

An Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text to The Eighth Graders in MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of students' ability in writing recount text. The purpose of the research was to know the students' ability in writing recount text of the eighth-grade student of MTs Mambaul Ulum at Kubupadi. The method used in this research was a descriptive qualitative which the researcher explained the result of research by describing the data gained. The techniques used for collecting data were observation and test. The tool of collecting data were written test. Based on the finding in this research, the students in the eighth grade of MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi have good ability in writing recount text, with a total average score of 21. The score is 22 score at writing organization of the text, 21 score at content, 19 score at grammar and 20 score at vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the introduction of the research. The first background of the study. The second was research questions. The third is the aim of the study. The fourth is the previous. The fifth is the scope. The last is the significance of the study.

Learning English is important not only for being the international language but also today English has become a language that is spoken in every place, and it has become a must for everyone to be able to understand the English to make people easier in the activity, English frequently found in many public places such as relating to transportation, market, even medicine using English, so it is wrong one if the English is interpreted as intended for people who plan to travel abroad only in the country but also the English language are often encountered in daily activities (Rismawati, 2017). Language is a paramount tool for communication. It is used to learn, socialize, think and express ideas or opinion between the speakers and the listeners or the writers and the readers. To be a good speaker, listener, writer and reader, someone has to learn the language informally

or formally in institution such as a course, language training or a school. Language is a system or way used to express feeling, ideas, suggestion. In such a way that language called as a means of communication or means of interaction that only human have it.

As a foreign language, students are not familiar with English. Although they have learnt English lesson from elementary school, they still get many difficulties in learning this language. A classroom usually will be the only place for many students to practice their English.

There are four main skills in language, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of them that is important for learner is writing, because by writing people can express his or her ideas in written form. It means that these skills should be interrelated and supported one another.

Writing is a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words which should be done at leisure time (Leo, 2007). In addition, Leo states that writing actually encourages thinking and learning when students view writing as a recursive process of their experience. It does not mean that writing is the most difficult subject to be learned. It means that all students can be taught to express their ideas clearly and correctly. They are many kinds of writing types, such as descriptive, recount, narrative, exposition, procedure, anecdote, news item and discussion, one of them is recount.

Recount is a text that tells the reader what happened in the past. It begins by telling the reader who was involved, and what happened (Pardiyono, 2007). Recount text is a kind of a text that is usually used for telling or to tell the past experience. There are three main elements of recount text. The first is orientation, it is explained about time of the story happen and where story happened, the second is events, it tells what happened and the third is re-orientation, it concludes of the story.

Based on the problem at MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi some students found difficulties in writing recount text. The first reason the students was still unable to write the tenses appropriately. Second, because research on recount text, especially in grade eighth was not much compare to the other grades. Some students just wrote the sentences that they wanted without using elements of recount text. For example, some students wrote a recount text direct to event, without having to be at the start with the orientation. In addition, some problems found in the field when the researcher asked the students to write a topic of their experience, the researcher found no one could write, and well as the content of the writing was not relevant to the topic there were many errors in the sentence vocabulary in writing, this was because of the lack of knowledge about words, word forms and incomprehensible, the grammar or word that is not accurate and students writing are not dominated by punctuation, spelling and errors capitalization.

The best writing teacher helped students to recognize many ways to solve the

problems and the difficulties of writing and made an interesting learning process. Therefore, an English teacher had to use the right method based on the situation and condition of the classroom. But principally the successful of teaching and learning process was not only determined by approach and method. In the other word there were many kinds of technique of teaching writing.

Writing is a fundamental skill crucial for effective communication and knowledge development. Various scholars define writing as a complex, multi-step process involving thoughtful expression, idea generation, and revision. Broughton (1980) emphasizes the distinction between writing and speaking, highlighting the deliberate and time-consuming nature of written communication. Oshima and Hogue (1997) portray writing as a progressive activity, requiring continuous refinement and reflection. Monaghan (2007) and Harmer (2004) emphasize the cognitive aspects of writing, suggesting it as a tool for critical thinking and idea exploration. Finally, Bowker (2007) underscores the practical applications of writing in diverse life contexts.

