

Students' Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text

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Abstract

Writing English is not easy to do by students. Students will face several difficulties regarding that issue. Thus, this study aimed to find out the tenth grade students' difficulties in writing narrative text at SMAN 19 Palembang. This study used the qualitative method of a case study. This study was conducted at SMAN 19 Palembang, by using a purposive sampling technique. The data collection technique used was an interview. Interviews were conducted with six students who had difficulty writing narrative texts in the tenth grade at SMAN 19 Palembang. The data obtained from interviews, then analyzed using thematic analysis. This study showed that most students had difficulty writing narrative texts. Difficulty classifications that have been done by students include generic structures, such as, orientation, complication, resolution and re-orientation. Besides the generic structure, students also experience difficulties in grammar, past tense, pronouns, prepositions, composing words, "to be, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Keywords: *Narrative text, Student difficulties, writing*

A. Introduction

In learning English, one of the skills that students need to develop is writing. According to Sinaga (2020), writing is defined as a communication activity to convey information through written language as the medium. In addition, Raimes (1983) argued that writing is one of the skills that students must develop when learning English for three reasons, they are (1) as a learning instrument, (2) a chance to experiment with language, and (3) immerse the students deftly in the new language. Moreover, Megawati et al. (2012) claimed that people now see that writing English is an important skill in the field of communication after realizing the importance of English as one of the world's languages in the era of globalization. Furthermore, Sadiku (2015) said that writing is a gem to pick. Good

writers are always successful in their attempts to communicate their ideas. The ability to write well is a 'hard-copy' indicator of how intelligent or expressive you are (Sadiku, 2015, p.31). Writing skills provide the means to produce language that comes from the mind. In the process of writing, students ideas and feelings must be developed in order to try to produce good sentences in order inform others.

Despite its importance, writing is considered as a difficult skill to master. According to Adas and Bakir (2013) in Laia (2019), the difficulties experienced by students are a lack of vocabulary, not using correct spelling, poorly formed sentences, not receiving proper feedback, not wanting to share their work with their peers, and being unable to distinguish between what they read and what they write when they read their writing aloud. In addition, Harmer (2005) in Sinaga (2020) mentioned that students had difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, handwriting, spelling, layout, and punctuation.

One of the writing texts learned in senior high school level is narrative text. Narrative text is a story or tale and is intended to entertain, inspire, or inform the reader (Hastuti, 2010). According to Lubis (2016), in narrative text, students are taught to write by expressing the contents of ideas both in everyday life and in fiction. Although the ideas written in narrative texts tend to be entertaining, if they are written correctly, they will have a major impact on improving students' learning abilities in the classroom. Muliani (2019) confirmed that in the context of writing a narrative text, the writer must use the correct structure such as orientation, complications, resolution, and re-orientation, so the author must really think about the idea or theme when making a narrative text. Besides that, the author must be able to explain the background of the narrative text, then the characters in the narrative text, until there are regular complications that are written. Furthermore, Joyce and Feez (2000) proposed that narrative has linguistic characteristics such as, specific in role, using transitivity analysis to describe the current situation, using past tense, dialogue, then using descriptive language and finally written in first and third person. In this explanation, it is explained that narrative text aims to entertain the reader, and that in writing narrative text, there are general structures that must be considered and must have linguistic characteristics so that they can write good narrative texts.

In addition, there are several studies related to students' difficulties in writing narrative texts. The first research was conducted by Laia (2019) the results showed that most of the students had difficulty compiling narrative texts. Grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and except handwriting, have all been classified by students as difficult areas.

Then, Falihah et al research (2022) which revealed that students had difficulty with grammar and lacked vocabulary when writing narrative texts. The last one is from Sinaga (2020) which discovered difficulties in writing narrative texts based on generic structures, including grammatical, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and capitalization. Students also had difficulties with lexicogrammatical features, including difficulties in using verb 2 (Past Tense), Adverbs of Time, and Adjectives.

