

Improving The Students' Writing Skill Through Reading The Recount Text

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out the difficulties and ways of improving the student's writing skills through reading recount texts. The writers apply the descriptive-qualitative method, which focuses on textual data analysis. In this research, the data was collected from second-semester students and focused on reading recount. Text knowledge and students' Writing skills, and then the writers took notes and quotes based on the data analysis. For the analysis, the writers identify, interpret, or describe the findings and then give a conclusion based on the findings. The findings of this study reveal that the second-semester students of Widya Dharma University English Department in the academic year 2022-2023 are quite able to use their reading and recount text knowledge clearly to improve their writing skills. Moreover, the writers found out that most of the students' ways of doing the test are related to type and strategies. In terms of reading knowledge, students have their own difficulties in constructing recount texts; besides that, they are not used to reading recount texts.

Keywords: *Writing Skill, reading skills, recount text.*

Introduction

In this modern era, learning English is very important. Many people communicate using English in academics, work, and everyday life. In fact, a lot of important information that is only available in English, such as health journals and other learning resources, even for advertisements and entertainment, often uses English to communicate with the audience. There are four communication skills that can be learned: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Of the four skills, writing is one of the most important to master.

In 2004, Harmer explained that language is created through writing. Moreover, Graham (2019) added that writing skills are a basic ability. By writing, so much information, feelings, and different points of view can be given. Naturally, writing has become a part of everyone's daily life, and it helps people in many situations. In addition, there are many things that can be expressed through writing.

Therefore, Richard and Renaya (2002) stated that writing is the most challenging skill for students to master. It makes sense since the students need to generate and organize ideas, construct the ideas into a readable text, and pay attention to spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, and grammar as aspects of writing. In other words, developing writing skills requires students to consider the purpose, main idea, and writing style, followed by developing their ideas before organizing them into a draft with appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and language used, finding the mistakes in the writing, and revising the writing to minimize mistakes before making a final version of the writing.

Moreover, to master all these abilities, the students need to read widely since writing is an activity that can be usefully enhanced by working on other skills where reading is included (Nation, 2008). Along with Nation, Maula (2015) stated that to increase vocabulary and confidence in writing, students have to read, since reading is regarded as the most influential factor in writing because people usually find out different writing styles from reading activities, as well as their awareness of grammar and punctuation. In addition, Harl (2013) asserted that reading is acquiring meaning from a text, while writing is the process by which meaning is

produced (as cited in Emak & Ismail, 2021). So, it is clear that reading activities can improve writing skills since both reading and writing skills are related to each other. On the other hand, those who read more will find it easy to construct and organize the ideas.

Moreover, Fachrurrazy (1990) stated that recount text is also a part of writing types (as cited in Rahman et al., 2021). Besides, recount text is usually found in journals, diaries, personal letters, biographies, travel reports, police reports, sports reports, and history, which is the most common study topic. So, recount text is easy to find and simple to understand; also, recount text can be an alternative to improving written communication skills because the more students can recall vocabulary and be aware of grammar and language used while reading recount text, the simpler it is for students to construct ideas for writing.

Thus, it is clear that writing is not an easy skill to master, yet it is also supported by the following skills that can be obtained from the reading process, especially by reading the recount text. However, in reality, the student's writing ability at the beginning of college is still low; students tend to make many mistakes in writing, such as incorrect punctuation, inappropriate tenses, vocabulary choice, grammar mistakes, misspellings, and the inability to construct words into a sentence. According to the reasons above, the writers decided that the students' writing skills at the beginning of college needed to be improved. Therefore, the writers are interested in conducting research on improving students' writing skills through reading the recount text.

Theoretical Review

1. Writing

Harmer (2007) argued that writing is a skill that belongs to the productive category (as cited in Saifullah, 2017). It signifies that the language is produced both orally and in writing. However, people frequently utilize the language for communication purposes. In 2005, Spratt et al. Also claimed that writing is a productive ability that produces rather than receives words. Furthermore, in 2004, Hyland pointed out that writing is a tool to express personal meanings. As a result, students can convey ideas or purposes in writing or create points of view on a certain issue.

