

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Writing

1. The Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the language skills that students need to master. It is an activity of presenting something in written form. It is also an activity of expressing, developing, and organizing ideas into written form (Abbas & Herdi, 2018). There are some ways for people to share their opinion or ideas to the world, one of them is writing. Writing helps people present their idea, deliver their thought, and express their opinion on an issue. Moreover, it also helps people deliver information through written materials. Therefore, writing is categorized as a communication tool.

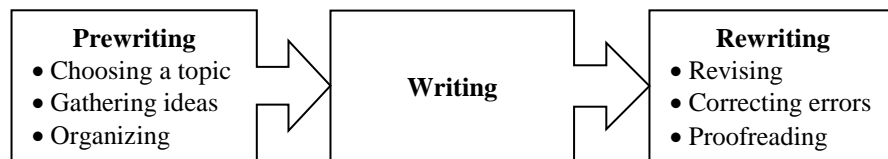
In language teaching, writing is basically a practice for recording speech and strengthening grammatical and lexical features of language (Brown, 2003). In education, writing is used as one of the tools to assess students' language usage. Through writing, students learn to express themselves (ideas, thoughts, opinions, etc.) clearly. They also learn to arrange and develop their ideas logically. They learn to communicate their understanding of a particular thing through written form. Furthermore, through writing, students learn to use correct language grammatical and lexical rules. Therefore, writing is a way of critical thinking, understanding,

extending students' learning, improving students' communication skills, and training them as a future professional in particular work fields.

2. The Process of Writing

The writing process is generally the same for all writers. They gather ideas, organize what they want to say, write the draft, revise and edit it. However, it can be different depending on the readers, the purpose, the content, and the situation of the writing (Kendall & Khuon, 2006; Brown & Hood, 1989). According to Clouse (2006), writing process is generally divided into three main process, namely prewriting, writing, and rewriting.

Diagram 2.1
The Process of Writing



a. Prewriting

Prewriting is performing activities before writing the first draft. It is the process of choosing a topic and collecting information about it (Oshima, 2005). In prewriting, a writer decides what he/she wants to write and plans what he/she is going to write. Prewriting process is divided into three steps, which are choosing a topic, gathering ideas, and organizing (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005).

1) Choosing a topic

Before writing, you need to choose a topic. Topic is main idea. Topic is the subject of your writing (Anker, 2010). It is what you are writing about. In choosing a topic, you have to make sure that the topic is manageable, means that it is not too general or too narrow. A good topic is a topic that interests you and something that you can talk about.

2) Gathering ideas

After deciding a topic, the next step is collecting information and developing ideas (Oshima, 2005). This is where you think about what you will write about the topic. In this step, you can make a list of all ideas that you want to talk about the topic. Then, you need to cross out some ideas that you do not want to use or not suitable for your topic.

3) Organizing

In this step, you decide which ideas you want to use and where you want to use them. You need to choose which idea to talk about first, which idea to talk about next, and which to talk about last (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005). In organizing or ordering ideas, there are three methods that can be used, namely chronological order, spatial order, and progressive order (Clouse, 2006).

b. Writing

Writing is composing the first draft. This step is where you start writing all ideas that you have organized in the previous step. The result of this step is often called as rough draft (Clouse, 2006).

c. Rewriting

Rewriting is making changes in the first draft to get your writing ready for a reader. Rewriting process is divided into three steps, which are revising, correcting errors, and proofreading (Clouse, 2006)

1) Revising

After you are done with the first draft, the next step is revising your writing. Revising is taking another look at your ideas to make them clearer, stronger, and more convincing (Anker, 2010). In this step, you need to evaluate your draft in order to improve the content, the organization, and the expression of the ideas. In this step, the goal is to make your ideas to be clearer, more effective, and more interesting.

2) Correcting errors

In this step, you need to find and correct problems with grammar rules, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. You need to make sure you use appropriate grammar, no misspelling, correct capitalization and correct punctuation.

3) Proofreading

The last step is proofreading. In this step, you read your writing again and check every aspect of your writing. You have to make sure you do not have any error or mistake.

3. The Aspects of Writing

According to Harris (1969), there are at least five aspects or elements involved in a writing. Those five aspects are explained below.

a. Content

Content is the substances of the writing and the ideas expressed in the writing (Harris, 1969). Content includes the relevant substances about the topic of writing. It explores the information and knowledge about the discussed or assigned topic. Content deals with the thoroughness of idea development. A thoroughly developed idea shows adequate knowledge about a topic and clear supporting details.

b. Organization

Organization is how the writer organizes the content or the ideas of the writing (Harris, 1969). It is the composition of the writing. Organization deals with how well the ideas within a writing relate to each other. A well-organized text is a text that has clear and logical sequencing and the paragraphs relate to each other.