The difference between this research and previous research is the level of students, the number of students and the research location. First, in this study, the authors used students in class X as a sample, while previous researchers used students in class VIII as a sample. Second, in this study, the authors used six students, whereas in previous studies, they used 20 students. And finally, in this study, researchers conducted research at Palembang, while previous researchers were outside Palembang, in South Sumatra.

B. Research Methodology

Qualitative design was applied in this study. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative analysis is the best method for dealing with research problems where the elements need to be studied but are not well understood. The data from this study will be examined and presented using the method of definition in qualitative analysis. Where the researcher used a descriptip qualitative because the researcher describe and ekplaned a students difficulties in writing narrative text in the tenth grade of SMAN 19 Palembang.

This study was conducted at SMAN 19 Palembang, by using a purposive sampling technique. According to Creswell (2012), purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling strategy in which participants are chosen because they are accessible and willing to participate in the study, tenth graders of SMAN 19 Palembang will be selected because they have learned to write narrative texts in the odd semester. Then, class X.2 will be chosen based on the teacher's recommendation that the class has the lowest average score in writing.

In this study, a homogeneous sample will be used for sampling. According to Patton (2002), homogeneous sampling is a purposive sampling technique that aims to achieve a homogeneous sample: namely a sample that has units (such as people, cases, etc.) that have the same (very similar) characteristics. Homogeneous samples are often selected when the research questions are addressed specifically to the characteristics of a particular interest group, which are then examined in detail. Thus, six students who are considered as lower achievers in

writing of class X.2 will be chosen based on the teacher’s recommendation.

The data collection technique that will be used in this study is interviews. An interview is a method for gathering data that entails questioning respondents verbally, either individually or in groups. According to Creswell (2009), an interview is a sort of study where the researcher documents the responses provided by the research subjects. The answers to the questions posed during the interview may be recorded, written, or a combination of the two.

In this study, data will be gathered through interviews, and information will be gleaned by using thematic analysis. The researcher started to recognize and derive broad themes from the interviews by utilizing thematic analysis to analyze and use the data. According to Alhojailan (2012), a type of analysis utilized in qualitative research, thematic analysis examines categories and identifies themes that are pertinent to the data.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

After analyzing the data from the interviews, the researcher tried to answer the research problem regarding the tenth grade students’ difficulties in writing narrative texts at SMAN 19 Palembang. Six students, namely PBC, MPI, DIK, MTR, MA, and MKS. Were chosen as participants based on the result of the questioner which showed that these six students encountered difficulties in writing narrative text. This study was focused on investigating students’ difficulties in writing narrative text. The summary of the findings is:

Table 1

Investigating students’ difficulties in writing narrative text

Themes	Codes
1. Students’ difficulty with the generic structure in writing narrative text:	
Orientation	The students encountered difficulty in writing down information about characters, the time and place of the texts.
Complication	The students encountered difficulties in writing the complications since they were confused about what happened in the story.
Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students encountered difficulty in the resolution section, because they had to write down the problem solving. - Some students did not understand the concept of resolution.
Reorientation.	The students experienced difficulties because in this section they were confused of what to write about the characters of the story.
2. Students'Difficulties with Writing Narrative Text	
Grammar	When writing narrative texts, the students encountered difficulty in using correct grammar.

Difficulties in Using Past Tense	- In writing narrative texts, the students explained that they did not understand the concept of Past Tense. - The students were confused on the changes of verb.
Difficulty in Using Pronouns	- When the students were using pronouns, They explained that they did not understand pronouns. - A few students explained that when they wrote narrative texts, they often ignored pronouns in their writing.
Difficulty in Using Prepositions	The students encountered difficulty on the concept and use of prepositions when they write narrative texts.
Difficulty in Composing Words	- In writing narrative texts, the students experienced difficulties in using the correct word order. - The students often did not have confidence in what they wrote.
Difficulty in Using To Be	- In using "To Be" in writing narrative texts, the students experienced difficulties because they don't understand the concept and usage of "to be" - In writing narrative texts the Students did not pay attention the use of "To Be"
Difficulty in Vocabulary	- In writing narrative texts, the students encountered difficulty with vocabulary because they do not memorize a lot of it. - Many students were confused about using the right terms.
Difficulty in Punctuation	- They just wrote without paying attention to punctuation. - The students experienced difficulties in placing the correct periods or commas.

