***STUDY ON STUDENTS’ DIFFICULTIES IN DEVELOPING GOOD WRITING (RECOUNT TEXT)***

**M. Adib Nazri1, Yulia Agustina2**

1Universitas Hamzanwadi

2Universitas Hamzanwadi

e-mail: 1[adibnazri88@gmail.com](mailto:adibnazri88@gmail.com)

2rahestin@gmail.com

***Abstract***

*The purpose of this study was not only to describe the students’ difficulties in developing good writing especially recount text but also to find out the possible causes underlying the problems of the students in developing good writing. The data in this study were obtained through non-sistematic classroom observation to get the data to be analyzed. This study used both quantitative and qualitative approach in analysing the data with descriptive, case study method. This study was written mainly to give input and benefits to the study on the students’ difficulties in developing good writing especially recount text. The results gained from the study were (1) there were 86 difficulties found, in which those difficulties were divided into four categories. (2) the difficulties in making grammatical sentences became the most difficulty faced by students in writing recount text (3) the difficulties faced by students were caused by lack knowledge about grammar and lack of practice.*

***Keywords:*** *Case Study, Writing, Recount Text*

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan tidak hanya untuk memberikan gambaran mengenai kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh siswa dalam menulis teks recount yang baik, tetapi penelitin ini juga mencoba untuk menemukan kemungkinan-kemungkinan yang menjadi penyebab kesulitan siswa dalam mengembangkan teks recount tersebut. Dalam mengumpulkan data peneliti menggunakanmetode observasi non-sistematik. Penelitian ini menggunakan kedua pendekatan kualitatif dan kuantitatif di dalam menganalisis data secara deskriptif, yakni metode studi kasus. Tujuan utama penulisan karya imliah ini adalah untuk memberikan faedah terhadap penelitian yang fokus kepada kesulitan-kesulitan siswa dalam menghasilkan tulisan teks recount yang baik. Adapun hasil dari penelitian ini adalah: (1) terdapat 86 jenis kesulitan siswa yang dibagi menjadi empat kategori. (2) kesulitan dalam menyusun kalimat yang sesuai dengan tata aturan bahasa (grammatical sentence) menjadi hal yang paling sering terjadi. (3) kesulitan yang terjadi dikarenakan kurangnya pengetahuan serta latihan grammar siswa.

**Kata-kata kunci:** Studi Kasus, Menulis, Teks Recount

1. **Introduction**

English is one of international languages used in communication, oral and written communication. Communication involved more than one person, the speaker and the listener. In the same ways there are writer and the reader in written communication. Teaching English in Indonesia is focused on the ability of student’s communication. The communication can be in oral and or written forms. As stated by Depdiknas (2004), Learners should learn four language skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, (p. 6). The learners should have the abilities in reading and listening to support their speaking and writing.

Moreover, Solahuddin (2013) stated that all of the skills are related and support to each other (p. 13). It means that all of those skills are important and all of the skills must be practiced by the students and cannot be separated from one to the other.

Writing is one of the important skills in teaching English; it has always occupied a place in most English language course. One of the reasons is that more and more people need to learn writing in English for occupational or academic purposes. English department students, especially, need to learn writing and to prepare themselves for the final academic assignment, i.e., thesis writing. This, in terms of student’s needs, integrated writing is necessary.

Another source, Carroline (2006), stated that writing is not simple process, it is not act of picking up a pencil and forming letters, it is an activity in teaching learning process in which the students are able to express their ideas, opinions, feelings, and organize them in simple sentences or short paragraphs well (p. 98). This indicates that writing is a way to express the ideas and feelings of someone and however, writing is not a simple and short way things to do. Likely it needs a long process which covers event teaching and learning, and in the end the writer is ready to compose writing in form of sentence or paragraph.

As an addition, Applebee (2005) found some lacks in producing good writing, among others: a). Almost half of all writing tasks, required only that students write or respond to words or sentences; almost none (about 3%) required response to or development of full-bodied text beyond the word/ sentence level. b). On the average, only three minutes were devoted to thinking time for writing assignments (the time from the moment students realized writing was to happen to the moment they began to write). c. Most writing assignments ask students to demonstrate knowledge rather than encouraging them to speculate, questions or explore the ideas. d). Many writing assigments center around what Applebe (1983) called “impossible topics”; by way of example, ‘describe the social political, cultural, and religion changes’. (In Ruddel, 2005: p. 279- 280).

