

An Analysis of Writing Competence of Class VIII Students of SMP Negeri 3 Tanjung Pinang through English Recount Text

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the writing competence of grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 3 Tanjungpinang through the analysis of English recount text. The method used was descriptive qualitative with data collection through interviews with English teachers and documentation of students' writing. The results showed that students' scores varied greatly, ranging from 10 to 100. A total of 31.8% of students obtained very good grades (90-100), which shows that some students have mastered the material well. However, 36% of students were in the less and very less categories, indicating that many students had difficulty in writing recount texts. Factors influencing the difference include learning style, motivation, as well as the support of the learning environment at home. Teachers also revealed that learning tends to be monotonous with minimal use of visual media and collaborative activities. This finding indicates the need to apply more varied and contextualized learning methods, such as genre-based approaches, the use of visual media, and active learning. In addition, special attention and remedial programs for students with low scores are needed to improve their writing competence. Synergy between teachers, schools and parents is also important to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Keywords: *Writing competence, recount text, descriptive qualitative*

INTRODUCTION

Writing ability is one of the main skills in English language learning that plays an important role in written communication.

Among the various types of texts taught in schools, recount text is one of the challenging genres for students, especially at the junior high school level. Recount text requires students to retell past experiences coherently, accurately, and with appropriate structures. Unfortunately, various studies show that many Indonesian students experience difficulties in writing recount texts due to limitations in mastering text structures, vocabulary, and grammatical aspects.

The results of research by Indah and Rini (2024) showed that the application of genre-based approach (GBA) can significantly improve students' ability to write recount text. This approach provides scaffolding and explicit learning of the structure and linguistic features of recount texts, thus helping students produce more coherent and systematic writing. The significant increase in post-test scores proves the effectiveness of this method in the context of learning in elementary schools.

In line with that, research conducted by Asriani et al. (2022) showed that learning media based on picture series also contributed positively to the improvement of students' writing skills. With the help of pictures, students can organize ideas visually first before pouring them into writing. This proved to be effective in overcoming confusion in arranging the sequence of events and increasing students' motivation in writing.

However, there are still many challenges faced by students in writing recount texts as found by Suyadi (2017) in his research at SMP Negeri 2 Jambi City. He found that most students struggled with vocabulary, grammar, and idea organization. This shows that a more varied and contextual approach is needed in teaching recount text writing so that these difficulties can be minimized.

Fakhruzi et al.'s research (2023) reinforced these findings by analyzing the main problems experienced by grade VIII students in writing recount text. It was found that as many as 81% of students experienced difficulties in grammar, and more than 56% experienced problems in choosing appropriate vocabulary. Lack of understanding of the recount text structure was also a major obstacle. This emphasizes the need for continuous evaluation of the writing teaching approach used in the classroom.

In addition, some studies also highlight the importance of the teacher's role in creating a pleasant learning atmosphere and supporting students in exploring their ideas freely. Teachers should not only act as facilitators, but also as motivators and guides in the writing process. Writing lessons that are too monotonous, such as lectures without media or collaborative activities, have been proven to decrease students' interest and negatively affect their learning outcomes.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that improving the ability to write recount texts is not enough just by providing exercises. A more structured, creative and needs-based approach is needed. By integrating various strategies such as genre-based approach, visual media, and active learning methods, teachers can help students to write more confidently and effectively. Therefore, further research on the effectiveness of these strategies in different contexts is important to be conducted to improve the quality of writing learning in Indonesia. The author wants to know the extent to which SMPN 3 Tanjungpinang students know and understand recount texts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the learning of English recount text at SMPN 3 Tanjungpinang. The main data was obtained through interviews with the grade VIII English teacher and documentation of students' writing. Teachers provided information related to classroom learning methods and curriculum implementation.

Data collection was conducted through structured interviews and document analysis. The interview lasted for about 45 minutes and focused on the learning techniques and materials used. The interviews were recorded to maintain the accuracy of the data. Student writing samples were also collected and analyzed to support the findings.

The data was analyzed by grouping students' scores based on David P. Haris' scoring rubric and calculating the percentage to see the trend of achievement. Interview data was transcribed and grouped into themes such as learning methods, motivation, and

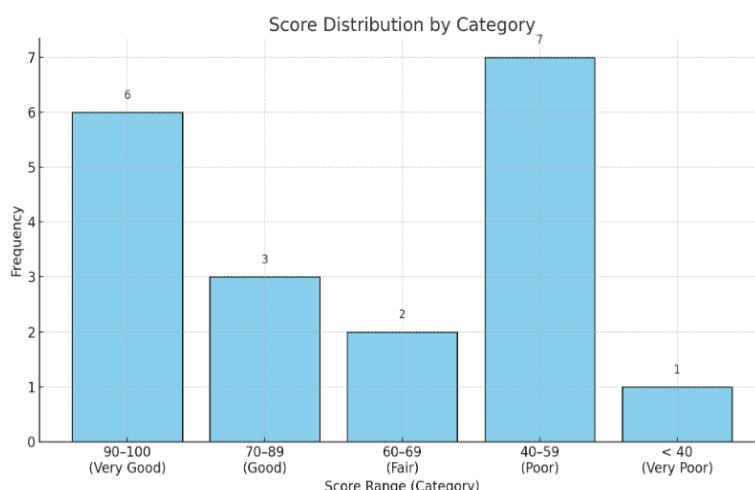
learning support at home. The analysis process followed the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

FINDING

This study aims to describe the writing competence of grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 3 Tanjungpinang through English recount text. Data were obtained from the documentation of 22 students' grades as well as interviews with the 8th grade English teacher. The analysis was conducted on the results of students' writing on recount text writing exercises that had been corrected by the teacher, and used a qualitative descriptive approach.

