AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' RECOUNT TEXT WRITING ABILITY AT SMK TELKOM 2 MEDAN

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kemampuan menulis teks recount dalam bahasa Inggris untuk siswa kelas 10 di SMK Telkom 2 Medan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini berfokus pada empat aspek utama dalam penilaian menulis, yaitu struktur, tata bahasa, kosakata, dan kohesi. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes menulis, observasi kelas, dan kuesioner yang melibatkan 22 siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan menulis siswa secara keseluruhan berada pada kategori "baik" dengan nilai rata-rata 79,3. Aspek struktur merupakan aspek yang paling dikuasai, karena sebagian besar siswa mampu menerapkan organisasi teks recount dengan baik dan benar. Penggunaan kosakata juga sudah cukup baik, meskipun beberapa siswa masih menunjukkan variasi kata yang terbatas. Namun, aspek tata bahasa menjadi kelemahan utama, di mana banyak siswa yang mengalami kesulitan dalam menggunakan tenses dan konstruksi kalimat. Aspek kohesi cukup dikuasai, meskipun masih ada beberapa siswa yang kurang lancar dalam menghubungkan ide antar kalimat. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun siswa memiliki kinerja yang baik dalam aspek struktur dan kosakata, penekanan pembelajaran lebih lanjut diperlukan pada aspek tata bahasa dan kohesi untuk meningkatkan kualitas tulisan secara keseluruhan.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Menulis Bahasa Inggris, Recount Text, Penguasaan Tata Bahasa.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the ability to write recount texts in English for grade 10th students at SMK Telkom 2 Medan. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research focuses on four main aspects in writing assessment, namely structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion. Data were collected through writing tests, classroom observations, and questionnaires involving 22 students. The results showed that the students' overall writing ability was in the "good" category with an average score of 79.3. The structure aspect was the most mastered aspect, as most students were able to apply the recount text organization correctly. The use of vocabulary was also quite good, although some students still showed a limited variety of words. However, the grammar aspect was the main weakness, where many students had difficulty in using tenses and sentence construction. The cohesion aspect was moderately mastered, although there were still some students who lacked fluency in connecting ideas between sentences. The study concludes that although students performed well in the structure and vocabulary aspects, further learning emphasis is needed on the grammar and cohesion aspects to improve the overall quality of writing.

Keywords: English Writing Ability, Recount Text, Grammar Mastery.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most crucial skills in English language learning, enabling students to express their thoughts, ideas, and experiences effectively. It plays a fundamental role in developing communication, critical thinking, and academic success. Mastering writing skills allows students to convey their messages clearly, whether for academic purposes or professional careers.

Brown (2000) asserts that writing is a cognitive process. When compared to other talents like speaking, listening, and reading, many people believe that writing is the most challenging. Writing appears to be the most challenging English language talent, requiring a lengthy process from idea generation to the finished product. Even though writing is the hardest English skill to master, it is crucial.

Students must understand language elements including grammar, vocabulary, and content in order to produce quality writing. According to Harmer (2001), students should take into account a number of writing elements in order to produce quality writing, including content, vocabulary, grammatical structure, and writing mechanics, including punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. A well-written book employs proper grammar.

One of the text types taught in the English curriculum at SMK is recount text. This type of text is essential because it helps students organize and present past experiences in a logical and structured manner. According to Hyland (2003), recount is about telling what happened. It so clear that recount is retell about the experience that had been happened in the past. In writing recount text, students must be able to provide clear information and choose the right words so that readers can understand the information well. In fact, being able to write recount text in English properly and correctly is not an easy thing for the 10th grade students of SMK Telkom 2 Medan.

Writing recount texts is an essential skill that students are required to master as part of their language development. Recount texts, which focus on retelling events in a chronological sequence, pose significant challenges for many learners. These challenges often stem from various factors, such as limited vocabulary, inadequate understanding of text structure, and difficulties in organizing thoughts coherently. For many students, writing recounts involves not only the technical aspects of grammar and punctuation but also the cognitive demand of recalling and effectively communicating personal experiences.

Several studies have examined the obstacles that students encounter when writing recount texts. According to Aziz (2019), "students often struggle with sequencing events in a logical order, leading to confusion in their written texts" (p. 45). Moreover, some learners experience anxiety or lack of confidence when tasked with writing recount texts, particularly when they feel their experiences may not be interesting or worth sharing. As stated by Siti and Kurniawan (2021), "students' lack of self-confidence often leads to simplified, unengaging recounts, which fail to capture the essence of the events they are narrating" (p. 120).

