correct generic structure, between one sentence and the other that is incoherent, putting the correct punctuation and the lack of vocabulary students have become one of the factors that causes students difficulty writing recount text. So students need to improve vocabulary and practice to write correctly not only in school but also outside of school.

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