Based on the documentation of score results, it is known that student scores vary greatly, ranging from 10 to 100. This shows that the mastery of the material between students is very different.



The following diagram presents the distribution of student scores based on the assessment categories adapted from David.

The results of the analysis show that the writing skills of SMPN 3 Tanjungpinang students in writing recount texts are uneven:

- 27.3% of students showed excellent mastery of the material. They were able to write with the correct recount structure,

relatively accurate grammar, and contextually appropriate vocabulary.

- 36.3% of students fell into the "less" and "very less" categories, showing weak understanding of the material.

From the interview with the English teacher, it was found that:

- High-performing students tend to have strong learning motivation, read frequently, and receive good support from their families.
- Lower-performing students often struggle with organizing ideas, have limited vocabulary, show low interest in writing, and lack regular writing practice.
- External barriers such as limited access to learning resources and minimal parental involvement were also reported.

Extreme scores such as 10 indicate serious barriers to learning. This is an important signal for schools and teachers to provide special interventions such as remedial programs, intensive guidance, or the use of more personalized learning approaches. The occurrence of a score of 50 six times is a concern in itself, because it shows that many students are at the threshold of completeness. Without follow-up, these students have the potential to regress in the learning process.

DISCUSSION

The findings highlight a significant disparity in students' writing abilities, pointing to an uneven distribution of writing competence among grade VIII students at SMPN 3 Tanjungpinang. The presence of both high and very low scores suggests that while some students benefit from supportive learning environments and strong personal motivation, others face substantial challenges both internally (e.g., lack of skills, interest, or confidence) and externally (e.g., limited resources or parental support).

The fact that 36.3% of students fall into the lower categories suggests a systemic issue that may not be fully addressed through traditional teaching methods. The interview with the teacher revealed that classroom instruction tends to be monotonous, lacking visual media and collaborative activities. This supports the

idea that the teaching approach needs to be more engaging and diversified to reach all learners.

The teacher's suggestion to use genre-based approaches and visual media aligns with best practices in writing instruction, especially in EFL contexts. Genre-based pedagogy helps students understand the structure and purpose of texts, while visual aids can enhance comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, contextual and active learning methods could improve student engagement and help overcome the identified issues such as low interest and difficulty organizing ideas.

The occurrence of multiple borderline scores (e.g., six students scoring exactly 50) is particularly concerning, as it indicates a risk of stagnation or regression if no remedial support is provided. This calls for strategic interventions, including targeted remediation, peer collaboration, personalized feedback, and stronger teacher-parent communication.

In summary, while a portion of students demonstrates promising skills, the overall results indicate a need for pedagogical innovation, enhanced support systems, and a collaborative effort among teachers, school leadership, and families to foster better writing competence across the student body.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the competence of writing recount texts of students in grade VIII of SMP Negeri 3 Tanjungpinang varies greatly, ranging from very good to very low achievement. A total of 31.8% of students showed excellent writing ability, which was thought to be influenced by high learning motivation, reading habits, and conducive environmental support. In contrast, around 36.4% of students were in the poor to very poor category, which indicates that there are still many students who have not mastered text structure, grammar, and vocabulary well.

This finding indicates that there are significant challenges in the learning process of writing recount texts. Factors such as lack of

interest in learning, limited learning facilities at home, monotonous learning methods, and minimal use of visual media and collaborative activities contribute to students' low achievement. Therefore, a more varied, contextual and student-centered learning approach is needed to accommodate different learning needs.

To overcome these problems, teachers need to implement more effective strategies such as the genre-based approach (GBA), the use of serialized picture media, and active learning that involves students directly. In addition, it is necessary to prepare remedial programs for students who are below the standard of mastery, and encourage collaboration between teachers, parents, and the school. By creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment, it is expected that all students can develop optimally in recount text writing skills.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that English teachers at the junior high school level, especially at SMP Negeri 3 Tanjungpinang, apply a more varied and contextualized learning approach in teaching recount text writing. The Genre-Based Approach can be used as the main strategy in guiding students to understand the structure and linguistic features of the text gradually. In addition, the use of visual media such as serial images and short videos is also highly recommended to help students in organizing ideas chronologically before being poured into writing. Cooperative learning such as small group discussions, peer-review, and project-based activities can also increase students' active participation and encourage them to be more confident in writing. Furthermore, schools need to provide remedial programs and intensive guidance for students who show low achievement, with collaborative support from parents and the home environment. To support the sustainability of improving students' writing competence, further research is also recommended to examine the effectiveness of implementing these strategies in a broader context and at different levels of education.

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