Moreover, according to Harmer (2001), there are two perspectives on writing: the product and the process of writing. The ultimate product of writing, such as a report, essay, or tale, should be given special consideration. Thus, the writing must meet specific standards of English writing, such as accurate grammar and the worth of the final output. In other words, when writing, the emphasis is on the act of transforming ideas into words.

So, based on the descriptions above, it is possible to conclude that writing is a process of arranging ideas in which students are challenged to be creative in their use of language skills to produce a written document. Furthermore, the writing process is divided into three stages: pre-writing, writing, and revision.

Pre-writing is the activity in which the writer thinks about and organizes the topic. In the pre-writing step, the students gather ideas about what topic they have to write about by taking notes in order to brainstorm and cluster. The next stage of the writing process is writing. Writing is a step in which the students are able to put their ideas into words on paper. In other words, the thoughts of the students are written at this stage. Revising is the last activity in the writing process. The revising activity has the function of checking the writing to see whether the information has been delivered clearly or not and making sure the information is not ambiguous or confusing.

2. Types of Writing

There are four types of writing: narration, description, exposition, and letter writing (Fachrurrazy 1990, as cited in Rahman et al., 2021).

a. Narration

Narration tells "what happened." In a story or event that follows time order. In addition, narration is the kind of writing found in novels, short stories, and biographies.

b. Description

A description tells how something looks, feels, or sounds. Description talks about such features as size, shape, color, sound, or taste. In addition, descriptions sometimes follow space order.

c. Exposition

Exposition is writing that explains something. It often answers the questions of what, how, and why. The purpose of exposition is to present ideas and make them as clear as possible. In other words, exposition follows a logical order, in which the paragraphs are arranged in such a way that the reader can understand the writer's thoughts. In logical order, the writer guides the reader from one idea to another.

d. Recount

The main function of recounting is to tell past events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. Furthermore, events are usually arranged in a temporal sequence.

3. Writing skills

The capacity to communicate by arranging anything in written form is referred to as writing skills. Furthermore, writing skills are part of productive language skills (Bello, 1997). Writing skills, as well as communication ability, play an important role in promoting language acquisition as students experiment with words, sentences, and large chunks of writing to communicate and reinforce grammar, as well as vocabulary, even though they have an imagination that makes writing activities interesting.

However, in 1975, Heton stated that writing skills were difficult. Writing skills, on the other hand, deal with more than just grammar and vocabulary; they are also a complicated skill combining numerous processes and talents, which might cause difficulty for some kids (Westwood, 2008).

Furthermore, having excellent writing skills is difficult to achieve since two factors must be considered: cohesiveness and coherence. The first is cohesiveness, which refers to the arrangement of sentences, and the second is coherence, which refers to the sequence of thoughts or ideas produced in order to arrange a paragraph or even an essay.

However, various elements, such as personality and extrinsic-social factors, impact students' writing skills (Brown, 2000). The first is a personality element within a person that helps language learning success in some manner, including self-esteem, motivation, and empathy. Meanwhile, the disparities in personality types that exist among students cause each student's writing skills to differ from one another. The second is about extrinsic-social factors and cultural variables, meaning that language brings not only two languages together but also two cultures. However, to improve writing skills, students should read a lot because, in 2016, Krashen mentioned that people do not learn to write by writing but rather by reading. It means reading and writing are substantially related to each other.

Thus, from some of the assertions above, it is clear that writing skills are a skill that takes a long time to develop and can be influenced by some factors, such as personality and extrinsic factors, but they can be improved through reading.

4. Reading

In 2006, Cline et al. claimed that reading involves decoding and comprehending printed text. Reading, on the other hand, is a participatory activity in which the reader engages in an exchange of ideas with the author through the text, according to Burnes & Page in 1991. Furthermore, reading is a collection of communication activities that entail creating sense and obtaining meaning from the written word from the writers to the readers.

