

Writing Skill' Assessment of English Department' Fourth Semester Students at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar (UHKBPNP)

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Abstract. The objective of this research is to assess how the writing skill' of the Department students at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar (UHKBPNP). The subject of this research is 4th semester students of UHKBPNP, with consist of 25 students. The research design of this research is qualitative approach with case study method. The instrument of collecting data used is writing test. The findings of the research: (1) Content aspect score was 14.88; (2) Organization aspect score was 12.32; (3) Vocabulary aspect score was 14.8; (4) Language use aspect score was 14.48; (5) Mechanics aspect score was 13.88. The result of the research showed that the students experienced mostly in excellent to very good level.

Keywords : Assessment, Writing, Recount Text

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of skill that is important for students because of some reasons. First, writing makes students strong in grammatical structure, idioms, and vocabulary. Second, writing makes students apply the language they have learned. Third, writing strengthens students to express their ideas in correct words and sentences.

Hyland (2003) states writing is among the most important skills that need to develop and involves composing skills and knowledge about texts, contexts, and readers. Writing as a part of the language skills must be taught optimally by the teacher to the students. Through writing the students can exchange their ideas, thoughts, and experiences. In teaching writing students need to express their feeling in a good way. They need to express their ideas and emotion creatively, so that the reader can understand their writing. Therefore, teacher plays important role in teaching writing. Teacher's creatively and appropriate method should be implemented in the class while teaching writing in order to make students' good writing.

In writing, Jacobs et al (1981: 31) listed out five critical components. These are content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Content is a planning, writing, and editing process to make the text is clear and can be understood. Organization is how the writer arrange and organize and the idea chronologically. Vocabulary is the language aspects of word choice. Language use is a correct usage of the rules of language or grammar that focuses on verbs, nouns, and agreements. Mechanics is dealing with capitalization, punctuation and spelling appropriately.

According to Knapp (2005) recounts are the simplest text type in this genre. Formally, recounts are sequential texts that do little more than sequence a series of events. Every story, no matter how simple, needs an orientation. It means that the language used in writing the recount text must also provide clarity and understanding for the reader. In writing the recount text, we must also pay attention to any sequence of events that can be developed further so that it can make the reader understand the contents of the text.

Assessment is an important tool to review student's achievement that can be useful for an information to students and teachers in language learning. Students are able to improve their skills in writing by evaluating and controlling their own learning process and teacher also can be used the assessment as a material for teaching developments. The difficulty in assessing student assignments is often encountered, especially with the provision of adequate tools and facilities. Like what Redecker (2013) said "the main challenge to the use of ICT for the assessment of Key Competences is the lack of software solutions – electronic tools, programs or environments – that are comprehensive and versatile enough to support curricular based classroom teaching and learning".

The researcher observe that the problems faced by the 4th semester students of UHKBPNP in writing, such as: 1) don't know how to write a topic or do not have an idea about what they want to write; 2) unable to apply English in the written form. 3) can't recognize or improve a sentence or paragraph correctly 4) don't know how to organize ideas with the knowledge in vocabularies and grammatical rules and tenses. Based on the statements description above, the researcher dealing with the title "**Writing Skill' Assessment of English Department' Fourth Semester Students at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar (UHKBPNP)**", also to explain the assessment of students' writing skill work and the students' competency in writing recount text.

Based on above, the researcher formulates research question as follow:

1. How is assessment of students' writing skill in recount text of the 4th semester students at UHKBPNP?
2. How is the students' competency in writing recount text of the 4th semester students at UHKBPNP?

Review Literature

Writing

Writing is a vital ability in students' life since it allows them to express their thoughts and ideas in their heads before pouring them into the text. When the writing process was going on, our brains will work to produce words, ideas, and concepts that we will later put into writing. According to Nunan (2008), Writing is the mental process of generating ideas, deciding how to convey them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that are understandable to the reader. It signifies that writing is a mental process in which ideas are generated and expressed in phrases and even paragraphs so that the reader's comprehension is clear and thorough.

