

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING PERSONAL RECOUNT TEXT AT SMA PERTIWI 1 PADANG

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to describe the tenth grade students' ability in writing personal recount text at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang. The study applied a descriptive design with 30 students selected through cluster random sampling. Data were collected using a writing test and analyzed by an inter-rater technique, which showed high reliability (0.84). The findings revealed that 87% of students had high ability, but weaknesses remained in orientation (60% low) and language features (53% low). It can be concluded that although students' overall ability was high, more practice and guidance are required in orientation and grammar mastery.

Key words: *writing ability, recount text, orientation, language features, mechanics*

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that students must learn, because it has an important role in the improvement of technology and literature. It is acceptable around of the world. English, as the foreign language in Indonesia, has been taught from junior high school to college. Indonesian students as a part of international society absolutely need it. Vanesa and Setiawati (2021) state students need it as a means of future communication in both spoken and written^[1]. Learning English covers four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a good way to improve English. Warda & Wijaya (2019) state that writing is one of the most important skills to learn in English^[2].

Writing is a creative activity that involves conveying ideas in written language, such as telling, persuading, or entertaining manner. Content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics are all parts of writing. Writing is a complicated skill that needs to be mastered in many contexts of life. According to Wildayati (2021), writing is a complicated activity that needs full of concentration and knowledge about what we are going to write^[3]. Writing is considered difficult by many students since writing needs more precision for occurrence in spelling, grammar, and suitable expression. However, writing can be learned by everybody practicing and perusing a part of books to get motivation in writing. Writing is not only a skill that the students need to learn in language learning, it is also an activity that is useful for students. Harmer (1998) states several importances

of writing formulated in the importance of teaching writing. They are reinforcement, language development, learning styles, and writing as a skill^[4]. As reinforcement, writing helps students strengthen their understanding by practicing vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures. It also contributes to language development, since the process of constructing texts requires active use of the language and supports deeper mastery. Furthermore, writing accommodates different learning styles, allowing students to engage critically and reflectively with the material. Finally, writing itself is a language skill that needs to be developed alongside listening, speaking, and reading.

Writing has been taught at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang. In this skill, students learned various text types, such as descriptive text, recount text, procedure text, expository text, and narrative text (English syllabus at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang). Recount text is a text that retells event or events in the past. Husna & Multazim (2019) state that recount text is a piece of writing that recounts a past event^[5]. Permatasai (2016) states recount text can be classified into three: personal, imaginative, and factual^[6]. The tenth grade students of SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang have learnt personal recount, factual recount, and imaginative recount.

There are some studies related to this research. The first study was conducted by Putri (2014) with the purpose of describing the tenth grade students' ability in writing recount text at SMA Adabiah 1 Padang, and the result was moderate^[7]. The second study was

conducted by Ridha (2023) with the purpose of analyzing students' ability in writing personal recount text using Small Group Discussion method at SMKN 4 Payakumbuh, and the result was high ^[8]. The third study was conducted by Rahman (2014) with the purpose of describing the second-year students' ability to write recount text at SMAN 3 Painan, and the result was moderate ^[9]. The fourth study was conducted by Resita (2020) with the purpose of improving students' writing skill in recount text using Small Group Discussion method at SMAN 6 Kediri, and the result showed improvement ^[10].

Based on the author's observations during the teaching practicum conducted at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang on July 29th, 2024. It was revealed that tenth grade students experienced with an assignment to write a personal recount text as part of the English curriculum. In the prior observation, it was also found that many students did not understand how to write recount texts well. This was reflected from the fact when the teacher asked the students to write a recount text based on their own vacation experience. Many students still had problems how to write the generic structure (orientation, event, and re-orientation) and language features of recount text. They also had difficulty in writing recount text with appropriate vocabulary, the correct mechanic of writing (punctuation, spelling, and capitalization), and determining the kinds of recount text.

From the reasons above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research entitled "An Analysis of the Tenth Grade Students' Ability in Writing Personal Recount Text at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang". She wants to describe scientifically the students' ability in writing personal recount text.

