AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS’ DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS

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Abstract
This study is aimed at investigating students’ difficulties in writing recount text. To achieve that purpose, qualitative approach embracing case study design was used in this study. The data were taken from eight texts of the third graders in one of Universities at Garut. The data were then analyzed using the genre rubric from Knapp and Watkins (2005). The result reveals that students are still difficult in organizing the structure of recount text and delivering ideas through the correct grammar such as conjunction, past tense, and mental verb

Keywords: writing, recount text, difficulties, qualitative

INTRODUCTION
Writing is important in learning process. It is line with Emilia’s (2010) that writing is an essential part in teaching which has been placed as a priority. It also can determine students’ success in learning English. This idea is further supported by Kingston et al (2002) who stated that the achievement of students while learning English is measured by the productive skills, particularly their writing performance. Put differently, writing is one aspect needed to be taken into account as the emphasis in EFL teaching.

However, writing is considered as the most difficult skill to be mastered by the second language learners (Richards and Renandya, 2002). According to Rass (2001), due to the complexity of writing aspects, such as content, organization, purpose, vocabularies or punctuation, writing is a hard skill in learning English. It is a hard work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express the ideas and organizing them into sentences, into paragraphs that will be clear for the readers. In other words, the writing quality of students needs to be increased.

Seeing this, the first step to do before finding out the solution to the problems above is analyzing students’ difficulties in writing. This is claimed important since in accordance with Erisda’s (2017), analyzing students’ difficulties has an important role to solve the students’ problems in writing, to know the causes of the students’ difficulties in writing, to discover what are the factors that influence the students’ difficulties and to uncover how students can learn from their mistakes in writing in order to avoid making the similar mistakes.

Numerous studies have been conducted. Particularly, there are some studies with the similar topic. First, Supatmi (2013), Erisda (2017), Za’in (2017), Sari (2017), Harris (2014), Musabbihin (2017), Umiyatun (2009), and Hikmah (2014) analyzed students’ difficulties in writing recount text. Generally, the findings of their study show that the most students’ difficulties in writing recount text are grammar. In addition to this, twelve studies focusing on students’ ability in writing were done by Andyani (2013), Suyadi (2017), Asni (2008), Adam (2012), Huzain (2016), Wahyuni (2014), Alfayed (2017), Azhar (2015),
Ligito (2018), and Mardalena (2017). The main result shows that the students generally had understood about the organization of recount text, yet they still had problem in grammar of recount text. Not only were those, studies about improving students’ writing through some techniques also undertaken by Yunianto (2014), and Anggraini (2018). The conclusion reveals that diary and journal writing can help students write recount text.

Seeing this, it is clearly seen that it is important to do similar studies with different focus, one of them is different site. More specially, this study focuses on conducting the research in sub-urban area. Thus, the study aims to analyze students’ difficulties in writing recount texts in one of universities in Garut, West Java

**METHODOLOGY**

This study has similar characteristics to a case study. First, the same as a case studies, it was conducted in a single case that is analyzing students’ difficulties in writing recount text (Creswell, 2004). The second characteristic is this study used text analysis, which is another method of qualitative case study (Freebody, 2003). In this study, the data were collected from eight students’ texts. Specifically, students should create recount texts with the same topic, and they were given time to make a text about 15 minutes. After students collected the texts, the researcher divided the texts into three categorized groups: high, middle, and low level from the rubric of general writing (Harmer, 2004).

The data in this study were analyzed inductively (Silverman, 2006), collecting, categorize, analysis, and conclusion. Specified the rubric analysis for sampling as follows rubric general writing from Harmer (2004). The texts were analyzed with 5 aspect, there are Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language use, and Mechanics.

After get the sample, the researcher analysis the difficulties with rubric of recount text from Knapp & Watkins (2005). The texts were analyzed with two main aspects assessed, generic structure and language features. In generic structure there are three components: orientation, event, and reorientation. In addition, this assessment involves language features, there are:

1. Past tense, ex: I went to Bali.
2. Conjunction, ex: and, but, for, or, yet, so, etc.
3. Action verb, ex: play, grow, jump, etc.
4. Pronoun, ex: I, you, they, we, he, she, it.
Mental verb, ex: remember, honor, prefer, enjoy, love, etc.