Components in Writing

In writing, Jacobs et al (1981: 31) listed out five critical components. These are content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

1. Content

Content is a planning, writing, and editing process to make the text is clear and can be understood. In order for the reader to understand what message is conveyed by the author, the substance of the writing needs to be clear. Also, in content should be well unified and completed in order to provide a good text in writing. This is usually called unity and completeness, which is the product of good writing. A good paragraph needs to have unity, where only one main idea is addressed in each paragraph. If the author is going to bring forward a new idea, then begin with a new paragraph. The supporting sentence in the sentence, then, should directly relate to the main idea. Using content that does not really clearly support the subject sentence is incorrect. In the key definition, completeness has a concept that must be completely described and developed as a commentary on the controlling idea that is extensively developed by certain information in the text. It is required that the complete material of the writing is clear and easily understood to readers.

2. Organization

The writer reflects on how he chronologically arranges and organizes ideas when compiling the text. From the beginning to the end of the idea, presenting the idea in a chronological order is a must. There are several forms for writing to be structured and coordinated. This organization is also primarily recognized as an order. There is a definition to coherence which sticks together. All ideas are connected to one another in a coherent text. A coherent paragraph is one in which all the thoughts are correctly ordered and the reader is never confused. In the following sentences and paragraphs in an article, writers are required to make efforts.

3. Vocabulary

One aspect of language related to the learning process in writing is vocabulary. In a process of writing text, the writer always thinks of the right way to put the words into sentences creatively and appropriately which then puts the sentences into paragraphs. Subsequently, with this the text can produce understandable writing. So, with the ability to master various word choices, this can help develop a more varied writing with a writing style that is not monotonous.

4. Language use

Language use in writing implicates correct form of the decrees of language or grammar. It focuses on verbs, nouns, and agreements. More specialized nouns and stronger verbs provide the reader with a mental picture of the description more vividly. This specific noun can be characterized by using modifier of adjective, adverbs, and participle forms. There are lots of opportunities for errors in the use of verbs and for very common misconceptions. Having the opportunity to reread and review what the author has written can reduce errors.

5. Mechanics

Mechanics in writing deal with capitalization, punctuation and spelling appropriately. This aspect is very important in terms of directing the reader to understand or recognize what the writer means with certainty.

Teaching Writing

Teaching is a process of learning activity to explore the knowledge. Teachers are responsible as a means to facilitate and guide students during the learning process and try to create an atmosphere, such as; to make students feel comfortable in the learning process, and then to make students are able to understand the material well. Teachers must be innovative in their methods, approaches, and tactics. Brown (2004) defines teaching writing as "guiding and promoting learning, enabling the learner to learn, and establishing the circumstances for learning."

Assessment in Writing

Brown (2004) stated that "assessment is an ongoing process that includes various aspects within." He mentions that there are two types of assessments: formal and informal assessment. Formal assessment is a planned and designed process that is used to see the success of students in their learning. Informal assessment, on the other hand, is a spontaneous response to the students, such as unplanned feedback and suggestions. According to Siozos et al (2009), he said "there are two main types of assessment systems: Paper Based System (PBS) and Computer Based System (CBS)." PBS is gradually being separated from learning practices as the spread of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) continues. At the same time, due to the success of ICT, CBS is replacing PBS.

There are three types of scoring method for responsive writing. They are holistic, primary trait, and analytical scoring (Brown, 2004). According to Weigle (2002), it is said "holistic scoring is used to judge the students' writing by assigning a single score after reading the overall text." He says that "analytical scoring is used to assess the students' writing based on the aspects of writing such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics." To determine the level or score of

the best, the researcher are going to use the test specification theory that creates by Heaton (1988;146). The criteria of the score can be seen in the table below :

Table 1 Scoring Rubric for Writing Skills by Heaton

Test Item	Composition Test	Criteria	Score	Kind of Test
Writing Recount Text	Content	the content of the sentence is conveyed according to context	20	E S S A Y T E S T
	Organization	1. Orientation 2. Sequences of Events 3. Re-Orientation	20	
	Vocabulary	Affective word, idioms and word forms	20	
	Language Use	Structure of the sentences based on language features.	20	
	Mechanic	1. Spelling 2. Capitalization 3. Punctuation	20	
Total score			100	

Recount Text

Recount text is a text that discusses historical events and their chronology. The recount text must be written in the right tense as well. Recounts, according to Peter Knapp and Megan Watskin (2005), are the most basic text type in this genre. Recounts are formal writings that do little more than sequence a set of occurrences. An orientation is required for every tale, no matter how small. That is, the language employed in composing the recount text must also convey clarity and understanding to the reader. We must also pay attention to any sequence of events that might be expanded further so that the reader understands the contents of the text while writing the recount text.

II. METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses a case study as a method. A case study is a research strategies that involve empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena in real life contexts using various sources of evidence, and very valuable when the boundaries between phenomena and contexts are blurred (Yin, 2009). Case study method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. It is conducted to investigate a condition or other phenomenon of which the result represented in a report. Therefore this research is called analysis because it tries to analyze objectively about students' ability in writing recount text. Vocabulary, mechanics, content, grammar and organization are the focus of the research.

Subject and Object of the Research

The subject of the research was the fourth semester students of UHKBPNP which consisted of 25 students. Furthermore, the object of this research is the students' writing skill.

Scoring Rubric of the Test

Concerning with the scoring method, the researcher applied analytical scoring method. Brown (2004:243) defined that analytical scoring scale specified five major categories and a description of

five different levels in each category, ranging from unacceptable to excellent. It means that each evaluation aspect is scored separately according to certain criteria. In the research, there were five assessment aspects covering content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. To determine the level or score of the best, the researcher are going to use the test specification theory that creates by Heaton (1988;146). The criteria of the score can be seen in the table below :

Test Item	Composition Test	Criteria	Score	Kind of Test
Writing Recount Text	Content	the content of the sentence is conveyed according to context	20	E S S A Y T E S T
	Organization	4. Orientation 5. Sequences of Events 6. Re-Orientation	20	
	Vocabulary	Affective word, idioms and word forms	20	
	Language Use	Structure of the sentences based on language features.	20	
	Mechanic	4. Spelling 5. Capitalization 6. Punctuation	20	
Total score			100	

Based on the explanation above, the researcher make a criteria to assess the students' competency:

Criteria of mastery	Level of mastery
91- 100	Excellent
81-90	Very good
71- 80	Average
61- 70	Poor
50- 60	Very Poor

Technique of Collecting and Analyzing Data

In this research, the researcher used observation as a method for data collection. The data analyzed based on the descriptive analysis. The steps which are done by the researcher in analyzing writing recount text; the researcher formulated the result of the writing test to get the total score by using this formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

m : The average the main score

N : Total number of the student

$\sum fx$: The total of obtain score

To get percentage the researcher used the formulation as below:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

p : percentage
 f : frequency
 N : the number of student

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of student’s writing skill could be seen from the mean of the student’s score in content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics aspects.

Table 1. Students’ Score in Writing Recount Text

No.	Students	Rating Score					Total Score
		C	O	V	L	M	
1	AAA	17	14	15	15	15	76
2	ADA	18	15	14	16	14	77
3	AG	15	14	18	17	13	77
4	AGS	16	15	14	16	17	78
5	AN	17	13	16	16	17	79
6	AW	15	15	14	17	14	75
7	CCS	18	14	15	12	16	75
8	DML	18	15	17	17	18	85
9	ES	14	16	17	14	15	76
10	EYS	17	18	13	15	14	77
11	FAS	19	13	14	15	13	74
12	FF	13	19	17	15	14	78
13	GDS	13	17	14	15	17	76
14	JOS	17	15	14	18	18	82
15	KS	17	15	16	14	15	77
16	MAH	18	16	17	15	16	82
17	MRA	17	15	16	16	17	81
18	NAR	14	16	18	15	14	77
19	NEB	16	17	15	13	17	78
20	NAP	19	16	13	16	17	81
21	NM	14	16	14	16	18	78
22	NS	16	13	15	18	17	79
23	PJS	18	16	14	15	17	80
24	RA	18	17	18	17	15	85
25	RAS	15	14	16	17	14	76
TOTAL		409	384	384	390	392	1959
MEAN SCORE		16.36	15.36	15.36	15.6	15.68	78.36

Based on the table above, the lowest score was 75, and the highest score was 85. There was 1 student who scored 74. Then, there were 2 students who scored 75. There were 4 students who scored 76. There were 5 students with a score of 77. There were 4 students with a score of 78. There were 2 students with a score of 79. There was 1 student with a score of 80. There were 2 students with a

score of 81. There were 2 students with a score of 82. And lastly, there were 2 students who get a score of 85. The average for the scores is 78,36.