This study aims to analyze the recount text writing ability of students at SMK Telkom 2 Medan. It will focus on identifying common errors, evaluating students' strengths and weaknesses, and exploring possible solutions to improve their writing skills. The findings from this research are expected to contribute to the enhancement of English writing instruction, particularly in recount text writing, and support students in achieving better proficiency in written communication. Objectives of the study is analyzing students' recount text writing

ability and identify common errors in recount text.

Writing is one of the essential language skills in learning English. According to Harmer (2004), writing is a process that involves generating, organizing, drafting, and revising ideas into a structured text. It requires students to develop grammatical accuracy, vocabulary mastery, and coherence to effectively communicate their ideas. Recount text is a type of text that retells past events in a chronological order. This text type typically follows a specific structure: orientation, events, and re-orientation. Writing a recount text involves several essential components to ensure clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy. Three key components are Grammar, Cohesion, and Vocabulary.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study will use a qualitative research method to gain a deeper understanding of students' recount text writing abilities. A qualitative approach allows for a more nuanced exploration of the students' writing processes and experiences (Creswell, 2014). The type of this research is a case study and uses a descriptive design. It focuses on a particular phenomenon in the school. It is conducted to investigate a condition or other phenomenon of which the result represented in a report. Therefore this study is called analysis because it tries to analyze objectively about students' recount text writing ability. Grammar, cohesion, and vocabulary are the focus of the study.

The research will be conducted for the tenth grade at SMK Telkom 2 Medan with 22 pupils. There are 8 male students and 14 female students. This study will focus in one class, where students are given the task of writing a recount text to be analyzed based on language aspects, structure, and common errors.

Researchers use observation, writing tests and questionnaires. Observation in this study aims to directly observe students' ability to write recount texts and analyze the results of their writing. The observation method is used to obtain accurate data on how students compose recount texts, the difficulties they face, and the language aspects that become obstacles in the writing process. According Creswell (2012), Observation is the process of collecting direct and open information through observation at the research location.

The writing test in this study was used to measure students' abilities in writing recount texts. This test aims to evaluate the extent to which students can develop recount text according to the correct language rules and text structure. This analysis helps in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the students and provides an overview of the aspects that need to be improved in learning to write recount text. A questionnaire is a list of questions used by obtaining information from the respondent. The researcher could find the cause of students' difficulties in writing recount text. the researcher uses a closed questionnaire as a type of questionnaire, for example, the researcher gives a question about "Have you ever written a recount text before?", then students are given choices yes or no.

According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning individuals assign to a social problem, emphasizing description, interpretation, and the context of the phenomenon. The data were analyzed through the following procedures is collection and selection of students' texts and assessment based on recount text criteria. The collection and selection of students' texts were purposively chosen to represent a score category of writing abilities (excellent, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and

fail) allowing for a rich and varied analysis.

Table 1. Category of Students' Writing

No	Score	Level of Students' Ability
1	91-100	Excellent
2	81-90	Good
3	71-80	Satisfactory
4	61-70	Unsatisfactory
5	Below 60	Fail

Assessment Based on Recount Text Criteria: structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion. The researcher analyzed whether the students followed the generic structure of recount texts, namely orientation, series of events, and re-orientation (Derewianka, 1990). Special attention was given to the use of past tense, sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, and verb forms. As stated by Hyland (2003), "grammatical control is essential for conveying meaning clearly in writing."

The analysis focused on the variety, appropriateness, and precision of the words used. Limited vocabulary or repeated word usage was noted, following Nation (2001), who emphasized that "vocabulary knowledge strongly influences the quality of a written text."

The researcher identified the use of cohesive devices such as time conjunctions (e.g., then, after that, finally), reference, and lexical ties that contribute to text coherence. Halliday and Hasan (1976) highlight cohesion as "the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which provide links between various parts of a text."

The research also analyzes the errors made by students in writing recount texts. According to Ellis (1997), error analysis is "a procedure used to identify, describe, and explain errors made by learners in their use of a second language." Identification of errors Each text was carefully examined to find errors

in four main aspects: Structure, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Findings

The aim of this study was to analyze the students' ability in writing recount texts at SMK Telkom 2 Medan. The data were collected from 22 students of the 10th grade through a writing test in which they were asked to write a recount text based on their personal experience. The analysis focused on five aspects of writing: structure, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion based on the scoring table adapted from Suryani (2020).

