

**AN ANALYSIS OF GRADE XII STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING
THE LANGUAGE FEATURES OF A NARRATIVE TEXT
AT SMAN 8 PADANG**

THESIS

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
to Obtain Strata One (S1) Degree*



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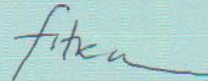
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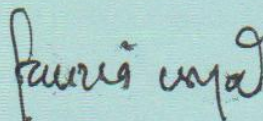
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ABSTRAK

Wahyuni, Khaira. 2015. "An Analysis of Grade XII Students' Ability in Using The Language Features of a Narrative Text at SMAN 8 Padang". *Skripsi*. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan fitur-fitur bahasa teks naratif di dalam menulis sebuah teks naratif. Terdapat lima fitur bahasa teks naratif yaitu *past tense*, *material processes*, *relational and mental processes*, *temporal conjunction and circumstances*, dan *pronouns to focus on specific participant*. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif dengan 156 orang siswa kelas XII (dua belas) di SMAN 8 Padang. Total sampel penelitian adalah 30 orang siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik *quota sampling*, yaitu dengan memilih 6 orang siswa dari masing-masing kelas. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes menulis. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, ditemukan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *past tense* adalah sedang, kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *material processes* adalah baik, kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *relational and mental Processes* adalah baik, kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *temporal conjunction and circumstances* adalah sedang, dan kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *pronouns to focus on specific participant* adalah baik. Dengan demikian, bisa disimpulkan bahwa siswa kelas XII di SMAN 8 Padang sudah mampu menggunakan fitur-fitur bahasa teks naratif dalam menulis teks naratif dengan baik. Mereka mampu menerangkan karakter tokoh dengan jelas dan spesifik menggunakan *pronouns* yang tepat, dan menggunakan *processes* yang benar pada klausa-klausa yang mereka tulis. Namun, kemampuan mereka dalam menggunakan kata kerja dalam bentuk *past tense* masih perlu ditingkatkan, terutama pada kata kerja tak beraturan, dan dalam menghubungkan alur cerita kurang efektif, terutama pada *temporal conjunction* dan *dependent clause*.

Kata Kunci: *kemampuan menulis, fitur-fitur bahasa, naratif teks*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Writing is a language skill which has to be mastered by language learners. It is because writing functions as means of communication and it reflects how good someone uses a language in the written form as well. Through writing, the learners can learn how to deliver ideas by using written language, which is much more complex than the spoken one, and organize the ideas in order to produce a writing which is accepted academically. Having a good writing skill will then help the learners to prepare themselves to achieve their academic or professional futures.

Since writing is an important language skill, it is included as one of the goals of learning English based on the school curriculum implemented in Indonesia, from elementary until senior high school level. As emphasized in the curriculum, especially in senior high school curriculum, the students are expected to be able to communicate in English both in spoken (listening and speaking) and written language (reading and writing). Therefore, the students are expected to be able to write in English and produce their own English writings which fulfill the good writing criteria.

Since the English curriculum for the senior high schools in Indonesia is genre-based, the students are taught through various kinds of texts. In writing, there are two kinds of text learned by students: functional and

monologue text. The former is a short text which has certain function in daily life, such as letters, invitation cards, announcements, and advertisements. While the latter is a text which presents information and consists of some paragraphs. For senior high school level, the monologue texts which the students learn are: descriptive text, narrative text, recount text, procedure text, exposition text, factual report text, and news item text.

A narrative text is one of the monologue texts learned by senior high school students in Indonesia. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994:204), a narrative text is a text whose purpose is to amuse or entertain people. It can be found in the form of short stories, novels, jokes, dramas, or even movies. Generally, a narrative text has three parts of generic structure: orientation, complication/ conflict, and resolution, but sometimes it has the optional part named re-orientation or coda. A narrative text is a text which is close to daily life since it is usual for people to tell a story to others, whether it is a fictional story or past experience. As Coffin, et.al. (2009:125) suggest that “telling stories is an important part not only of literature, but of our everyday lives”.

However, although a narrative text is already familiar in everyday life, it is not easy for the students to produce a narrative text, especially in written language because they have problems in writing a narrative text. Based on researcher’s preliminary study during teaching practice at SMAN 8 Padang, there are three main problems faced by the students related to writing a narrative text. *First*, the students find it difficult to generate ideas. Since a narrative text is an imaginative story, the students need to imagine the

sequences of the story which they should transfer into written language, and it is not an easy thing to do. *Second*, the students still get problems in writing a narrative text based on its generic structure. Therefore, the ideas are not well-organized based on the appropriate structure of a narrative text.