Table 2. Students' Score Percentage

Score	Level of mastery	Frequency	Percentage
91- 100	Excellent	0	0 %
81-90	Very good	6	24 %
71- 80	Average	19	76 %
61- 70	Poor	0	0%
Below 60	Very Poor	0	0 %
Total		25	100%

Rubric Score adopted by Heaton 1998

From the score above, the students' writing score is 78,36. It was categorized to be average. There were 19 students (76%) got score 71-80 (average), and 6 students (24%) got 81-90 (very good).

After correcting students written test, it can be stated that generally students skill in writing recount text are in average category. The mean score of the students was 78,36. It can be seen from number of the students who are in average category is the biggest one. There were 19 students (76%) got score 71-80 (average), and 6 students (24%) got 81-90 (very good).

Discussion

The research described how the students' skill in writing recount text. The students writing have average ability in terms of content, grammar, and mechanics are average category in each aspect. It can be seen from the students' mean score was 78,36 or in an average category. Sometimes the students had problems in writing it. It is because in writing recount text, the students should be aware in using the schematic structure of recount text including orientation, record of events, and reorientation (Anderson & Anderson, 1998). Besides, the students should apply the linguistic features of recount in their text, including specific participants, circumstance of time and place, first person, additive conjunction, material process, and past tense (Gerot & Wignell, 1995 in Saepulloh, 2020). So those three aspects are the problems of the students in writing recount text.

Tooley's opinion about writing which stated that writing is a complex subject; there is no "one right way" to teach it. He also added that the teaching of writing is a multifaceted subject that does not come with a manual. As writing was considered as a complex and multifaceted subject, so it certainly involves a number of theories, strategies, and approaches to enhance the quality of writing. Due to the complexity of writing, teacher should make students aware that learning writing is not an instant process. Writing is not only a matter of grammar and vocabulary. There are many factors that should be considered both in learning and teaching writing (Tooley, 2009 in Saepulloh & Salsabila, 2020). And there are any number of ways in which to write, there are any number of ways in which to teach writing

IV. CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Writing recount text was one of the skills that should be mastered by the students. Measuring student competence in writing is very helpful for teachers and students to interact with each other. According to the process of the language learning system helps lecturers work easier and faster in correcting students' scores. Many students at English Department of UHKBPNP found it difficult to write a recount text. They found it hard to use grammar, mechanic and organization in writing. Based on the results of the research, the researcher concluded that there were still many students who had

difficulty writing recount texts properly and correctly. Especially by using the correct generic structure, between one sentence and the other that is incoherent, putting the correct punctuation and the lack of vocabulary students have become one of the factors that causes students difficulty writing recount text. The present study also reveals that the most dominant level writing was 'average' and the last was the 'very good discovery on the significant components of students' writing skill. The students are proficient in content, but almost less proficient in the component organization and vocabulary.

Suggestion

After the researcher obtains the result of the data analysis, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions for the consideration which are significant for the lecturers/ students.

1. From the results that the researcher met, the researcher can suggest to the lecturer who teaches at English Department of UHKBPNP, there must be a new strategy from the teacher to influence student interest and improve students' ability to English and also make a technique needed by students so that the learning process becomes more interesting.
2. From the results of the writing conducted by the researcher that the students' low ability in English and coupled with their interest in English, there was clearly a lot to do. Researcher recommends that students try to do tutoring outside of university even with a lecturer and lighter lessons to attract interest and enthusiasm in learning English, coupled with finding interesting learning techniques such as watching videos containing English or fairy tales interesting English

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