In addition, Harris said in 1974 that reading is typically formed around grammatical structures and lexical things. Students can increase their understanding of vocabulary selection from lexical items, language utilized, punctuation, and grammatical awareness by reading a book or text. In addition, "in order to read, we must be able to decode the printed words and also comprehend what we read" (Linse, 2005). As a result, reading entails an interaction between readers and the writer's ideas. As a result, during the reading activity, the reader must employ a variety of reading techniques.

5. Reading Techniques

Reading techniques are strategies for determining the meaning of a text. (Lai et al. 2013). There are four types of reading techniques, such as skimming, scanning, making predictions, and questioning (Adams & Patterson, 2008)

a. Skimming

Skimming is the technique of reading where the reader only reads the major concepts in a section, in order to acquire a general sense of the content of a reading selection. As an example, we read the title of a newspaper to learn about what happens on a daily basis. When readers skim a text, they do it quickly to acquire a rough impression of the subject matter.

b. Scanning

Scanning is defined as quickly glancing over a text to look for a specific piece of information, such as a name, location, or time to acquire an initial judgment of whether the material is appropriate for a certain purpose (Nuttal, 1982). Thus, scanning is a reading strategy used to find particular information based on the reader's needs. Based on that assessment, the writer determined that scanning is an excellent method for obtaining precise information. To put it another way, readers just need to glance at particular areas to get the substance of the text.

c. Making prediction

Making a Prediction is a reading technique that allows readers to guess what will happen next in the text (Thomas, 2005). To make predictions, readers must utilize information from a text, such as titles, headers, illustrations, and diagrams; as well as their own personal experiences, to anticipate what they are going to read.

d. Questioning

Questioning is a reading technique that requires readers to question themselves, the text, or the author in order to connect with the material. Furthermore, questioning strategies assist the reader in clarifying and comprehending what he or she is reading. Asking suitable questions with this method allows successful readers to focus on the most important information in a reading book (Wood et. al, 1995).

6. Recount Text

Recount text can be considered the most common kind of text that can be found as a study topic for English students. The main goal of a recount text is to retell or make a report about an experience in the past; as stated by Anderson (1997), "recount is a text that talks about events happening in the past in a sequence of time." Furthermore, the function of recount text is to recount events with the purpose of either informing or entertaining readers (Coogan, 2006). Thus, recount text usually uses past tense, a striking time sequence, and vocabulary that describes an action to retell experiences or stories that have already happened. The special features of recount text can be found in its sequence of events, in which past events are written chronologically.

a. The Structure of Recount Text

In 2005, Knapp and Watkins stated that recount text is the simplest text type. Formally, a recount text is a sequential text that does little more than sequence a series

of events. However, the overall idea or theme being explored needs to be clear with the generic structure, such as orientation, events, and reorientation (Anderson, 1997).

1) Orientation

The orientation provides all the necessary background information to enable the audience to make sense of the text. To ensure that the orientation is detailed and thorough, use the words (who, what, when, where, and why). Moreover, the recount text gives information about what happened, who or what was involved, when and where the events occurred, and why.

2) Event

In a series of events, the recount text must serve the events chronologically, beginning with the first event, followed by the second event, and ending with the last event. However, the sum of events depends on the creativity of the writer of the text, which must be selected carefully in order to make the text understandable.

3) Reorientation

The final section, or reorientation, concludes the recount by summarizing outcomes or results, evaluating the topic's importance, or offering personal comments or opinions. Reorientation can also predict the future of an event by speculating about what might happen next. However, not all of the recount text is closed by re-orientation; in other words, re-orientation is an optional part of the recount text.

b. Types of Recount Text

Since the function of recount text is not just to retell the events, but also to entertain the readers, recount text is classified based on three categories. Recount text is divided into personal recount, factual recount, and imaginative recount (Kaleen, 2011).