METHOD

The researcher used descriptive method for this research. Gay et. al. (2012) state that descriptive research is to describe or to tell the way things are^[11]. Refnita (2018) states that descriptive research involves collecting data to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study^[12]. The population of this research was the tenth grade students at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang. The total number of population members of this research was 283 students which were grouped into eight classes. Because the size of the population was so large, the researcher took a sample to do this research. The researcher chose one class as the sample by using cluster random sampling technique. It means that the

sample was selected by choosing a class among others. The researcher used this technique because the members of the population were distributed in groups or classes. They had the same book and learning material in learning English. In selecting the sample, the researcher carried out some procedures. Firstly, the researcher wrote the names of each class (X E 1, X E 2, X E 3, X E 4, X E 5, X E 6, X E 7, X E 8) on eight pieces of paper and put them into a box. Secondly, the researcher closed her eyes and took one piece of paper from the box. The class that was selected was X E 3. This class initially consisted of 36 students, but only 30 students were involved in the research because 6 students were absent due to illness.

This research used a writing test as the instrument. The test was used to assess the students' ability in writing a personal recount text. The aspects that were assessed in the students' writing test were orientation, chronological events, re-orientation, language features, vocabulary, and mechanics. The researcher provided some topics and let the students choose one of them. The topics were: traveling experience, Eid al-Fitr experience, and the unforgettable experience. The researcher used content validity to know the validity of the test, in which the test material was constructed based on the curriculum, syllabus, and teaching materials given to the tenth grade students in SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang. To analyze the reliability of the test, the researcher used an inter-rater technique. This technique was used to eliminate subjectivity in giving scores. It means that there were two scorers (scorer 1 and scorer 2). The first scorer was the researcher, and the second scorer was Zuratun Naimah. The researcher asked her to be the second scorer because she had good skills in writing subjects and she got an A in all writing subjects. To find out the correlation index of two sets of scorers, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment. After the researcher analyzed the score, it showed that the test was reliable. It was supported by the fact that the coefficient correlation was 0.84 which was categorized as very high correlation.

In this research, the researcher used a test to collect the data. The data in this study were collected with the following procedures: first, the researcher distributed the test to the students; second, the researcher explained the instructions of the test to the students; third, the researcher administered the test in 60 minutes; fourth, the researcher collected the students' answer sheets; fifth, the researcher copied the students' answer sheets, the original one was for the

first scorer and the copy was for the second scorer; finally, the researcher and the second scorer counted the score based on the criteria. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the following procedures: first, the researcher showed the raw score from both scorers; second, the researcher counted the average score of two scorers; third, the researcher converted the score of the students' writing answer; fourth, the researcher classified the students' ability by using KKM at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang, in which the KKM is 75; fifth, the researcher counted the percentage of students' ability; finally, the researcher interpreted the result of data analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of this research showed that most students had a high ability to write a personal recount text. It was supported by the data analysis that 26 students (87%) had high ability and 4 students (13%) had low ability. In detail, the data analysis revealed that the students' ability varied across different aspects of writing. In writing the orientation, only 12 students (40%) were able to achieve high ability, while 18 students (60%) still had low ability. This shows that many students found it difficult to introduce the story clearly by mentioning who was involved, when and where the events took place, and why they occurred. On the other hand, in writing the chronological events, the majority of the students, namely 26 students (87%), had high ability, and only 4 students (13%) were still categorized as low. This means that most of the students could arrange events in the correct order, which is an important characteristic of recount text. Furthermore, in writing the re-orientation, 21 students (70%) had high ability, while 9 students (30%) were not yet successful. In using language features, the result was less satisfactory because only 14 students (47%) who had high ability, while 16 students (53%) still had low ability, which indicated difficulties in applying simple past tense correctly. In terms of vocabulary, the result was very positive since all students (100%) were able to apply appropriate vocabulary to express their ideas. Moreover, in mechanics, 20 students (67%) showed high ability and 10 students (33%) were still low, which means that problems with spelling, punctuation, and capitalization were still found.