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the choice and usage of structures and lexical items to give a particular tone or flavor to the writing (Harris, 1969). Vocabulary deals with the selection and the usage of word used in the writing. Someone has good vocabulary skill if they use a good amount of relevant vocabulary to express their ideas and the text demonstrates appropriate vocabulary choices, usages, and forms.

d. Language Use

Language use is the usage of grammatical forms and syntactic patterns (Harris, 1969). Language use deals with the use of appropriate grammatical patterns. They include agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunction. It also deals with the correct sentence pattern.

e. Mechanics

Mechanics is the usage of the graphic conventions of the language (Harris, 1969). Mechanics deals with the use of appropriate English convention rules, such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing.

B. Text

1. The Definition of Text

A text is often defined as the product of writing. However, a text can be any producing activity. It can be a book, a film, a phone conversation, and so on. Text also can be defined as a product and a process. A text can be seen from two main perspectives: 1) a product that can be recorded, analyzed and discussed, and 2) a process resulting from a socially produced event (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Between these two perspectives, most people think text as product. Although some people believe in the process in which the text is produced, people mostly see or assessed the product, which is the text itself.

Language is always produced, exchanged or received as text and thus text is a cohesive unit produced from language (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Language is organized or arranged into a more understanding form called text to ease the communication among people. A text is a completed act of communication no matter what its form is, whether it is a novel, an advertisement on television, or a greeting friends share on the street. Text is any communication act produced as the result of social purpose or event.

Texts mostly have more than one purpose. A text may have a primary purpose (the important purpose) and a secondary purpose (the less important purpose). Moreover, there is a possibility that the purpose of the text as produced is not the same with the text as received since people have their own interpretation. Despite these conditions, the purposes of a text are

mainly divided into four broad purposes, which are to persuade, to instruct or advise, to entertain, and to inform (Beard, 2003).

2. The Genre of Text

Genre is the different kinds of writing constructions representing the norms of the writing itself (Harmer, 2004, 2007). Genres are classified based on their social purpose and identified according to the stages they include to obtain their purpose (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Moreover, according to Knapp and Watkins (2005), the genres are divided into five as follows.

a. The Genre of Describing

The genre of describing is one of the most widely used genres in the learning areas. Description categorizes or classifies things, such as experiences, observations and interactions into an orderly system in which allows readers to know them objectively or subjectively depending on the writer's intent (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Describing is used when the writer talking or writing about a picture, a character, a place, or a phenomenon. Describing commonly used in personal descriptions, commonsense descriptions, technical descriptions, information reports, scientific reports and definitions.

b. The Genre of Explaining

The genre of explaining is the basic language function for understanding the world and how it operates (Knapp & Watkins, 2005).

Explanation allows people to logically sequence the way people and the environment physically function, as well as understanding and interpreting the cultural and intellectual ideas and concept. Explaining has two main orientations which are to explain why and to explain how. Explaining commonly used in elaborations, illustrations, accounts and explanation essays.

c. The Genre of Instructing

The genre of instructing aims to tell someone what to do or how to do something (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Instructing involves giving instruction about the steps on how to do something. However, it involves more than simple, sequential or procedural texts. While the purpose is the same, instructing can be done through a range of textual forms depending on the thing instructed. Instructing commonly used in procedures, instructions, manuals, recipes and directions.

d. The Genre of Arguing

The genre of arguing is a process that involves reasoning, evaluation and persuasion (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Arguing involves interpreting a phenomenon, an issue or a story and persuading the readers about the interpretation. It involves a writer to give opinion for something and the reasons that support it. Arguing commonly used in essays, expositions, discussions, debates, interpretations and evaluations.

e. The Genre of Narrating

The genre of narrating is a popular genre. However, it does not mean that students can write naturally in this genre. Besides entertaining readers, narrative also has a powerful social role in changing social opinions and attitudes (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). There are many books or dramas that use narrative to bring up social issues and present them in a way news reports cannot possibly do. Narrating commonly used in recounts, stories, fairy tales, myths, fables, and narratives.

C. Recount Text

1. The Definition of Recount Text

Recount text is one of short functional texts. It is included as a short story. This text also is included as the genre of narrating (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). The word recount itself means to narrate or to retell. Recount text is a text which aims to restore past events by retelling events in original sequence (Hyland, 2004). It is a text in which a writer retells events or experiences that happened in the past. It involves retelling each event according to their occurrence in time.

Similar with any other text, recount text involves retelling the basic information of the story, such as the characters, the place, and the time. Furthermore, it also involves retelling the sequence of events chronologically and ending it with the writer's comment about the story.

Recount text only aims to retell an event which occurs in the past thus it does not include conflict.

2. The General Features of Recount Text

a. The Social Function of Recount Text

Recount text retells or narrates a past event or experience in time sequence. It aims to inform and tell readers about a sequence of event or experience as well as entertain them with how the writer's or the characters' attitudes towards it. Therefore, the social purpose or function of recount text is to inform and entertain the readers.

b. The Generic Structure of Recount Text

A recount text consists of three parts, namely orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation.