**FINDINGS**

As mentioned in chapter I, this study aimed at investigating students’ difficulties in writing recount texts. As the findings, there are two aspect analyzed, generic structure and language features of the texts.

**Text 1 (TE)/ Low achiever**

Experience in Society

Last week, I was joined an activity held by BUMDES (Village-owned bussiness entity). Which is “Ecovillage” activity, and coincidently my village get a turn for the socialization. “ecovillage” is the concern the quality of the population and ecological quality holisticaly beacuse it involves all dimensions of living creatures.

In the socialization I was become the youngest cadre this is an opportunity for me how to active role in society. Many who become ecovillage members, including the village head, the head of RT and RW in the village. Even those in the provinces also present and
participated. Not only them, my father and my mother were present and participated in the event, to present the material as well as socialize activities. That have been running for two years lately. Namely is bank waste and fish farming, which became the inspiration of many people. So, active role can be anywhere.

**Text 2 (DH)/ Low achiever**

**Theater**

Last week I went to the theater. It was the only theater at my town. I went to the theater with my bestfriend. I watch the movie about love.

I parked my motorcycle at the parking area and I walked slowly at the hall of the theater. Then, I watch those movie and this movie so cute and romance.

I went home and I was very happy about that.

**Text 3 (AH)/ Middle achiever**

**Climbed the Cikuray mountain**

Last year, I went to the Cikuray mountain with my friend. It was the first time I climbed the mountain.

We started climbing at 07.00 pm. It was so dark and we used flashlight to get the way. We climbed calmly and enjoyed the night there. After 7 hours climbing, we could reach the top of mountain. It was at 2 am early in the morning. There were a lot of people who reached that top before us. We waited sunrise by eating some food to get back our energy. We sang and shared stories. After sang the sun raised. We had to go back home.

After all, it was great experience I had ever done so far.

**Text 4 (NW)/ High achiever**

**The tiring day**

Last day was a tiring day. I spent my time to do a lot of activities, that I had no time to take a rest.

First, in the morning, I went running. After that I went to campus until 3 pm. Then, I arrived in home at 4 pm. Because this was fasting/ramadhan month, I was cooking some foods with my mom. In 8 pm after praying tarawih, I decided to sleep but I remembered there was some homework I had to do. I did my homeworks until 11 pm. And finally I could take a rest in my bed. Those activity made me exhausted.

**Text 5 (SO)/ High achiever**

**Galunggung**

Last year ramadhan, my friends and I went for a holiday to Galunggung mountain in Tasikmalaya. We went there by a car.

As soon as we arrived at the gate, we paid tickets and then we saw a road sign which showed us several places to be visited in Galunggung mountain. First, we visited the crater of Galunggung mountain through the yellow stairs. It was really a lot of work to climb the stairs but it was paid off. We could see beautiful and amazing views from the crater. The second place we visited was Agung waterfall. The air around waterfall is very cool. The last place was galunggung hot water bath. We relaxed and soaked our body in the hot water. After that we decided to go home.

On the way home, we felt hungry. So, we stopped at the meat ball stand to fill our stomach. We ordered the same menu with a big glass of tea. After finished eating, we paid the bills. Then, we went home. Although we were tired, we were certainly happy and satisfied.

**Text 6 (AF)/ Low achiever**

**Went camping**

One year ago, my friends and I went camping on the mountain of Papandayan, Garut
West Java. The mountain was near from our town. It was about one hour to get there. So, we decided to choose Papandayan because it was not too far from our home.

We prepared everything before went to Papandayan. We brought cooking utensils, some food, clothes, camera, and guitar. We went there by motorcycles.

One first day, we sat up the tent on the camping area. The air was so fresh there and we took a bath on the waterfall. After played at waterfall, we felt hungry, so we cooked some food for the lunch. The first night of our camping we made a campfire, sang a songs together and after that we slept.