The purpose of writing, according to Grenville (2001), can be categorized into entertainment, information, and persuasion. Informative writing, often seen in academic and professional settings, aims to convey knowledge and understanding. This type of writing prioritizes clarity, accuracy, and logical organization. Entertainment writing focuses on engaging the reader's emotions and imagination, while persuasive writing aims to influence the reader's beliefs or actions. Each purpose requires a unique approach and stylistic choices.

The writing process typically involves prewriting, planning, and drafting stages (Oshima & Hogue, 1999). Prewriting includes brainstorming and narrowing down a topic. Planning involves outlining the structure and developing supporting arguments. Drafting involves writing and revising multiple versions of the text, paying attention to content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Jacobs, 1981; Weigle, 2002). Various genres of writing exist, including academic, job-related, and personal writing (Brown, 2004), and different types, such as expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive (Kane, 1988), each demanding specific skills and techniques.

Recount texts retell past events or experiences in a chronological sequence. Hyland (2003) defines recounts as telling what happened, while Knapp (2005) emphasizes their sequential nature and the importance of an orientation. Saragih (2014) adds that recounts inform or entertain by narrating past incidents. Therefore, a recount text serves to reconstruct past experiences by presenting events in their original order, offering both informative and entertaining value. The purpose, according to Hyland (2005) and Priyana (2008), is to list, describe, and evaluate the significance of past events, motivating, informing, and entertaining readers.

Key features of a recount text include an orientation setting the scene (who, what,

where, when), a chronological sequence of events, and an optional reorientation or conclusion. Language features include proper nouns, descriptive words, past tense verbs, and time connectives (e.g., first, next, then). Derewianka (2012) identifies three types of recount texts: personal, factual, and imaginative. The generic structure, as outlined by Hyland (2005), comprises an orientation, a record of events, and an optional re-orientation. This structure ensures clarity and coherence in presenting the past experience to the reader.

Khanifatul Hikmah (2014), in a descriptive qualitative study at Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, investigated the problems faced by first-grade students at MAN Kebumen 1 in writing recount texts. The research aimed to analyze the types of problems encountered and identify the most dominant one. The findings revealed that students indeed struggled with writing recount texts.

Divana Lisa Za'in (2017), from the State Islamic University Raden Intan Lampung, conducted similar descriptive qualitative research exploring the challenges faced by eighth-grade students at SMPN 4 Bandar Lampung in writing recount texts. Her research identified grammatical weaknesses, limited knowledge and understanding of the genre, lack of practice, and educational background as significant contributing factors to student difficulties. Za'in's study differed from Hikmah's by also investigating the underlying causes of these writing problems.

METHOD

This chapter discusses how the research was carried out. There are five things discussed. The first, method of research, which explains the research method used. The second, the place and time of the research. The third, the technique of data collection. The fourth, instrument of research. The last, the technique of data analysis.

Method of Research

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method (Nunan, 1992) to investigate student ability in writing recount texts. A test was used as the instrument to analyze and understand student performance within this genre, focusing on an in-depth understanding of their writing abilities rather than numerical data.

The Technique of Data Collection

Data was collected through observation and testing. Observation at MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubu Padi revealed student confusion and difficulty with vocabulary and idea generation regarding recount texts, despite prior teacher instruction. A writing test, designed to assess student capability in composing recount texts, was then administered to gauge their practical writing skills within this genre.

The Instrument of Research

The research instrument employed was a free-writing test requiring students to compose a recount text of at least 100 words on a topic of their choice. This allowed for an assessment of their recount text writing abilities based on their freely generated compositions.

The Technique of Data Analysis

Data analysis employed a descriptive method utilizing Brown and Bailey's analytical scoring rubric. This rubric assesses student writing based on four criteria: organization, content, grammar, and vocabulary. Each criterion is scored on a scale of 1-25, with scores of 22-25 classified as excellent, 16-21 as good, 9-15 as fair, and 1-8 as poor.

Organization focuses on the structure of the recount text, including the use of a title and the effective development of orientation, events, and reorientation. Content evaluates the clarity and development of ideas, particularly the explicit statement of events and personal comments. Grammar assesses the correct usage of past tense, subject-verb agreement, articles, conjunctions, and pronouns. Vocabulary evaluates the precision, variety, and conciseness of language use. This comprehensive rubric allows for a detailed evaluation of student writing skills in the recount genre.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter describes the results of the research that has been done. This chapter describes the characteristics of the data, data presentation, results and is followed by discussion.