Third, the major problem for the students in writing a narrative text is to use the language features of a narrative text correctly and appropriately. Language features actually refer to lexical choices (the choice of words) and grammatical resources (grammar). Based on the researcher's preliminary study at SMAN 8 Padang, students found it difficult to apply their knowledge of grammar into writing since the errors in grammar are so noticeable in writing. When they were given grammar test separately, they could do it pretty well. However, when they were asked to write a narrative text, they found it difficult to write grammatically-correct sentences. It is seen by the common errors and mistakes found in students' narrative text related to the use of grammatical resources.

There are various numbers of language features which may occur in a narrative text. A set of them is suggested by Gerot and Wignell who used the term 'lexicogrammatical' features (usually used in functional grammar approach). The language features which dominantly occur in a narrative text are: *past tense* indicated by verb forms, *material processes*, *relational* and *mental processes*, *temporal expressions* to indicate the chronology of story events, and the use of *specific participants* or characters involved in the story (Gerot & Wignell, 1994:204).

The use of past tense is indicated by the use of verb two in the sentence predicate. However, the students still get difficulty in using the past tense correctly. The common mistake in using past tense made by students is about the change of verb forms especially in the case of irregular verbs, such as *write – wrote – written*. It is even more complicated if the tense also includes progressive or perfect aspect (past continuous, past perfect, or even past perfect continuos). Another common mistake in the use of past tense is that the students assume that all of the verbs in narrative text are in the past form, meanwhile, there are some parts which should not be in the past form. It is difficult for the students to determine which parts should be written in present or past tense. For instance, in the case of writing direct speech or in stating the moral value of the story, it should be in present tense.

Moreover, the types of verb which typically occur in narrative text vary. Narrative text involves the use material processes (the verb of doing), relational processes (the verb of being), and mental processes (the verb of sensing). Compared to recount text, another text which is quite similar with narrative text and is also learned in senior high school, it only involves material processes. (Gerot and Wignell, 1994:204). Thus, it increases the difficulty in writing a narrative text since the students should know the past forms of a large number of verbs.

Another language feature of narrative text is temporal expressions. Since a narrative text is related to series of events, expressions to relate one event to another one are necessary, such as *then, after, once upon a time*, etc.

Uniquely in narrative text, the sequence of events do not have to be in sequenced order. As Coffin, et.al. (2009:130) state that “narratives involve a sequence of events, but very often the narrator manipulates this sequence, changing the order of events or slowing down the pace”. Compared to recount text, the events tend to be in sequenced order since its purpose is to retell events. Thus, temporal expressions in a narrative text have more variations, however, it is difficult for students to make variations in using the expressions. The students tend to only use the expressions such as *then* or *after that* in their narrative text, meanwhile, there are so many expressions of time they can use such as prepositional phrases and dependent clauses.

Next language feature is *specific participant*. In a story, there are some characters involved. The character’s name is usually mentioned then sometimes is changed into pronoun, such as *he*, *she*, or *the* girl. However, the students get difficulty in focusing on the characters intended, which sometimes leads to ambiguity in the sentence and causes confusion of the readers. For instance, *Malin Kundang helped the merchant defeat the pirates. To thank Malin Kundang, he allowed him to sail with him*. Although it can be understood that the one who was allowed to sail is Malin Kundang, it is not accepted in written language. It is better to be changed into “*the merchant allowed Malin Kundang to sail with him*”. Thus, it is seen that there should be appropriate “switching” between using pronouns and mentioning the names in order to indicate the characters.

Thus, it is important to analyze the students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text, in term of the use past tense, material processes, relational and mental processes, temporal conjunction and circumstances, and pronouns to focus on specific participant since those are the dominant grammatical resources in a narrative text. When the students are given knowledge about grammar or language features, it is not enough to only give them the test about it separately, but they are also supposed to be able to apply it on their real writings. Either in writing or teaching writing, "focused attention to language features is often beneficial and sometimes necessary" (Lightbown in Frodesen & Holten, 2003:144). Therefore, in order to find out in more detail about the quality of language features made by the students on their narrative text, the research in order to see the students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text needs to be conducted.

B. Identification of the Problem

From the background above, there are three common problems related to writing a narrative text in senior high school. *First*, the students find it difficult to generate ideas in order to be developed to be a narrative text. *Second*, it is difficult for the students to write a narrative text based on the appropriate generic structure. *Third*, the major problem for the students in writing a narrative text is to use the language features of a narrative text correctly and appropriately. Related to the use of language features, the

common mistakes done by the students are: using past tense inappropriately; using inappropriate form of verbs; using ineffective conjunction to relate one event to another; and using incorrect pronouns to refer to the participants. Thus, this study focuses on the students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text as reflected on their narrative texts and the researcher specifies the language features to five language features suggested by Gerot and Wignell, namely; the use of past tense, the use material processes, the use of relational processes and mental processes, the use of temporal conjunction and temporal circumstances, and focus on specific participant.