On the second day and the last day, we had some activities, we tried to fishing in the river that near the waterfall. After that we packed everything we brought and we cleaned the camping area and prepared to go home.

**Text 7 (RA)/ Middle achiever**

I lose my phone

Two days ago I was in the bus station to pick up my brother up for his arrival. I was playing my phone all the time in that afternoon. I sat the bench right near the ticket keeper. Then, I bought a bottle of water across the ticket keeper. I forgot to take my phone with me when I bought water. Then, I saw my brother out of the bus. I ran to him and we were about to go that time I bought I lost my phone. My brother told me to check it in the pick before. I come back and the ticket keeper told me that he saved the phone for me.

I thanked him and we said our good bye, I was afraid that I would lose my phone. Lucky I still had it back.

**Text 8 (DK)/ Middle achiever**

Visited my Grandma

Last year, my family and I went to my grandma’s house in Cilacap. We went to Cilacap by car. We departed at 06.00.

We arrived at 05.00 pm in the afternoon. We was very tired, so we took a rest. We had dinner. There were fried chicken, omelet, and fried tofu. After that we talked with my family. We went to sleep at 9 pm.

In the morning we went to the field. We directly in the field and help my grandma to crop vegetables. After had lunch in the field we went to my grandma’s home. At 2 pm, we came back to my house.

**Table 4.1 The result of the data analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Generic structure of recount text</th>
<th>Language features of recount text</th>
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Based on the table above, there were many kinds of mistakes made by students when writing recount texts. Specifically, the result is categorized into some parts: Generic Structure and Language features.

A. Generic Structure

Analysis in generic structure, divided into three parts. The analyses were in orientation, event and reorientation. The orientation, it gives the readers the background information needed to understand the text, such as who was involved, where it happened, and when it happened. The event, a series of events, ordered in a chronological sequence. The reorientation, a personal comment about the event or what happened in the end.

1. Orientation

Based on the data it was analyzed in orientation in one of eight students. The data was seven students could write the orientation of the text correctly, the student could write orientation. For example of texts by one of student, “Last week, I was joined an activity held by BUMDES (Village-owned business entity). Which is “Ecovillage” activity, and coincidentally my village get a turn for the socialization. “ecovillage” is the concern the quality of the population and ecological quality holistically because it involves all dimensions of living creatures.”

2. Event

Based on the data was seven students could write the event of the text correctly. For example texts by one of student, “We started climbing at 07.00 pm. It was so dark and we used flashlight to get the way. We climbed calmly and enjoyed the night there. After 7 hours climbing, we could reach the top of mountain. It was at 2 am early in the morning. There were a lot of people who reached that top before us. We waited sunrise by eating some food to get back our energy. We sang and shared stories. After sang the sun raised. We had to go back home.”

3. Reorientation

Based on the data was analyzed in reorientation in one of eight students. The data was seven students could write the reorientation of the text correctly, the student could write reorientation. For example texts by one of student, “I decided to sleep but I remembered there was some homework I had to do. I did my homeworks until 11 pm. And finally I could take a rest in my bed. Those activity made me exhausted.”

B. Language Features

Analysis in language features, divided into five parts. The analyses were in past tense, conjunction, action verb, pronoun, mental verb. Past tense, recount text use past tense because the purpose of this text is tells past event. Conjunction is use in the recount text especially temporal conjunction to arrange the event. Action verb, recount text use action verb because in the event tells real activity and the reader can imagine what happen in the past. Pronoun, recount text use pronoun because in one paragraph each subject of the
sentence must be referred. Mental verb is use in the recount text, mental verb for express feeling at the end or in reorientation.

1. Past tense
Based on the data was analyzed in past tense in eight students. The data was six students could use past tense of the text correctly; the student could use past tense. For example, “My friends and I went for a holiday to Galunggung mountain in Tasikmalaya.”

2. Conjunction
Based on the data was analyzed in past tense in eight students. The data was five students could use conjunction to the text correctly. For example, “Then, I bought a bottle of water across the ticket keeper. I forgot to take my phone with me when I bought water. Then, I saw my brother out of the bus. I ran to him and we were about to go that time I bought I lost my phone. My brother told me to check it in the pick before. I come back and the ticket keeper told me that he saved the phone for me.”