1) Personal Recount

A personal recount is when the writer recounts a personal event in which they were directly involved. Further, personal recount means that the writer is actively involved in the activity of the event; the purpose is to inform and entertain the reader.

2) Factual Recount

A factual recount is a list of records of a certain event. A factual recount can be used to retell a particular incident or event, such as an accident report, eyewitness account, scientific experience, historical event, or newspaper report, whose purpose is to inform the reader about the facts that were going on in the past.

3) Imaginative Recount

An imaginative recount retells an imaginative story through the eyes of a fictional character. It means the event that happened in the text does not occur in life, whose purpose is usually to entertain.

Methodology

In this part, the researcher discusses the way to conduct this research. There are qualitative and descriptive categories. Those categories help the researcher get an overall result from this research. A thorough and theoretical analysis of the methods employed in a field of study is known as a research methodology (Kothari, 2004). Moreover, the act of identifying, explaining, and forecasting occurrences in order to uncover answers and provide the theoretical foundation for knowing which technique or combination of processes may be used in a particular situation is known as a research methodology. In addition, the research methodology will describe the procedure or research method used. Therefore, it is crucial for writers to follow the right processes and any relevant laws when performing their research.

Population and sample are the most important elements of research that will provide information related to the topic under study. In addition, to describe the population and sample used in this research, the writer will explain them in this part, and the data are collected by using the measurement technique; the items to which the participant replies Furthermore, the medium for data collection is a Google Form.

Findings and Discussion

In a study, data analysis is very important to the research findings and discussion. This chapter also presents a discussion of research data obtained from the results of research on semester 2 students through questionnaires. After that, the data collected from the test needs to be analyzed through the following steps:

a. The Category of Students' Writing Skills Knowledge through Reading the Recount Text

To analyze the students' writing skills through reading the recount text, a test was administered to the population of this research on Thursday, June 8th, 2023. The test consists of 37 items. The 37 test items are divided into three parts. Part I consists of two kinds of questions about the students' difficulties in constructing English writing; the first question must be answered by yes or no, while the second question must be answered by the students' difficulties in producing writing, based on their experience. Part II consists of 15 questions about students' opinions about the relationship between reading and writing skills as well as a recount of the text. In order to answer it, the statement agree or disagree must be given by the students honestly. Part III consists of 20 questions about the use of the right vocabulary, arranging the text, and the use of simple past tense to complete a sentence. For Part III, a score will be taken according to the student's understanding ability. In addition, this section was held in order to find out the grades and experiences of students at the beginning of college. Therefore, based on the scoring system described above, the overall score of Section III is 100.

b. Students' Difficulties in Constructing the Writing

In order to identify the students' difficulties in writing, the writers conducted research in the form of a questionnaire through Google Classroom. The tables show the results of the question given. The results described the students' difficulties when constructing English writing.

Table 1. Students' difficulties in writing

The students' difficulties in producing English writing	Percentage of Agreement
It's difficult for me to use punctuation correctly.	30,4%
It's difficult for me to use tenses correctly.	43,5%
My vocabulary mastery is still lacking.	39,1%
I don't really master grammar.	52,2%
I have difficulty constructing the ideas that I will write about.	30,4%
I have difficulty constructing words into paragraphs.	21,7%

According to the problems related to students' writing skills in the table above, it can be identified that the most difficult writing component faced by students is grammar, because 12 (52,2%) students stated that grammar mastery is the difficulty that has to be faced, followed by 43,5%, or 10 students, who stated that the use of tenses correctly has become the difficulty that is part of grammar mastery.

