
Undergraduates' Difficulties In Writing Recount Text: An In-Depth Analysis

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Abstract

The foremost writing function is to be utilized as an indirect communication means. It could be considered as the most difficult skill to be mastered due to recurring difficulties, especially in recount text, which make it challenging in constructing a good writing. This study utilized a descriptive qualitative method for describing the undergraduates' problem in constructing recount text in the Intermediate Writing class of FKIP ULM Banjarmasin year of 2020/2021. The chosen study subjects were 34 undergraduates from the said course. By utilizing instruments which are questionnaire and interview, it was showcased from the study result that there exist the highest-three and the lowest-three difficulties faced by the subjects. The highest-three were 30 undergraduates facing difficulties in grammar or 21,0%, 29 in vocabulary or 20,3%, and 28 in topic with or 19,6%. While the lowest-three problems were capitalization with 2 undergraduates or 1,4%, conjunction with 14 undergraduates or 9,8%, and tenses along with punctuation which both occurred to 20 undergraduates (14,0%). Grammar was the most difficult aspect for them. It was proposed that the undergraduates should be more energetic in educational process; enquire the teacher regarding recount text's particular aspect which they face difficulties to comprehend, and the teacher should also give feedback towards the undergraduates' piece of writing so that they could advance their writing capability since writing is a capability requiring constant process and practice. Therefore, the undergraduates should practice writing constantly, from the simplest one such as daily activity report or diary, then advance the writing content by retelling past experience by utilizing recount text.

Keywords: Problems, Recount Text, Writing

INTRODUCTION

Study Background

Writing is one among four basic capabilities which is crucial to be taught to those in pursuit of English mastery. Writing involves several language components (spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation). This is in accordance with what was stated by Braine and Claire (1996, p. 60), constructing clear sentences writing requires one to learn the English grammatical guidelines along with its mechanics, such as the subject-verbs agreement as well as commas and other punctuation marks.

There exists good writing criterion, which are content, form/organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic. (1) Content: the writing substance where the ideas expressed. (2) Form/the organization: the utilized ideas were well organized. (3) Vocabulary: words choice and list. (4) Language use: utilization of tense, article, number, as well as word order. (5) Mechanic, the implementation of the language graphic convention: spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing. Therefore, it could be settled that the utilization of those components can aid writing process. However, several problems were bound to be arisen and faced by the undergraduates who strive to study English. Hence, they must be careful while constructing a writing piece. Thus, grammar mastery is necessary to make writing while paying attention towards the utilized punctuation and how to combine single words into a sentence.

Text is a kind of writing activity which comprises several paragraphs emerged from one topic or idea. According to Luxemburg, et al., (1992, p. 86), text could be defined as a language of expression made from many language aspects. It is compulsory to be learned by university undergraduates since the frequent task they faced mostly in form writing. Especially for English Language Undergraduates of FKIP ULM, where the communication was not only carried out through spoken but also by written.

Several previous studies which investigated regarding undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount had been conducted. One of them which was done by Sari (2017, p. 21) who discovered that the undergraduates' difficulties in constructing English writing were mostly occurred in the aspect of capitalization, organization/illogical sequence, punctuation, inexplicitness/fuzziness, spelling, as well as grammatical error. Therefore, the undergraduates required to deepen their basic skills mastery for improving their writing comprehension. Another analyst, Karmida (2014, p. 41-42) discovered that most of the eleventh-graders faced problems in vocabulary, mechanism, language use, and grammar especially tenses component. It was difficult for them to find the appropriate utilization of past simple or past continuous tense in written form.

The Intermediate Writing syllabus of English language education in FKIP ULM Banjarmasin has programmed that the third semester undergraduates would have to partake in the intermediate course for developing their writing mastery in constructing the opening, content, and closing paragraphs by implementing appropriate language rules. This course is a continuation Basic/Guided Writing, which was the related previous course. Learning activities in said course incorporate two crucial things, namely (1) concept mastery of the writing paragraphs through essay analysis, along with (2) practice on constructing opening, content, and closing paragraphs gradually for providing opportunities to the undergraduates to ease them in applying their knowledge.

There are several reasons why the analyst elected the Intermediate writing undergraduates as the subjects. First, they have already learnt regarding how to construct a paragraph in Guided writing. Second, when the analyst interviewed an undergraduate who are partaking in the course, he said that he still faced problem when he attempted writing down a text as well as when tried developing ideas due to the lack of grammatical mastery and language uses. Third, the undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text has not revealed yet for those who are taking the Intermediate writing course.

Based upon the mentioned facts as well as the reasons above, the analyst is intrigued to conduct a study emphasis on discovering undergraduates' difficulties on constructing recount text while taking Intermediate writing course in the English language education of FKIP ULM Banjarmasin in the academic year 2020/2021.

Study Problem

The study emphasis on discovering the undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text.

Study Objective

Based upon the study problem above, it could be perceived that this study purpose was discovering the problems in constructing recount which faced by English Language Educations Study Program, particularly for those who were taking the Intermediate Writing.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study employed descriptive method and qualitative approach for interpreting and describing the gathered data from the chosen undergraduates regarding their difficulties in constructing recount paragraphs.

Study Subject and Setting

The chosen subjects were 34 undergraduates who were taking Intermediate Writing in Academic year 2020/2021 and held at FKIP ULM Banjarmasin which is located on Jl. Brigjen H. Hasan Basri No. 87, Pangeran, Kec. Banjarmasin Utara, Kota Banjarmasin. Kalimantan Selatan.

Instrumentation

In this study, a questionnaire and an interview were utilized.

Questionnaire

The analyst utilized questionnaire in this study for acquiring data regarding undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text at the Intermediate Writing Class.