Data Description

MTs Mambaul Ulum, an Islamic junior high school in Kubu Padi, West Kalimantan, has limited learning resources, primarily relying on modules, blackboards, and lecture-based teaching. This restricts the variety of teaching methodologies employed. The school environment, while physically pleasant with green spaces and a flower garden, lacks technological aids like projectors, potentially hindering effective learning. Teaching practices involve minimal student interaction, focusing on teacher explanations and written work, with limited opportunities for developing critical thinking or creativity due to time constraints.

The study sample comprised 18 eighth-grade students (8 male, 10 female) with diverse learning styles and primarily Madurese-speaking backgrounds. Their limited Indonesian language proficiency further complicates English language acquisition, despite three English lessons per week and dedicated efforts from teaching staff. This language barrier poses a significant challenge in effectively teaching English and requires

additional support for these students.

Data Presentation

Data collection took place on December 17, 2021, involving 18 eighth-grade students from class VIIIV at MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubu Padi. Student writing samples, collected after a recount text writing test, were evaluated using Brown and Bailey's analytical scoring rubric, assessing organization, content, grammar, and vocabulary.

The researcher described the result of the 18 students' scores in writing recount text as follows:

1. **Student 1:** Demonstrated excellent overall performance with a total score of 22. The student excelled in organization (24), content (23), and vocabulary (23). While grammar (20) was classified as good, areas for improvement included consistent use of past tense, capitalization of "I," and incorporating commas.
2. **Student 2:** Received a total score of 16, categorized as good. Strengths were observed in content (23), indicating a good grasp of idea development. However, significant weaknesses were evident in grammar (11) and vocabulary (10), particularly in tense consistency, pronoun usage, conjunctions, articles, punctuation, and accurate word choice. The organization (20) was also good, but the title placement needed correction.
3. **Student 3:** Achieved a good overall performance with a total score of 21. Content (23) was a strong area. Organization (21) and vocabulary (21) were also categorized as good, but improvements were needed in translation accuracy and precise word choice. Grammar (19) presented challenges, including tense consistency, pronoun usage, conjunction overuse, article usage, missing verbs, and punctuation.
4. **Student 4:** Excelled with a total score of 23, demonstrating excellent overall performance. The student performed exceptionally well in organization (25), content (23), and vocabulary (25). Grammar (21) was good, with minor areas for improvement in tense consistency and punctuation.
5. **Student 5:** Scored 23, achieving an excellent level. Content (25) was a particular strength. Vocabulary (23) and grammar (23) were also excellent, although minor inconsistencies in tense, conjunction usage, and punctuation were noted. Organization (20) was good, but the title translation was missing.
6. **Student 6:** Attained an excellent overall level with a total score of 22. The student's strengths were in organization (24) and vocabulary (22). Content (22) was also excellent, but could benefit from further idea development. Grammar (20) showed good potential, but needed attention to tense consistency, article usage, missing words, punctuation, and capitalization.

7. **Student 7:** Scored 20, categorized as good. Organization (21), content (18), and grammar (20) were all rated as good. Vocabulary (22) was excellent. Areas for improvement included tense consistency, article usage, missing verbs, and punctuation. Reorientation needed to be more explicit.
8. **Student 8:** Received a good overall score of 21. Organization (23) and content (21) were good. The story needed further development for better reader engagement. Grammar (20) and vocabulary (20) were also good, but improvements were needed in tense consistency, article usage ("for visit" to "to visit"), subject inclusion in one sentence, plural word usage, and avoiding Indonesian words.
9. **Student 9:** Achieved a good overall score of 21. Organization (23) was excellent, but the title was not entirely representative of the content. Content (21) was good, but could benefit from further development. Grammar (21) presented some challenges, including tense inconsistency, pronoun errors, conjunction usage ("and" at the beginning of sentences), article usage, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation. Vocabulary (20) was good, but some misspelled words were noted.
10. **Student 10:** Scored 22, reaching an excellent level. Content (25) was a strong suit, demonstrating well-developed descriptions and inclusion of feelings. Organization (22.5) and grammar (22) were also excellent. Minor grammatical issues included tense inconsistency, conjunction usage, capitalization, and punctuation. Vocabulary (21) was good, with a minor word choice error ("come home" to "went home").
11. **Student 11:** Achieved an excellent level with a total score of 23. Organization (25) and content (25) were both excellent. Vocabulary (22) was also excellent, demonstrating accurate word usage despite some spelling errors. Grammar (21) categorized as good, but showed areas for improvement in tense consistency, verb forms, punctuation, and capitalization.
12. **Student 12:** Scored 22, achieving an excellent level. Organization (25), content (25), and grammar (20) were all strong areas. Vocabulary (20) was categorized as good, with a minor word choice error ("motor water" for "water motorbike"). Grammatical improvements included addressing the use of "so" in complex sentences, "and" for compound words, missing verbs and subjects, and punctuation.
13. **Student 13:** Received a good overall score of 20. Organization (23) was excellent. Content (18) was good, but needed further elaboration. Grammar (19) presented challenges with tense consistency, subject usage, conjunctions, articles, punctuation, and capitalization. Vocabulary (20) was good, but contained a noun phrase error and an imprecise expression ("12 o'clock in the evening").
14. **Student 14:** Scored 16, categorized as good. Significant improvements were needed in organization (16), which lacked a title, clear orientation, and distinction between