- 1) Orientation is the introduction of a recount text (Brown & Hood, 1989). It tells the background information or the setting of a story, such as the participants (the characters), the place, and the time the story takes place.
- 2) Sequence of events is the series of events that happened in a story. It narrates each event chronologically. A sequence of events retells the first event until the last event in order when it happened. It is where a writer describes each event with its details.
- 3) Reorientation is the conclusion of a recount text. It concludes the sequence of events and tells how the writer feels about the event that

happened. This part is optional, but most recount texts end with reorientation.

c. The Language Features in Recount Text

Language features are grammatical features of a text. The language features of recount text are: (a) using nouns and pronouns to identify people, animals, or things involved; (b) using action verbs to refer to events; (c) using past tense to locate events that happened; (d) using conjunctions and time connectives to sequence the events; (e) using adverb and adverbial phrases to indicate place and time; (f) using adjectives to describe nouns (Hyland, 2004).

3. The Kinds of Recount Text

Recount text is classified into three, namely personal recount, factual recount, and imaginative recount.

a. Personal Recount

Personal recount is a recount text that retells an event or experience in which a writer have been involved directly, such as diaries or personal experience. In writing personal recount text, a writer uses personal pronoun, such as I, we, my friends, and my family.

b. Factual Recount

Factual recount is a recount text that tells about a real (factual) event or accident, such as on news report and history events. It aims to

document a series of events and evaluate their significance in some way (Hyland, 2004).

c. Imaginative Recount

Imaginative recount is a fiction recount text in which uses imaginative roles and events, such as novel. The purpose of imaginative recount mostly to entertain the readers.

D. Difficulties in Writing Recount Text

Based on the studies conducted by some researchers, these are some difficulties that students face in writing a recount text (Andansari, Sari, & Murwantono, 2019; Fitria, 2020; Fridayanthi, 2017; Sinaga, Herman, & Hutauruk, 2020; Sinta & Astutik, 2019; Somba, 2017; Suci, Shalihah, & Darmayenti, 2019; Yulianawati, 2018).

1. Content

Content is the substances of the writing. Based on the study conducted by Suci, Shalihah and Darmayenti (2019), students who were categorized as poor in aspect content had very little knowledge about the topic. They had difficulty in using relevant substances and thus could not express their ideas well.

2. Organization

Organization is the structure or the composition of the writing. Based on the study conducted by Suci, Shalihah and Darmayenti (2019), students could not organize their paragraph well. Their writing was difficult to

understand since their ideas were disconnected. Regarding the generic structure of recount text, students mostly made mistakes in writing orientation and sequence of events. This was due to students have difficulty in arranging (ordering) the ideas of the writing.

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary in writing deals with the words choosing and usage. Since English is students' foreign language, they need to transfer their vocabulary from their native language (Indonesia) into English. Moreover, many students do not have good knowledge in vocabulary. The majority of the students had limited vocabulary and thus were not able to express their ideas well (Suci, Shalihah, & Darmayenti, 2019). They also often used inappropriate vocabulary which makes the meaning of their writing difficult to understand (Yulianawati, 2018).

4. Language Use

Language use deals with the grammatical rules and syntactic patterns. In recount text, students mostly make mistakes in this aspect. Some studies showed that students mostly made mistakes in using simple past tense (Andansari, Sari, & Murwantono, 2019; Fitria, 2020; Fridayanthi, 2017; Sinta & Astutik, 2019; Somba, 2017; Suci, Shalihah, & Darmayenti, 2019; Yulianawati, 2018). Students also made mistakes in using personal pronoun (Sinaga, Herman, & Hutauruk, 2020). They also made mistakes in constructing correct sentences (Andansari, Sari, & Murwantono, 2019).

5. Mechanics

Mechanics is the ability in using the appropriate English conventions. Based on the study conducted by Suci, Shalihah and Darmayenti (2019), students frequently made mistakes in using spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Another study also showed that students made mistakes in using appropriate punctuation (Sinta & Astutik, 2019).

E. Previous Studies

Some similar studies had been done to describe both students' ability in writing recount text and what difficulties they face in writing the text. A study conducted by Suyadi (2017) showed that the eighth grade students' ability in writing recount text was classified as poor or weak. This study used writing test to collect the data with topics "My Holiday". Furthermore, the data was analyzed using scoring consisted of content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary. The result showed that 30% of the subject was categorized as poor.

A study conducted by Suci, Shalilah, and Darmayenti (2019) aimed to find out the eighth grade students' writing skill in recount text. This study found out that the students' skill in writing recount text was categorized as fair. This study also used writing test to collect the data and scoring rubric to analyze it. The study found that the student still found difficulties in giving background information in orientation and writing the events chronologically. From the five scoring aspects, the students got lower scores in mechanics, language use, and vocabulary.

Another study conducted by Suryani (2020) also aimed to investigate the students' ability in writing recount text. The result showed that the students' ability in writing recount text was categorized as poor. This study used writing test and interview to collect the data. This study showed that the ability of 12 out of 25 students in writing recount text were categorized as poor. It also stated that students had low ability in aspect vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Similar to the previous studies, this study also aims to find out the quality of recount text written by the eighth grade students. However, this study uses the score classification adapted from Depdikbud (2009). Moreover, this study describes the example of recount text on each classification. This study also aims to describe the difficulties they face in writing recount text. Using the theory by Harris (1969), the students' recount texts are examined to find out the difficulties they face in writing recount text.