Table 1. Research Findings

No	Aspect	The Number of Students		Ability
		Number	Percentage	
1	The Students' Ability in Writing a Personal Recount Text	26	87%	High
		4	13%	Low
2	The Students' Ability in Writing the Orientation	12	40%	High
		18	60%	Low
3	The Students' Ability in Writing the Event	26	87%	High
		4	13%	Low
4	The Students' Ability in Writing the Re-orientation	21	70%	High
		9	30%	Low
5	The Students' Ability to Use the Language Feature	14	47%	High
		16	53%	Low
6	The Students' Ability to Apply Appropriate Vocabulary	30	100%	High
		0	0%	Low
7	The Students' Ability to Use the Correct Mechanics	20	67%	High
		10	33%	Low

1. The Students' Ability in Writing a Personal Recount Text

Based on the findings, the researcher found that most students had a high ability to write a personal recount text. This is proved by the fact that 87% of students were categorized as high and only 13% were categorized as low. On the other hand, previous research conducted by Putri (2014) entitled "An Analysis of the Tenth Grade Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text at SMA Adabiah 1 Padang" showed that the majority of students (56.25%) had a moderate ability in writing recount text.

2. The Students' Ability in Writing the Orientation

Based on the findings, the students' ability in writing the orientation was low (40%). It means that many students did not yet understand how to write the orientation clearly, including mentioning who, where, when, and why. This result is different from the previous research conducted by Ridha (2023) entitled "An Analysis of the Tenth Grade Students' Ability in Writing Personal Recount Text by Using Small Group Discussion Method at SMKN 4 Payakumbuh". His research showed that 58% of the students had a high ability in writing the orientation.

3. The Students' Ability in Writing the Events

Based on the findings, the students' ability in writing the chronological events was high (87%). This means that students understood how to write the events completely and sequentially. This is different from the research conducted by Putri (2014), who found that the students' ability in writing the events was only moderate (40.6%).

4. The Students' Ability in Writing the Re-orientation

Based on the findings, the students' ability in writing the re-orientation was high (70%). It means that students generally understood how to give an opinion, conclude the story, and use an adjective properly. This result is different from the previous research conducted by Ridha (2023), who found that the students' ability to write the re-orientation was low (54%).

5. The Students' Ability in Using the Language Features

Based on the findings, the students' ability in using the language features was low (47%). This shows that many students still had difficulties in applying the simple past tense and other grammatical aspects correctly. This result is different from the research conducted by Rahman (2014) entitled "An Analysis of the Second Year Students' Ability to Write a Recount Text at SMAN 3 Painan". His study showed that the students' ability in using the language features was moderate (80%).

6. The Students' Ability in Using Appropriate Vocabulary

Based on the findings, the students' ability in using appropriate vocabulary was very high (100%). It means that all students could choose suitable

vocabulary to express their ideas clearly. This result is different from the research conducted by Putri (2014), who found that only 65.625% of students had a moderate ability in using appropriate vocabulary.

7. The Students' Ability in Using the Correct Mechanics

Based on the findings, the students' ability in using the correct mechanics was high (67%). This indicates that the majority of students were able to apply punctuation, spelling, and capitalization correctly, although some still made errors. This is in line with the previous research conducted by Ridha (2023), who found that 71% of students had a high ability in writing mechanics.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the tenth grade students' ability in writing personal recount at SMA Pertiwi 1 Padang was high.

Based on the conclusion, for the teachers, the researcher suggests that English teachers pay more attention to the students' difficulties in writing the orientation part of personal recount texts, as this was the aspect with the lowest student achievement. Teachers are encouraged to design more targeted exercises that help students understand and include the key elements of orientation: who, where, when, and why. In addition, teachers should continuously guide students in using correct simple past tense structures and mechanics (punctuation, spelling, and capitalization) through consistent feedback and writing practice.

For the students, the researcher suggests that they are encouraged to improve their writing ability by practicing more frequently. They should focus especially on constructing a complete orientation and applying grammar rules correctly. Students are also expected to read more example 48 texts of personal recounts to better understand the structure and language features.

The researcher suggests the future researcher to investigate how this finding can be different from the previous study. In addition, the researcher also suggests the next researchers to investigate the specific causes of students' low ability in writing orientation in personal recount texts.

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