There are some types of text which are thought at school in Indonesia, namely Narrative text, Report text, Recount text, Descriptive text, and Exposition text. With the regard towards this study, the researcher chose recount text as the focus of the study. And, indeed, recount text is the text closest to the real life context since it recalls and reconstructs events, experience, and achievement from the past in a logical sequence.

In line with the discussion above, Mark & Kathy (1998), stated that recount text is a text that retells past events which the place and accoured events flow smoothly based on the sequence of time. It differs from Narrative text which the climax and the resolution of the problem must be created in the story (p. 24).

Based on some considerations above, the researcher formulated that there are two objectives of this study, they are: firstly, to describe students’ difficulties in developing good writing especilly recount text, and secondly is to find out the posssible causes underlying the probems.

Because writing is very crucial skill that students have to master, it is necessary for the researcher to conduct a research to find out the students’ problems or difficulties in writing, especially in producing recount text. Then the researcher hopes that there will be a contribution for a better learning and instructional process in producing recount text.

1. **Theoretical Basis**

Harmer (2007) stated that we use language in terms of four skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These are often divided into two types. Receptive skills is a term used for reading and listening, skills where meaning is extracted from the discourse. Productive skills is the term for speaking and writing, skills where students actually have to produce language themselves (p. 265).

To support the idea above, Brown (2004: 218) states as follows “We also fully understand the difficulty of learning to write “well” in any language, even in our own native language. Every educated child in developed countries learns the rudiments of writing in his or her native language, but very few learn to express them clearly with logical, well-developed organization that accomplishes an intended purpose”.

Another expert, Hyland (2004), expressed that writing is a way to share personal meanings. The people construct their own views on topic. They will share their views on a topic to each other then. A person’s views may be different from other people’s views. It depends on their belief. Therefore, when constructing their views (ideas), the people have to make it understandable and acceptable (p. 9).

The form of writing that this study focused on is recount text. According to Knapp in Natanael (2014: p. 56), Recount Text, basically it is written out to make a report about an experience of a series of related event. A recount is written out to inform an event or to entertain people. Recount Text is text function as for telling an incident in the past.

More specific, Boardman (2008) stated that the steps for constructing of written recount text are: a. The First paragraph that give background information about who, what, where and when. It is called on orientation. b. A record of events usually recounted in chronological order, named; event 1, event 2, event 3. c. A personal comment and or evaluative remarks, which are interspersed throughout the record of events named evaluation. d. A reorientation which “rounds off “the sequences of events or retell about what happened in the end (p. 287).

As the conclusion that recount text is about reconstructing the past and it is generally based on the fact rather than fiction.

1. **Research Method**

In this research, two steps of investigations were applied, namely: collecting the data and analyzing the students’ recount text writing. The reseracher tried to do case study. So, the result of this study can not be used to represent students from other school’s mastery of recount writing. It is only relevant to the second year students of MA NW Perian in the academic year of 2019/2020 and their mastery of recount writing.

In conducting this research, the researcher came to the field, explaining what recount text is, this was done in order to refresh students’ understanding and memory about recount, getting them write a recount, and then analyze and describe the difficulties which arose.

In doing this research, the researcher needs population. According to Koentjaraningrat (1986:89), population is the entire subject involved in research as a direct target or as the sources of information. In line with it, Arikunto (2006) said that population is a set of all elements possessing one or more attributes of interest (p. 102). So, based on those two statements the population was all of second year students of MA NW Perian in academic year 2019/2020. There were 160 students.

By looking at the number of students, the population was too many to be the sample. Koentjaraningrat (1986) stated that a sample is the sum of subjects that represent the population. The sample which is taken in the study should be representative (p. 89). It means that the sample must be able to represent the whole population. As Arikunto said that if the subject is more than 100 we can take only 10%-15% or 20%-25% among all samples. Therefore, in this study the researcher took 25% of the sample as the subject of this research or the number of subject were 40 students.

In selecting the sample of the study, the researcher used random sampling. It means that the researcher selected his sample randomly. In this case, the researcher provided 4 folded papers containing 4 classes. The researcher put them into a glass then stirs them. The folded paper which falls down first will be the sample of the study.

In collecting the data, the researcher applied non-systematic classroom observation, since the researcher tries to analyze the students’ difficulties and the concern of this final project is to find out the difficulties faced by students in writing recount texts. The researcher came to the field, get the students writing a recount, collect their works, and analyse them. In this way, the researcher tried to get the the data as objective as possible.

