

A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 5 PEKANBARU IN WRITING NARRATIVE PARAGRAPHS

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***Abstract:** This descriptive study aimed to find out the ability of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in writing narrative paragraphs. The population of the research was the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru, while the sample was 36 students of XI IPA 1 which was decided by using cluster sampling technique. The instrument used in this study was a written test. The students' score were graded by three raters and analyzed by using Harris' scoring system which concerned with five aspects of writing, such as content, form, grammar, style, and mechanics. The findings showed that there were 7 students (19%) in **excellent** level, 18 students (50%) in **good** level, 9 students (25%) in **average** level, and 2 students (6%) in **poor** level. It was also found that the students' ability in terms of content was the highest among the other aspects, with the average score of 75,69, while grammar was the lowest one, with the average score of 60. The students' average score for each aspect of writing was in **good** level. Based on the result obtained, it can be inferred that the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru were able to write narrative paragraphs and their level of ability was in good level with the average score of 66. This study recommended the students to pay more attention in terms of grammar and style since the score of these two aspects were low. Then, the teacher should pay more attention, too, on these two aspects as well as the other aspects: mechanics, form, and content. Further researchers can focus on studying each aspect in details.*

Keywords: Ability, writing, narrative paragraphs.

KEMAMPUAN SISWA KELAS XI (SEBELAS) SMAN 5 PEKANBARU DALAM MENULIS PARAGRAF NARATIF

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Abstrak: Penelitian deskriptif ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kemampuan siswa kelas XI (sebelas) SMAN 5 Pekanbaru dalam menulis paragraf naratif. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI (sebelas) SMAN 5 Pekanbaru, sedangkan sampelnya adalah kelas XI IPA 1 dengan jumlah 36 orang yang ditentukan dengan menggunakan teknik *cluster sampling*. Instrument yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah tes tertulis. Skor para siswa dinilai oleh tiga orang penilai dan dianalisa dengan menggunakan sistem penilaian Harris yang menyangkut kepada lima aspek menulis, seperti *content* (isi), *form* (teks organisasi), *grammar* (tatabahasa), *style* (pemilihan kata), dan *mechanics* (mekanik). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada 7 siswa (19%) pada level *excellent*, 18 siswa (50%) pada level *good*, 9 students (25%) pada level *average*, dan 2 siswa (6%) pada level *poor*. Diketahui juga bahwa kemampuan siswa pada aspek *content* merupakan yang tertinggi dari semua aspek, dengan nilai rata-rata 3,03, sedangkan *grammar* merupakan yang terendah, dengan nilai rata-rata 2,39. Nilai rata-rata siswa untuk masing-masing aspek menulis berada di level *good*. Berdasarkan hasil yang didapatkan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa siswa-siswa kelas XI (sebelas) SMAN 5 Pekanbaru dapat menulis paragraf naratif dan kemampuan mereka berada pada level *good* dengan nilai rata-rata 66. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan siswa untuk lebih memperhatikan aspek *grammar* dan *style* karena dua aspek ini memiliki nilai yang rendah. Kemudian, guru seharusnya memberi perhatian lebih juga terhadap dua aspek ini dan juga aspek lainnya: *mechanics*, *form*, dan *content* untuk membuat tulisan siswa lebih baik. Penelitian lebih lanjut dapat fokus pada penelitian mengenai masing-masing subtopik dengan lebih rinci.

Kata kunci: Kemampuan, menulis, paragraf naratif.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language skills. Writing is encoding a message (Bachani, 2003). It is translating our thoughts and ideas into language. The ability to write involves specific skills, such as; the use of punctuation, structure of sentence, vocabulary, and organization of paragraphs. In writing process, learners will always deal with the process of putting ideas into words, then putting words into sentences, and putting sentences into paragraphs until they can create a piece of writing. Referring to the School-Based Curriculum, the purpose of writing for the Senior High School, especially for the eleventh grade, is to encourage the students to write several kinds of text in the form of functional text (banner, poster, pamphlet) and monologue text (report, narrative, analytical exposition, spoof, hortatory exposition).