orientation and body paragraphs. Content (15) was fair and needed better focus and clarity of ideas. Grammar (16) and vocabulary (18) were both good, but tense consistency, subject-verb agreement, conjunctions, articles, and punctuation required attention.

15. **Student 15:** Achieved an excellent overall score of 23. Organization (25), content (23), and vocabulary (25) were all excellent, demonstrating strong structural, descriptive, and linguistic skills. Grammar (19), while categorized as good, showed areas for improvement in tense consistency, missing verbs and subjects, punctuation, and capitalization.
16. **Student 16:** Scored 21, achieving a good level. Organization (25), content (23), and vocabulary (20) were strong areas. Grammar (18) was good, but required further development in tense consistency, pronoun usage, conjunctions, articles, missing verbs, punctuation, and capitalization.
17. **Student 17:** Received a good overall score of 18. Organization (19) needed improvement, particularly in providing a title and a clear, separate orientation. Content (18) was good, but needed further development. Grammar (17) and vocabulary (20) were also categorized as good, but required attention to tense consistency, conjunction usage, article clarity, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation.
18. **Student 18:** Scored 18, reaching a good level. Similar to Student 17, organization (19) needed improvement in providing a title and a distinct orientation. Content (18) was good but needed further development. Grammar (17) and vocabulary (20) were good but needed improvement in tense consistency, conjunctions, articles, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation.

Result

Based on data presentation, the research finding of this research was describe that students' ability in writing recount text of MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi was categorized as good level with an average score of 21.

Table 1. Summary of students' writing scores

No.	Category	Sub Category	Score	Average	Total Average
1	Organization	Title	18	22	
		Orientation	24		
		Event	24		

No.	Category	Sub Category	Score	Average	Total Average
		Re-orientation	24		
2	Content		21	21	
3	Grammar	Past tense	8		
		Pronoun	23		21
		Conjunction	22		
		Article	22		
		Subject	21	19	
		Agreement			
		Punctuation	19		
4.	Vocabulary		20	20	

Discussion

Analysis of the students' writing abilities, based on organization, content, grammar, and vocabulary, revealed an average total score of 21. Students performed best in organization (average score 22), demonstrating proficiency in structuring recount texts with orientation, events, and reorientation. However, grammar (average score 19) was the weakest area, indicating a need for further development in this aspect of writing.

1. Organization

Analysis of student recount texts reveals a strong understanding of organizational structure. The average score of 22, classified as excellent, indicates proficiency in incorporating the three key elements: orientation, events, and reorientation (Hyland, 2005). While most students successfully applied these elements, some struggled with title selection, translation, and placement.

Title analysis showed some difficulties, with some texts lacking titles, having untranslated titles, or incorporating the title into the first paragraph. However, the average score of 18 suggests that most students could create relevant titles. Orientation analysis revealed an average score of 24, indicating that most students could establish the setting (place, time, characters). Some, however, included events within the orientation or introduced themselves inappropriately.