C. Limitation of the Problem

In relation to the identification above, the research problem was limited to the analysis of grade XII students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text (*past tense, material processes, relational and mental processes, temporal expressions, and pronouns to focus on specific participant*) at SMAN 8 Padang. The reason of taking grade XII students is that they have studied about narrative text. They studied it when they were both at grade X and XI. Thus, it is assumed that they have mastered writing a narrative text.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem was formulated as "How is the grade XII students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text (*past tense, material*

processes, relational and mental processes, temporal expressions, and pronouns to focus on specific participant) at SMAN 8 Padang?

E. Research Questions

1. How is the ability of grade XII students in using *past tense* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang?
2. How is the ability of grade XII students in using *material processes* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang?
3. How is the ability of grade XII students in using *relational and mental processes* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang?
4. How is the ability of grade XII students in using *temporal expressions* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang?
5. How is the ability of grade XII students in using *pronouns to focus on specific participant* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang?

F. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research was to find out:

1. The ability of grade XII students in using *past tense* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang
2. The ability of grade XII students in using *material processes* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang
3. The ability of grade XII students in using *relational and mental processes* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang

4. The ability of grade XII students in using *temporal expressions* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang
5. The ability of grade XII students in using *pronouns to focus specific participant* on their narrative texts at SMAN 8 Padang

G. Significance of the Research

The findings of the research are both theoretically and practically significant. For theoretical value, it can be an input for the next researchers to conduct further research related to teaching writing process, especially narrative text. For practical value, it can be as information for English teachers for their teaching improvement. By knowing the students' ability that the students face in using the language features, it can be the consideration for the teacher to improve their way of teaching writing in the classroom. Also, it can increase both teachers' and students' awareness about the importance of understanding and using the language features of the text in teaching and learning English since it is a very crucial aspect in language teaching and learning.

H. Definition of Key Terms

Narrative Text : a kind of text which aims to amuse or entertain the reader. It deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis or climax, then finally come to a resolution

- Language Features : language resources through which the meaning is built up in a text (a narrative text) including past tense, material processes, relational and mental processes, temporal expressions, and pronouns to focus on specific participant
- Students' Ability : the ability of grade XII students at SMAN 8 Padang in using the language features of a narrative text correctly and appropriately on their narrative texts

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

As mentioned previously in Chapter I that the purpose of this research is to find out the ability of grade XII students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text at SMAN 8 Padang as reflected on their narrative texts. There are five language features assessed in this study, namely, the use of past tense, the use of material processes, the use of relational and mental processes, the use of temporal conjunction and circumstances, and the use of pronouns to focus on specific participants.

Based on the collected data through the research instrument which was a writing test, and the analysis of the data, it was found that the students' ability in using the language features of a narrative text in average was *good*. Although there are some students which were actually very good, and some of them were fair and poor. In using the past tense, the students' ability was *fair*. The mistake which mostly occurred was in the case of using irregular verbs. In term of using material processes, the students' ability was *good*. In using relational and mental processes, the students' ability was also *good*. In using temporal conjunction and temporal circumstances, the students' ability was *fair*. The most common mistake in temporal expressions was in using dependent clause. In using pronouns to focus on specific participants, the students' ability was *good*. However, there were several mistakes found and

the use of possessive pronouns were found as the mistakes which occurred the most.

Therefore, the grade XII student can use the language features of narrative text well as reflected on their narrative texts. The students were good in making clear the characters of the story by using pronouns, and the processes were also good. However, their understanding of past form of verbs, especially in irregular verbs, regular verbs, and copula verbs needs to be concerned since those three were mostly used incorrectly by the students. The students' understanding about how to use temporal expressions effectively also needs to be concerned, especially in making dependent clause to relate one event to another, in using temporal conjunction effectively, and there are still some of the events which missed temporal expressions.

B. Suggestions

From the findings and the conclusion of the research, there are some suggestions offered to the teachers, students, and the next researchers. For the teachers, they should pay more attention to the students' writings especially in using the language features. The teachers should also give more explanation and exercises related to past forms of verbs (irregular and regular verbs). The teachers should explain that there are various kinds of temporal expressions can be used in a story, especially the use of dependent clause as one of effective temporal expressions. Furthermore, the teacher should also concern about students' understanding about the form of pronouns, especially

possessive, subjective, and objective pronouns. For the students, they should pay more attention about the verb forms, how to use the temporal expressions effectively in order to make the story understandable, and how to use pronouns appropriately. They should also be more careful in using appropriate tenses in writing. For researchers, they can use the results or findings of this research as the basis for the following related research.

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