The themes and codes obtained from the qualitative data listed in Table 4.1 are explained to determine students' difficulties in writing narrative texts in the tenth grade at SMAN 19 Palembang. It was found that students had difficulties writing narrative texts.

2. Discussion

The discussion of this research is based on the results of interviews that aim to find out students' difficulties in writing narrative texts at SMAN 19 Palembang. The research results are discussed as follows:

The students perceived difficulties with the generic structure of narrative texts, such as orientation, complication, resolution and re-orientation. First, the student perceived difficulties with writing the orientation section of narrative text. This occur since the students experience difficulties in writing down information about the character, time and place of the text which was caused by the students' lack of understanding of the stories they wrote. Therefore, in writing narrative text the students just write without knowing what to write in the orientation section. Therefore, the students experience difficulties with orientation due to the students' lack of understanding of this part of the orientation. Thus, in writing the students have difficulty writing

down some of the information that must be written when writing narrative texts. This result is supported by Hartati (2019) who argued that the students had difficulty in writing down some of the information in the orientation, such as the characters, time and place in the story because of students' lack of understanding of the orientation. In addition, a study by Sulisty (2013) found that students had difficulty with the orientation section due to students' lack of understanding of narrative structure so the students had difficulty in writing down the information in the orientation section. Those studies are in line with the data obtained that shows that when the students write narrative text, they perceive difficulties in the orientation section because they do not understand the meaning of the orientation and find it difficult to write down the information in the orientation.

Second, based on the interviews, the tenth grade students of SMAN 19 Palembang perceived difficulties with complications sections when they write narrative texts. It occurs because the students do not understand what to write in the complications section. This is due to the students' lack of understanding of the concept of complications in writing which caused them to write without paying attention to problems in the complications section of the story. This result is supported by Hartati (2019) that the students wrote without writing down information about the problems in the stories they wrote. Furthermore, a study by Sulisty (2013) found that the students had difficulties in writing the complications section because they did not understand the concepts involved in writing narrative texts in the complications section which made them unable to write down the problematic information that occurs in the story.

Third, it was found that the students encountered difficulty with narrative text writing in the resolution section. The students cannot write down the problem solving and they did not understand the concept of resolution. This is due to the lack of interest in learning and the fact on the students' lack of knowledge on the things that must be written in the resolution section. According to Hartati (2019), in writing narrative text, the students do not write information about how to solve the problem at the end of the story (happy or sad ending) this is because the students do not understand what they have to write in the resolution section. Similarly, a study by Sulisty (2013) found that the students perceived difficulty in writing narrative texts in the resolution section because of the students' lack of understanding of the elements that must be written in the generic structure, especially in the resolution section. So in this section, the students did not write the information in the stories they were writing correctly. Those studies above were in line with the data obtained that the students have difficulty writing resolutions

when writing narrative texts because they do not understand the concept of resolutions, so they cannot write the ending of the story.

Fourth, the students perceived difficulties with the re-orientation section of narrative text. This occurs due to the students' lack of understanding of re-orientation so in this section, they find it difficult to re-express clear information at the peak of the story. The Students are confused to rewrite the last condition in the story. This is because students do not understand the concept of re-orientation. This result is supported by Hartati (2019) that in writing re-orientation, the students experience difficulties in writing conclusions in stories because they do not understand what they should write. In addition, a study by Sulistyono (2013) found that the students had difficulty in rewriting the re-orientation section due to the students' lack of knowledge about the concept of re-orientation. Those studies were in line with the data obtained that the students perceived difficulties in writing re-orientation when writing narrative texts because students do not understand re-orientation. Therefore, when writing narrative texts, the students just write without paying attention to the correct order of the generic structure.