Although writing is an essential skill, but in fact many high school students are not interested in it. They are even not aware of the importance of writing skill in their learning. Huy (2009) says that good at writing will bring many benefits for human, especially for students. Firstly, writing is a good way to help developing their ability in using grammar and vocabulary, and increasing their ability in using language. Secondly, writing is an essential tool to support other skills. If a student has good writing ability, they can speak and read the text more effectively. Thirdly, writing is a way to approach modern information technology as well as the human knowledge. It is also necessary to master writing skill because it can help students to have well-prepared when finding a job or attend English courses. Because sometimes, people need to make official texts for the purpose of communication or other businesses. With those benefits, writing is very important for students.

Since writing is one of productive skills, the students are expected to be able to produce or create something in written form. According to Derewianka (1990), there are many types of writing genre, one of them is narrative writing. The basic aim of narrative writing is to entertain the readers through gaining and holding the readers' interest in a story.

Narrative text is a kind of text which is aimed to entertain the reader with a story that deals with complications or problematic events which lead to a crisis and in turn finds a resolution (Sudarwati & Grace, 2007). Since this kind of text is frequently appear on the learning material for the eleventh grade, the students are expected to be able to write a narrative story. They have to memorize and understand about its generic structure which consist of:

1. **Orientation.** It sets the scene: where and when the story happened, introduces the participants of the story: who and what is involved in the story.
2. **Complication.** It tells the beginning of the problem which leads to the crisis (climax) of the main participants.
3. **Resolutions.** It shows the problem (the crisis) is resolved, either in a happy ending or in a sad ending.

Based on the learning material taught in Senior High School, the types of narrative text which are frequently discussed are traditional tales. Many of these stories serve an original purpose of passing on traditional knowledge or sharing cultural beliefs. Traditional or folk tales include:

- a. **Myths.** It aimed to provide a fictional explanation for natural phenomena. Many cultures use myths to explain the world and its mysteries by handing them down from one generation to the next.
- b. **Legends.** It aimed to provide information about the way particular people lived, and what they believed.
- c. **Fairy tales.** It aimed to amuse and to convey information that influences behaviour. It recently categorized as fantasy.
- d. **Fables.** It aimed to teach the readers or listeners a lesson they should learn about life through animals' story. (National Literacy Trust, 2013).

From the explanation above, it clearly shows how important writing for students is. It is also supported by O'Farrell (2015) that writing skills play a larger part in a professional life. As we know, good writing skills become one of the important job requirements nowadays. Therefore, narrative text is necessary to be learned because indirectly it can help them to explore and develop their thinking about something chronologically. Through narrative text, the students are expected to be able to think more creative and be good writers in order to prepare themselves in workplace.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research. It serves to describe, fond of describing (Hornby, 1974). According to Gay and Airasian (2000), descriptive method is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems and issues. In this study, the writer wanted to know the students' ability in writing narrative paragraphs.

The population of the research was the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru, which consists of XI IPA 1, XI IPA 2, XI IPA 3, and XI IPA 4. The writer used cluster sampling technique to decide the sample of the research. Cluster sampling selects groups, not individuals (Gay & Airasian, 2000). They also state that cluster sampling usually involves less time and expense and is generally convenient. Each group has similar characteristics that appear close together with have the same teacher, learning material, and time allocation. It means that the selection of the sample is related by having similar characteristics. In this case, the writer got XI IPA 1 as the sample of the research.

The instrument used in this study was a written test. Where the students were asked to write narrative paragraphs based on one topic they had chose from three topics given, entitled Cinderella, Mallin Kundang, and Timun Mas. The writer used *Guided Question and Answer* from Brown (2000) in designing the test. It stimulates the students' thinking before they create pieces of paragraph. The time allocation was 90 minutes to finish their writing. The students' writing were analyzed and scored by three raters in order to have valid data.

The writer used the following assessment system which is adapted from Harris (1974) in order to find out the students' ability level in writing narrative paragraphs.

Table 3.3 The Measurement of the Students' Ability

Test Score	Level of Ability
80-100	Excellent
60-79	Good
50-59	Average
0-49	Poor

In scoring the students' composition, the writer also used the scoring system from Harris (1974). The aspects of writing which are analyzed in this study are *content, form, grammar, style, and mechanics*. The scores for each aspect of writing start from 1 up to 4. Score of 1 is the lowest and score of 4 is the highest one, where score of 1 is categorized into *poor* level, 2 is categorized into *fair* level, 3 is categorized into *good* level, and 4 is categorized into *excellent* level.