Table 2. Score of Students Recount Text Writing Ability

No	Name	Structure (30)	Grammar (30)	Vocabulary (20)	Cohesion (20)	Total (100)
1	FR	30	26	20	16	92
2	HM	30	24	20	17	91
3	AB	29	24	20	17	90
4	YS	28	22	18	16	84
5	NA	28	21	20	15	84
6	DJ	27	20	20	17	84
7	MA	27	21	19	16	83
8	AZ	26	20	19	18	83
9	AN	28	20	18	17	83
10	FA	26	20	18	18	82
11	AA	27	19	18	18	82
12	SM	27	18	19	17	81
13	RA	26	19	18	17	80
14	KE	26	18	17	17	78
15	CJ	25	19	18	15	77
16	RE	24	18	18	16	76
17	SH	23	18	17	17	75
18	FN	23	17	17	16	73
19	EP	22	17	15	17	71
20	LM	22	17	15	16	70
21	NA	20	16	14	15	65
22	AG	18	15	13	15	61
Total Score						1.745
Mean Score						79.3

From the table above, it can be seen that the 22 students obtained various scores ranging from the highest to the lowest with an average score of 79.3 where the student who obtained the highest score was FR with a total score of 92 with the acquisition of structure 30,

grammar 26, vocabulary 20, cohesion 16. While the lowest score was AG with a total score of 61 with the acquisition of structure 18, grammar 15, vocabulary 13, cohesion 15.

Tabel 3. Level of Student's Achievements

Score	Level	Frequency	Percentage
91-100	Excellent	2	9.09%
81-90	Good	10	45.45%
71-80	Satisfactory	7	31.82%
61-70	Unsatisfactory	3	13.64%
Below 60	Fail	-	-
Total			**100%**

From the table above, it can be seen that the results of analysis of students' writing score in recount text found 2 students in the excellent category (9,09%), 10 students in the good category (45,45%), 7 students in the satisfactory category (31,82%), 3 students in the unsatisfactory category (13,64%), and there is no category of students who fail.

After correcting the students' written tests, it can be said that in general the students' ability to write recount text is in the good category. The average score of students is 79.3. This can be seen from the larger number of students who are in the good category. There were 2 students (9.09%) scored 91-100 (excellent), 10 students (45.45%) scored 81-90 (good), 7 students (31.82%) scored 71-80 (satisfactory), 3 students (13.64%) scored 61-70 (unsatisfactory), and no students scored below 60 (fail).

After trying to focus more on analyzing students' abilities in each aspect or writing in terms of structure, grammar, vocabulary and cohesion. Students' abilities in each of these aspects fall into the good to unsatisfactory category. This can be seen from the number of students who are in the good to unsatisfactory category the most

compared to other categories. Furthermore, as for the results of analyzing each aspect in terms of structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion.

From observation of the data structure, the highest score (30) was obtained by (FR and HM) and the lowest score (18) was obtained (AG). Most students obtained a structure score above 24, which indicates a fairly good understanding of writing structure. 8 out of 22 students (about 36%) got a structure score ≥28, which means that their ability to organize the writing structure is very good. Only 2 students (about 9%) scored below 22, indicating the need for coaching in structuring paragraphs and writing logic. Structure is an aspect that is quite mastered by students, this shows that students have been able to organize ideas logically and systematically in their writing. However, there are still a small number of students who need more assistance in understanding the elements of text structure such as idea introduction, paragraph development, and coherent closing.

Most of the grammar scores are in the range of 17-20, indicating that some students have understood the use of basic grammar but there are still frequent minor errors in the use of sentence structure, tenses, subject-verb agreement, and the use of conjunctions. The highest grammar score (26) was achieved by only 1 student (FR) and the lowest score (15) was obtained by a student (AG) indicating that only a few students were able to write with almost no grammatical errors. Students with grammar below 18 points (7 out of 22 students) need significant improvement in the grammar aspect, as they most likely still have difficulty forming complex sentences or using correct formal grammar. The grammar aspect is still a challenge for students, many students showed moderate mastery, with some common errors still occurring frequently.

From the analysis of the vocabulary aspect, the highest score (20) was achieved by 5 students (FR, HM, AB, DJ, MA) and the lowest score (13) was obtained by 1 student (AG). Most students (14 out of 22) scored between 17-20, indicating that they have a fairly good command of vocabulary and are able to use a variety of words according to the context. Students with a score of 20 have shown the ability to use vocabulary that is appropriate, diverse, and in accordance with the genre of writing. Students who scored ≤15 (as many as 4 students) may have difficulty in choosing accurate words or tend to use vocabulary that is too simple or repetitive. The vocabulary aspect is generally quite well mastered by students. However, there are still some students who need to enrich their academic vocabulary and improve their ability to choose the right words according to the context.