Fifth, the students perceived difficulty in writing narrative texts on the use of grammar. This is because they do not know the type of grammar used when they write narrative texts due to their lack of knowledge about the concepts of grammar and how to use the correct type of grammar. According to Afriani (2019), the students' difficulties with their command of grammar because they still have a very limited comprehension of grammar in relation to tenses, especially in the Simple Past Tense. It is brought on by the fact that English is not their first language. Additionally, students' lack of sufficient knowledge of English sentence structure bring about the problem. Similarly, a study by Laia (2019) found that students experienced difficulties in using correct grammar in writing narrative texts, such as when they could not determine the tenses used when writing narrative texts. Those studies were in line with the data obtained that shows the students' experience difficulties with grammar when writing narrative texts because of their lack of knowledge about grammar and the use of grammar to write narrative texts.

Sixth, the students perceived difficulty in using the Past Tense when writing narrative texts. In writing narrative texts, the students never pay attention on the use of the Past Tense in narrative text because they do not know the concept of Past Tense and are confused of the changes in the verbs. Muliani et al. (2019) proposed the students' difficulty in using Past Tense because they don't notice how the verb tense in the Past simple and continuous. In addition, a study by Laia (2019) found that the students experience difficulties in Past Tense because they

tend to use verb 1 (infinitive) when expressing past activities. In fact, most students find it difficult to use verb 2 (past tense) in writing narrative texts. Those studies were in line with the data obtained, which showed that students experience difficulties in the Past Tense because they do not understand how to use the Past Tense in writing narrative texts.

Seventh, the students perceived difficulty in using pronouns during the process of writing narrative texts. This is because the students do not understand pronouns, so when writing narrative texts, they often ignore pronouns in their writing. In writing narrative text, the students are often confused about choosing the right pronoun as a subject or object in a narrative sentence. According to Falihah et al. (2022) students experience difficulties using pronouns when writing narrative texts since they often neglect the use of pronouns when writing narrative texts. Similarly, a study by Laia (2019) found that students perceived difficulties in using pronouns, the majority of students have difficulty with pronouns because they are unable to distinguish between pronouns used as subjects, objects, and possessive pronouns. Thus, it can be concluded that the students do not understand pronouns, thus, when writing narrative texts, they just write without paying attention to the pronouns in them.

Eighth, the students perceived difficulties in using prepositions when writing narrative texts in class. The results of the study revealed that the students had difficulty with prepositions, namely that they did not understand the concept and use of prepositions when writing narrative texts because these prepositions had not been learned in their previous classes. This causes limitations for students to understand the meaning and function of prepositions in writing narrative text. The students have difficulty in determining the right prepositions to describe the location, time, or relationship between objects in the story. According to Ismayanti et al. (2020), the students often write prepositions that are not specific and that they experience difficulties in using prepositions because they do not understand the use of prepositions. In addition, a study by Laia (2019) found that the students experience difficulty in using the correct prepositions and tend to use inappropriate prepositions in writing narrative text because they do not understand prepositions well. As a result, the students experience difficulties in writing narrative texts in the prepositions section due to their lack of understanding of the concepts and use of prepositions.

Ninth, the students perceived difficulties with the arrangement of correct word order when they write narrative text. The results of the study revealed that in writing narrative texts, the students had difficulty in composing the correct words due to a lack of interest in their learning and improving their writing skills. According to Mega (2022), the students experience

difficulties in composing words when writing narrative texts due to the lack of vocabulary that students have which causes them to have difficulty putting words in the correct order. Similarly, a study by Laia (2019) found that the students have difficulty in composing words into sentences because of their lack of interest in learning to compose words in order. Those studies were in line with the data obtained that the students perceived difficulties because they are unable to compose the correct words and because there is a lack of interest in their learning and improving their skills, especially their writing skills.