Moreover, students also faced difficulties in constructing the ideas into words that have to develop to become paragraphs, because 30,4% or 7 students stated that the

difficulty in constructing the ideas that they will write has also become a problem, followed by 21,7% or 5 students who stated that the difficulties in constructing words into paragraphs have also become a problem when producing English writing.

c. Reading Recount Text Improves Students' Writing Skills

The act of reading recount text can allegedly improve students' writing skills. Students who like to read tend to produce writing easily, and the way reading the recounted text can improve students' writing skills will be shown in the table below:

Table 2 Students' Reading recount text

Statements	The percentage of agreement
Recount text is the text frequently found in the academic study text.	69,9%
Recount text is one of the techniques that can be used to build writing skills.	78,3%
Reading the recount text can help me use punctuation correctly.	82,6%
Reading the recount text makes me able to improve my awareness of grammar when producing the writing.	78,3%
Reading the recount text improved my vocabulary when producing the writing.	82,6%
By reading the recount text, I could construct the ideas of my writing more easily.	78,3%
By reading the recount text, I could construct the words into paragraphs of my writing easier.	69,6%
By reading the recount text; it can help me improve my writing skills.	87%

According to the statements and the percentage above, it can be clarified that reading recount text can improve students' writing skills by supporting and building some elements in writing since 87%, or 20 students, agree that reading recount text can help improve writing skills. Moreover, recount text is the most common text that can be found in any academic text, and 69.9%, or 16 students, agree that recount text is frequently found in any academic study text, followed by 78.3%, or 18 students, who agree that Recount text can be one of the techniques that can be used to build writing skills.

Furthermore, by reading recount text, students helped to use punctuation correctly, improve vocabulary mastery (according to 82.6% or 19 students), increase grammar awareness (according to 78.3% or 18 students), as well as in terms of construction, because 78.3% or 18 students agreed that the ideas that will be written can be improved by reading recount text, followed by 87% or 20 students who agreed with the statement that reading recount text can help to construct words into paragraphs easier.

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the test results, the writers found that there were several problems experienced by students while doing the test, and most of the students stated that the use of correct grammar has become the biggest difficulty when producing English writing. Moreover, construction matters and vocabulary mastery also became the main difficulties that students faced, because only 30,4%, or 7 students, could arrange the sentence correctly in the construction test, and only 52,2%, or 12 students, could fill the cloze test with correct vocabulary.

Thus, it can be said that students' writing skills are still lacking, where the main score shows that almost all students belong to the poor to average level for the writing skills knowledge through recount text, and only 8 students can do all tests well by belonging to the

good to excellent level. However, all the difficulties faced by students can be overcome by reading a lot of Recounted Text, since the act of reading Recounted Text can support the elements of writing skills.

Conclusion And Suggestion

This chapter describes the conclusions and suggestions of this research. The first part is a conclusion that is formulated from research findings, and the second part is suggestions from the writers regarding how to improve writing skills.

Conclusion

Based on data analysis, the writing skills of second-semester English students at Widya Dharma Pontianak University are still lacking, with the main difficulties faced by students related to grammar, punctuation, and constructing or arranging sentences in the right order. In grammar questions, students often make mistakes in the use of the past participle. In addition, poor interpretation of the meaning of the text also seems to be the main weakness of students, which causes many errors to be produced on tests, including sentences that are arranged irregularly, so that the meaning of paragraphs becomes complicated and difficult to understand.

However, from the study above, students' writing skills can be improved by reading recount texts because the act of reading recount texts builds and supports the elements of writing skills themselves, such as helping students use correct punctuation and vocabulary, as well as constructional terms. In addition, reading recount text can increase awareness of grammar, such as the correct use of tenses, and lastly, it can provide inspiration for ideas in writing itself, thereby increasing students' writing skills.

Suggestion

It is important for students to have good reading abilities in order to support their writing skills. There are many ways to have good reading abilities. One of them is reading recount texts for daily practice. Students can visit the campus library to read the books provided there. Alternatively, if they need a new environment to start reading, they can go to the local library or even read on the internet to save time from going anywhere. In order for students to organize ideas that will be properly written, they must be familiar with how a piece of writing should be structured. For example, a paragraph must begin with a general statement and end with a conclusion. Therefore, to get used to it, students have to read a lot.

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