From the cohesion assessment most students scored between 16-18, indicating that they already the application of cohesive writing techniques, such as the use of conjunctions, reference words, repetition of keywords, and word substitution. The highest score (18) was achieved by 6 students (FA, AN, AA, RA, SH, EP) and the lowest score (13) was obtained by only one student (AG), indicating difficulty in maintaining relationships between sentences and between paragraphs. The cohesion aspect was mastered quite well by students, as seen from the dominance of scores 17 and 18. There are still some students who need to improve their ability to connect ideas in the text to make their writing more coherent and easy to understand.

Discussion

The results of the analysis of the 10th grade pupils writing ability demonstrated that the students' authoring of recount text ability were at a fairly good level overall. The assessment was conducted based on four main aspects, namely writing structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion. Each aspect contributes to the total score with a predetermined proportion: structure (30%), grammar (30%), vocabulary (20%), and cohesion (20%). The highest total score was obtained by student (FR) with 92 points, while the lowest score was obtained by (AG) with 61 points. The overall average score was 79.3, which falls into the "good" category. The structure aspect showed the best performance among the four aspects analyzed. Most students were able to organize their writing with a logical and systematic flow. This was shown by the number of students who scored ≥28 out of 30 points. This means that they have understood how to build an essay structure, starting from the introduction of the topic, the development of the main idea, to the appropriate conclusion. However, some low-scoring students still showed deficiencies in consistency between paragraphs as well as difficulty maintaining the overall flow of writing.

Meanwhile, the grammar aspect is the weakest aspect. Grammar scores ranged from 15 to 26, with most students in the 17-20 score range. Common errors include inappropriate use of tenses, incorrect subject-verb agreement, and ineffective sentence structure. These problems indicate that students' understanding of grammar still needs to be improved, especially in its application in the context of writing recount texts.

The vocabulary aspect showed satisfactory results. Five students obtained a perfect score (20 out of 20), and most of the others were in the range of 17-19. This shows that students have the ability to use varied, appropriate, and contextually appropriate vocabulary. However, there are some students who still use limited, repetitive, or inappropriate vocabulary, which can reduce the quality of the message conveyed in their writing.

The cohesion aspect, most students scored quite well, in the range of 16-18 out of 20 points. This shows that they are able to maintain the connection between sentences and paragraphs by using cohesion tools such as conjunctions, repetition of keywords, and reference words. Students who scored low on this aspect may not be accustomed to building a strong continuity of ideas in their written texts.

Overall, it can be concluded that students have shown relatively good mastery in writing recount texts, especially in terms of structure and vocabulary. However, weaknesses are still evident in the aspects of grammar and cohesion. Therefore, improved teaching in the form of repeated writing exercises, providing specific feedback, as well as strengthening the understanding of grammar and the use of cohesion devices are highly recommended to improve the overall quality of students' writing.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the writing ability of 10th grade recount text students at SMK Telkom 2 Medan. The study used descriptive qualitative method, which focused on four main aspects of writing assessment, namely: structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion. Data were collected through writing tests, observations, and questionnaires involving 22 students as research subjects.

Based on the results of the study, the average score of students' writing ability is 79.3, which is classified in the good category. The highest score obtained was 92, and the lowest score was 61. The analysis showed variations in students' abilities in the four aspects assessed.

Structure is the aspect that students master the most. Most students were able to organize their writing logically and systematically according to the recount text structure (orientation, events, re-

orientation). About 36% of the students scored ≥28 out of 30, which shows that they understand how to structure paragraphs well.

Grammar is the weakest aspect. Many students had difficulty in using tenses, subject-verb agreement, and correct sentence structure. Only one student achieved a high score (26 out of 30), while most were in the 17-20 range. This indicates the need for improvement in grammar mastery, especially in the context of writing.

Vocabulary was generally quite good. Five students achieved a perfect score (20 out of 20), and most other students scored 17-19. This shows that students are able to use appropriate and varied vocabulary. However, there are still some students who tend to use limited and repetitive vocabulary.

Cohesion also showed quite good results. Most students scored 16-18 out of 20. They were able to use cohesion tools such as conjunctions, reference words, and repetition of keywords to maintain relationships between sentences and between paragraphs. However, there are still some students who are not used to building a complete continuity of ideas in their writing.

Overall, it can be concluded that the ability to write recount texts of SMK Telkom 2 Medan students is generally good, especially in the aspects of structure and vocabulary. However, the grammar and cohesion aspects still require further attention and coaching. Therefore, it is suggested that writing lessons should focus on repeated practice, providing specific feedback, and strengthening the understanding of grammar and the use of cohesion tools to improve the overall quality of students' writing.

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