Event analysis also resulted in an average score of 24, demonstrating understanding of the chronological sequencing of events. While some errors in content, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling were observed, along with instances of

repetition, the overall understanding of event sequencing was evident. Re-orientation analysis showed an average score of 24, indicating that most students could provide a personal opinion or closing statement. Some, however, continued narrating events in this section.

Overall, students demonstrated a good grasp of recount text organization, effectively sequencing events and providing appropriate orientation and reorientation. While areas for improvement exist, particularly in title creation and consistent adherence to each section's purpose, the findings suggest a solid foundation in recount text structure.

2. Content

Students generally demonstrated good content development in their recount texts, achieving an average score of 21 (good level). They effectively described places, feelings, and individuals involved, showcasing their ability to create engaging narratives. Some students, however, require further practice in elaborating on their ideas to enhance descriptive richness.

While high-scoring students excelled in detailed descriptions and conveying emotions, mid-range performers presented understandable narratives but lacked depth in their descriptions. Students with lower scores, while able to convey basic ideas, needed significant improvement in developing their narratives to create more vivid and engaging recount texts.

3. Grammar

This research explores grammatical proficiency in student writing, focusing on organization, content, grammar, and vocabulary. Grammar emerged as the most challenging aspect, with an average score of 19, slightly below the other areas. The study delves into six specific grammar categories at the government school level: simple past tense, pronouns, conjunctions, articles, subject agreement, and punctuation.

The analysis reveals significant struggles with the simple past tense, evidenced by an average score of 8. Students frequently defaulted to the present tense, demonstrating difficulties with "to be" verbs (was/were), auxiliary verbs, and regular/irregular verb conjugations. Examples include using "is" instead of "was" and "wake up" instead of "woke up." While pronoun usage was generally proficient (average score of 23), some students exhibited errors in pronoun case, confusing subject and object pronouns like "I" and "me." Conjunction use also scored well (average score of 22), but some students overused conjunctions, particularly "and."

Articles and subject agreement also presented moderate challenges (average scores of 22 and 21 respectively). Article errors included incorrect preposition use

("at the morning") and misused prepositions ("for visit" instead of "to visit"). Subject agreement issues primarily involved missing verbs or objects in sentences. Finally, punctuation (average score 19.5) showed areas for improvement, such as missing periods and commas, and incorrect capitalization of proper nouns. Unfortunately, the provided text doesn't mention the researcher's name or cite any specific experts. Therefore, attribution of these findings to specific individuals is not possible based on the information given.

4. Vocabulary

The descriptions of vocabulary aspect in good level with average score 20. Most the students were able to choose the good words. Few students still made many mistakes in choosing the good words. Some vocabulary misused, lack awareness and may be to wordy. For example, the word „tepatnya (in Indonesia) “ is translated „the place“ which should be translated „exactly“.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION

In this research, the researcher presents the following conclusions and suggestions based on the result of the research findings and discussions as explained in the chapter I. The goal of this chapter is to give the relevant conclusion and analysis on student's writing ability in recount text. In addition, the positive suggestion also was presented in this chapter.

Conclusion

The objectives of this research are to analyze the students' ability in writing recount text to the eighth graders of MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi. Based on the data analysis, the researcher can make conclusion about an analysis of students' ability in writing recount text. Based on the result of the analysis, the students in the eighth grade of MTs Mambaul Ulum Kubupadi have good ability in recount text, with a total average score of 21. There are four categories which were evaluated. They are organization, content, grammar and vocabulary. The average score of students' organization was 22, students' content was 21, students' grammar was 19 and students' vocabulary was 20.

Suggestion

Based on the benefit of this research, the researcher proposes the following suggestions: 1) Teacher; a) The teacher should give more explanation of grammatical rule in English, especially in simple past tense. So, the students will more understand about how to write recount text especially in grammatical feature, b) The teacher should give more writing exercise to make the students more familiar with English writing form, c) The teacher should give more attention to the weak students in comprehending the lesson. 2) The students; a) The students should read more and practice to write more to

increase their ability in writing especially recount text, b) The students should learn more about grammar and do not hesitate to ask the teacher if they have difficulties on it, c) The student should be motivated in learning English. 3) To the other researcher, the researcher hopes that after reading this thesis, the other researcher can take the information inside it and improve this thesis to be better, so that the English teaching and learning will be more successful.

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