In accordance to Wijanarko’s study (2006:3) the resercher used the following table of potential difficulties arising to the students in producing recount text. The figure of table is as follows:

**Table 1**

**Potential Difficulties of Writing Recount**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Potential Difficulties** | **Percentage** |
| Produce unified paragraph |  |
| Organize ideas logically |  |
| Complete generic structure of the text |  |
| Make grammatical sentence |  |

To analyze the data, the researcher used quantitative and qualitative procedure. Quantitative procedure was done by the percentage and tabulating the difficulties faced by the students in producingrecount text. While qualitative procedure was done by identifying the students’ difficulties in producing recount text.

In this case, the researcher used descriptive method. The quantitative data explained in detail descriptively. Before that, the researcher firstly computed the raw data quantitatively then afterwards the researcher elaborated the quantitative data descriptively. The procedures of the data analysis are as follows:

% of difficulties = number of difficulties made by students x 100%

Number of students

By way of example, if the number of difficulty item start writing = 20 students, therefore the percentage of that item will be:

20 X 100% = 50%

40

From the calculation above, the students who have difficulty in start writing add up to 50%.

The research method contains information on the nature of the research, data and data sources, data collection techniques, data collection instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis methods. Quantitative research needs to include relevant hypothesis testing techniques.

1. **Discussion**

The reasearcher found some results related to the problem faced by students in writing recount. Eighty six difficulties were found; they were classified as follows: (a) difficulties in producing unified paragraph = 10 students, (b) difficulties in organizing ideas logically = 17 students, (c) difficulties in completing generic structure of the text = 19 students, and (d) difficulties in making grammatical sentence = 40 students. The result of the analysis can be tabelized as follows:

**Table 1**

**Result Difficulties of Writing Recount**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of difficulties** | **Number of students** | **%** |
| Produce unified paragraph | 10 | 25% |
| Organize ideas logically | 17 | 42.5% |
| Complete generic structure | 19 | 47.5% |
| Make grammatical sentence | 40 | 100% |

In order to answer the question number two from statement of the problems, the following data will be presented.

Based on the data collected by the researcher, it was found that there were some possible causes underlying students’ difficulties in producing good recount. They are as follows: Lack of grammatical knowledge. Because of this factor students have difficulty to produce or to make good sentences. It was viewed from the structure point of view. This phenomenon can be seen from the students sentences such as: “on Monday sesterday to get toose.....”, “...I’am to bathe use wather....”, “...there is a man I to approach....”, “....I goes to Joben yesterday......”.

Beside the cause above, the students also had lack of practices in producing recount. This phenomenon can be seen from the number of paragraph that students produces. In average, most students made less than two paragraphs. This indicates that students were still having difficulty to develop their ideas because of lack of practice.

Furthermore, the mastery of vocabulary also determine students’ recount. Based on the data, students still lacked vocabulary. This can be seen from the repitition of particular words many times. This makes students’ recount are quite far from good recount.

Related to the difficulty in producing grammatical sentence, the researcher found some mistakes in students’ writing in terms of word spelling, word order and the use of correct tenses. Focusing on word spelling, students made mistake in putting correct word spelling. This can be analyze from some students’ sentences such as: “we when home”, in this case students actually should put the word “went” (past form) instead of when (interrogative pronoun).

On the other case, students made mistakes in putt

ing particular word in right position such as: “study english my friend together”. In this sentence, the students should not put the verb (study) at the beginning of the sentence, but he should put subject (my friend) at the beginning of sentence in order to make grammatical sentence.

Talking about tenses, it is compulsory for us to understand that in producing recount text we usually use past tense instead of present tense. However, in students’ writing they still use inappropriate tenses, in this case they still use present tense instead of past tense. This can be analyzed from the use of verbs such as: “I take many fish in the pool”. Correctly, in telling past experience the students should put past form (took) instead of take.

In conclusion, the students were still difficult to understand the use of tobe in producing grammatical sentence. This becomes the most difficulty faced by students. Beside the difficulty in producing grammatical sentence, students also had problem to develop their idea in order to produce interesting writing. This can be seen from the repitition of particular words such as “after that” so many times. This makes students’ writing becomes monotous and less interesting.

1. **Closing**

Based on the findings and discussion, we can inferred that: (a) the researcher found the percentage of each difficulty according to the result of the students’ paper among others: there were 10 students having difficulty in producing unified paragraph (25%), 17 students having difficulty in organizing ideas logically or (42.5%), then 19 students having difficulty in completing generic structure of the text or (47.5%), and 40 students having difficuty in making grammatical sentence or (100%). (b) we know that the difficulty in making grammatical sentence becomes the most difficulty faced by students. (c) in general, the difficulties faced by the students are caused by the lack of knowledge about grammar and practice.

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