After the data were collected, the writer then summed up the score of each aspect which was obtained from the raters in order to find out the total score for each student. Then, the total score was divided into 20 (the maximum score) and multiplied by 100 in order to find out the score of each individual. Finally, the writer summed up the total score of each students from the three raters and then divided into 3 in order to find out the real score of each student.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The writer collected the data by giving the students three topics and asked them to choose only one topic and then write a story accordingly. The students' score were analyzed and graded by three raters based on Harris' scoring system.

1. The Description of the Students' Scores in Writing Narrative Paragraphs

Based on the data obtained, there are 7 students (19%) in *excellent* level with the score range of 80-88. It means that they can write narrative paragraphs very well. Then, 18 students (50%) are in *good* level with the score range of 60-78. It means that they have good ability in writing narrative paragraphs. After that, there are 9 students (25%) in *average* level with the score range of 50-57. Finally, there are 2 students (6%) in *poor* level in this study with the score of 33 and 45. It means that there are students who have low ability in writing narrative paragraphs, and they need more practice. The percentage of the students' ability in writing narrative paragraphs can be seen in the following table:

The Students' Ability Level

No.	Classification		Frequency	Percentage
	Test Score	Level of Ability		
1	80-100	Excellent	7	1
2	60-79	Good	18	2
3	50-59	Average	9	3
4	0-49	Poor	2	4
Total			36	100%

It can be inferred that the ability of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in writing narrative paragraphs was in *good* level.

2. The Presentation of the Students' Ability for Each Aspect of Writing

In terms of content, 17 students (49%) were in *excellent* level, 10 students (28%) were in *good* level, 8 students (22%) were in *average* level, and 1 student (3%) was in *poor* level. It can be inferred that their writing ability in terms of content was in *good* level with the average score of 75,69.

In terms of form, 10 students (28%) were in *excellent* level, 11 students (31%) were in each level of *good* and *average*. For the rest, there were 4 students (11%) in *poor* level. Based on the average score, they were in *good* level with the score of 66,44.

In terms of grammar, 3 students (8%) were in *excellent* level, 11 students (31%) were in *good* level, 16 students (44%) were in *average* level, and 6 students (17%) were in *poor* level. It can be inferred that their writing ability in terms of grammar were in *good* level with the average score of 60.

In terms of style, 13 students (36%) were in *excellent* level, 13 students (36%) were in *good* level, 16 students (44%) were in *average* level, and 4 students (11%) were in *poor* level. It can be inferred that their awriting ability in terms of style were in *good* level with the average score of 61,34.

In terms of mechanics, 5 students (14%) were in *excellent* level, 19 students (53%) were in *good* level, 10 students (28%) were in *average* level, and 2 students (6%) were in *poor* level. It can be inferred that the students' writing ability in terms of mechanics was in *good* level with the average score of 66,20.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

After conducting this study, the writer can conclude that the the eleventh grade students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru are able to write narrative paragraphs and their level of ability was in *good* level, with the average score of 66. Among 36 students who took the test, 7 students (19%) were in *excellent* level, 18 students (50%) were in *good* level, 9

students (25%) were in *average* level, and 2 students (6%) were in *poor* level. Based on the score of each aspect of writing, it was known that the students' ability in terms of content was the highest among the other aspects, with the average score of 3,03, while grammar was the lowest one, with the average score of 2,39.

Recommendations

Based on the result obtained and the conclusions in this study, the writer would like to propose some recommendations related to the students' writing ability in narrative paragraphs: (a) The students should pay more attention in terms of grammar and style since the score of these two aspects are low; (b) The teacher should pay more attention, too, on the two aspects (grammar and style) as well as the other aspects: mechanics, form, and content, in order to make the students' writing better. After knowing the students' ability in writing, the teacher should be able to make the students feel more interested in learning English, particularly in writing activity; (c) It is suggested to further researchers to focus on each aspect in details.

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