3. Action verb
The entire student knew the action verb which had to write in student’s work. For example, “we cooked some food for the lunch.” Based on the data the entire student showed that they were able to write the action verb which told in their work. In this analyze, the entire student did not find mistake in showing the action verb. All students have mastered about action verb.

4. Pronoun
The entire student knew the pronoun which had to write in student’s work. For example, “We went to Cilacap by car.” Based on the data the entire student showed that they were able to write the pronoun which told in their work. In this analyze, the entire student did not find mistake in showing the pronoun. All students have mastered about pronoun.

5. Mental verb
Based on the data was analyzed in mental verb in eight students. The data was five students could use mental verb of the text correctly, the student could use past tense. For example “we were certainly happy and satisfied.”

**Generic Structure**
seen from generic structure, there are three texts which do not fulfill the criteria. As an example in text 2, the event is not clearly stated, before coming to the main place where happen. He also merely state that ‘this movie so cute’. Example in text 6 has no reorientation, “I went home and I was very happy about that” In addition text 7, in the orientation stage, there is no setting, “two days ago I was in the bus station to pick my brother up for this arrival” According to Knapp & Watkins (2005). Generic structure of recount text is a package of events in a text. This organization will explain how the stages move through to attain the purpose. Every genre has its generic structure, so do the recount. Specifically, the generic structures of recount are:

1. Orientation: Introducing the participant, place and time (when, where, who, etc)
2. Events: Describing series of event that happened in the past (what happened).
3. Reorientation: Closure of the events. It is optional. Stating personal comment of the writer to the story.

**Language features**
seen from language features, there are five texts which do not fulfill the criteria. As an example in text 1, some sentences used incorrect past tense, “this is an opportunity for me”, and have no mental verb, next text 2, some sentences used incorrect past tense,
watch the movie about love”, have no conjuction and mental verb also text 3 and 5 have no conjunction. In addition text 8 does not have mental verb. Language features are about general grammatical pattern to form the information, message, and idea in effective sentences, especially in this case. According to Knapp & Watkins (2005), language features of recount are:

1. Past tense
2. Conjunction
3. Pronoun
4. Mental verb
5. Action verb

From the findings above, it is seen that there are two types of difficulties, there are generic structure and language features. Those findings are related with Harris’s (2014) and Supatmi’s (2013), claimed that the difficulties of writing recount text is language features, there are past tense, action verb, linking verb, and pronoun. But the other studies find that the difficulties of writing recount text from Saharah (2017), Erisda (2017), Za’in (2017), and Andayani (2013) stated that the difficulties are grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, content, and organization.

DISCUSSIONS

In addition, this research had differences with other researches. In the previous study which was done by Andayani (2013) who investigated about “The Analysis of Student’s Ability in Writing Recount Text”. The study tells that the analysis guide had been formulated as students’ writing problem indicators in writing recount text which of Capitalization, Punctuation, Inexpliciteness/ Fuzziness, Poor Organization/ Illogical Sequence, Spelling And Grammatical Error. It shows that students need more basic skills in order to improve their writing comprehension. The other previous study which was done by Sari (2017) who investigated about “An Analysis of Students’ Problem in Writing Recount Text”. The study tells that the difficulties in writing a text in English is due to the fact that English is not their mother tongue. In Senior High School at SMAN Arjasa Jember, there were many problems in writing such as: organization, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, content, and organization.

Moreover, the researcher realized that this study still had many mistake, but he researcher hoped that this research could be used as one of effective aspects needed to be considered by readers to understand what the difficulties in writing faced by students, especially in writing recount texts.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the previous section, this study was aimed to find out the difficulties of students in writing recount texts. Based on the result of the students’ texts analysis, there are two conclusions. First, students have difficulties in framing the texts into standardized text organization, orientation, event, and reorientation. Second, students also still have problems in fulfilling the linguistic features of the texts; using past tense, conjunction, and, mental verb.

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