Tenth, the tenth graders of SMAN 19 Palembang perceived difficulty in using To Be when writing narrative texts. This is because of the students' lack of understanding about To Be. In the interviews, the students said that To Be was very difficult to understand when it was studied in class. According to Laia (2019), the students have difficulty in using To Be in narrative texts, since they had difficulty in distinguishing between "present to be" and "past to be". The use of "to be" in writing narrative text is not an easy thing for students to do. As a result, the tenth grade students perceived difficulty with "to be" when writing narrative texts because of their lack of concentration and understanding in learning, especially in learning about "to be" in class.

Eleventh, from the results of the study, the students perceived difficulty in writing narrative texts in term of vocabulary. The results of the study revealed that the students had difficulty in writing narrative texts because of their lack of vocabulary. This is due to the lack of interest in learning English among students, who are too lazy to memorize English vocabulary. According to Adas and Bakir (2013), in learning English, the students have a limited vocabulary which cause them to use the same word repeatedly. Furthermore, a study by Laia (2019) found that the students' vocabulary is very limited, so they are unable to construct sentences correctly. Those are the reasons the students find it difficult to write narrative texts in English due to a lack of vocabulary. Those studies were in line with the data obtained that the students lack of interest in learning English causes students to lack vocabulary when writing and students tend to use the same word repeatedly when writing narrative texts.

Lastly, based on the results of the study, it was found that the students perceived difficulties in writing narrative texts when punctuating. This occurs due to the lack of understanding of the role and function of punctuation marks in writing a sentence. Thus, the students just write without knowing that punctuation can affect meaning, intonation, and sentence structure. Similarly, a study by Laia (2019) found that students have difficulty determining the use of punctuation marks, such as commas and points. In this case, students

use 'comma' and 'period' in the wrong positions. That is, they use the punctuation marks incorrectly. In addition, a study by Telaumbanua (2020) found that the difficulty students have with punctuation marks is that they do not understand what they are writing, which cause the students to encounter difficulty in placing punctuation marks. From the statement above, it can be concluded that the students have difficulty in placing correct punctuation marks, thus they just write without paying attention to punctuation. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that students experience difficulties in writing narrative texts. Students have difficulty writing narrative texts because of their lack of understanding of writing, thus making them more lazy to improve their writing skills.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusions

Based on the results of data analysis using thematic analysis, the researcher found information about the students' difficulties in writing narrative texts at SMAN 19 Palembang. The findings were that in writing narrative texts, students still experienced difficulties with the generic structure of narrative texts, such as: orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation. In addition to the generic structure, students also experience difficulties with grammar, past tense, pronouns, prepositions, the correct word order, "to be", vocabulary, and punctuation.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions described above, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions. The researcher hopes that these suggestions will be useful, especially for the English teacher and for the students.

Based on these problems, the writers suggests to the teacher, the teacher must explain how to write narrative texts with more attention to every detail. The details referred to by the researcher include the generic structure of narrative text, grammar, past tense, pronouns, prepositions, composing words, using "to be", vocabulary and punctuation. Besides that, the teacher must motivate students to enjoy writing by providing interesting writing topics and creating a pleasant learning atmosphere where students feel comfortable so that they are motivated to learn and the teacher must give awards to students who show significant progress. In addition for students, it is suggested that students be more active and maintain motivation in learning to write narratives by practicing writing in their spare time. In practicing writing,

students must pay attention to the rules of correct writing. And for other research, they can try to find out about difficulties in writing other types of text. such as, descriptive, argumentative, persuasive, procedure or recount text. They may try to investigate difficulties in speaking, reading or listening. They may also conduct a similar study at other levels of education, such as junior high school or in university level.

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