Interview

Interviewing is necessary in checking the accuracy, verifying or refuting the impressions one achieved for supporting the questionnaire's result as well as exploring additional information which could not be achieved through the distributed questionnaire. Moreover, the analyst also discusses regarding the recount paragraphs characteristics by employing open-ended questions in the interview so that the analyst could procure further information regarding the subjects' knowledge about recount paragraphs as well as knowing the difficulties they faced in constructing recount paragraphs vividly. Based upon interview result, the analyst could discover the undergraduates' familiarity or recount paragraphs as well as their problems regarding constructing recount paragraphs well.

Data Collection

As previously stated, questionnaire and interview were utilized for data collection. First, the analyst distributed questionnaire for the subjects, then conducted interview for acquiring in-depth data. Questionnaire is utilized to discover the undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text while interview was carried out for supporting the data acquired from questionnaire as well as acquiring the data could not be gained from questionnaires only.

Data Analysis

A basic analysis of this study is for systematically determining the descriptive data result on undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text which then showcased by utilizing frequency and percentage form. In this study, the analyst analyzes the qualitative descriptive data by utilizing the steps as follows:

1. Determining the study subject

The undergraduates of FKIP ULM Banjarmasin who were partaking Intermediate Writing class were taken as the study subject.

2. Examining the questionnaire data

The questionnaire was distributed to the chosen study subjects.

3. Calculating the difficulty percentage by utilizing formula below

$$(\%) = \frac{\text{frequency}}{\text{total number subject}} \times 100\%$$

4. Interview

For gaining in-depth data from questionnaire as well as exploring the data which could not be acquired from questionnaires.

5. Making report findings

After acquiring the necessary data, the data then analyzed by comparing the interview and questionnaire outcome to be described by the analyst.

STUDY FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Data Description

This study was conducted in English Department ULM where the crucial data was gathered from the undergraduates in batch 2020 through open-ended questionnaires, consisted intermediate class of A1 and A4. The questionnaires then distributed to class A1 in which the number of participants were 15 while class A4 possessed 19 undergraduates. Therefore, the total participants were 34 undergraduates, 25 females and 9 males, as the study subject. Based upon the consideration which they had studied recount text by the time they took Intermediate Writing and Structure course, they were given the questionnaire sheet to be filled for discovering the difficulties they faced while constructing recount text on November 6th 2020 which was then analyzed according to the data analysis procedure.

Study Findings

The Questionnaire Result Description

The questionnaire results were presented within the general description regarding the undergraduates' difficulties in constructing recount text which gathered through the questionnaire, the frequency of the undergraduates, along with the difficulties percentage.

From the question 1 which was "What is recount?" it was known that the majority of them comprehend the recount text meaning well, such as the respondent "S6" who responded that recount text is a text that tells about a story or an event which occurred in the past. However, there were several respondents who answered differently such as respondent "S7" who explained that this text is utilized for telling a story or an action to entertain readers.

The next one was the question 2, "What is the purpose of writing recount text?" which almost all of them realize the intention for constructing recount text, as follow:

Subject "S3" stated that constructing recount text was to mention to the readers what was occurred in the past through a part of sequences occasions. The following is an excerpt from "S3". "The purpose of recount text is to tell the readers what happen in the past through a sequence of events." (S3). As well respondent "S22" who mentioned that the recount text purpose is for informing and retelling the reader in an entertaining way about the past events or story. Here is the excerpt of the questionnaire and interview with the respondent "S22". "The purpose of writing recount text is to inform and retell the reader in an entertaining way about the past events or story." (S22). From the interview excerpt of several respondents, it could be concluded that the majority of them had already known the basics and faced no problems regarding it. Shortly, all respondents stated that the recount text purpose is for telling and informing past things or events in an entertaining way.

The question 3, which was “What is the tenses used in writing recount text?” In general, all respondents could tell what tenses to be utilized in constructing recount text, namely the past tense. Respondents “S1”, “S2”, and “S4” explained that the utilized tenses for constructing recount text were simple past tenses, past continuous tense, past perfect tense, and past perfect continuous tense. Therefore, no difficulties regarding the knowledge of the utilized tenses for constructing recount text.

The question 4 “Can you write a recount text?” was responded by the majority of respondents that they could construct a recount text, albeit there were some responded with “not sure” that could be seen from the answer of respondents “S7” and “S18” with "Not really" as the given answer. Respondents “S7” and “S18” were unsure whether they could construct a recount text or not. Thus, it was necessary to look for difficulties and problems which causing this uncertainty.

For this paragraph section, the analyst summarizes the question 5-12, the questions were as follows: "5. Do you have any problems in writing recount text?. If the answer yes, what is the problem?.". "6. Is that the problem related to the vocabulary?.". "7. Is that the problem also related to your grammar skills?.". "8. Is that the problem about tenses, especially in the second form of verbs (V2) used in writing recount text?.". "9. Do you have any problems in using punctuation?.". "10. Do you have any problems in using capitalization in writing recount text?.". "11. Do you have any problems in using conjunctions in writing recount text?.". "12. Do you have any problems in developing the topic?." The answers as follow:

In question number 5, the majority of the respondents, or 29 undergraduates (20,3%) said “Yes”. Thus, they faced a problem with the aspect of vocabulary, they are S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S14, S15, S16, S17, S19, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24, S25, S26, S28, S29, S31, S32, and S34. Here are the excerpts:

Based on answered of respondent “S6” he said that he has less-vocabulary. “I think my vocabulary is still lacking.” (S6).

It is the same with the answer “S28” which said almost the same answer about the problem in vocabulary. “Yes, I have problem with unfamiliar vocabulary.” (S28).

And another answer that still has the same meaning is the answer “S32”, “Sometimes, because I don't have many vocabs.” (S32).

In question 7, 30 undergraduates (21,0%) or almost all respondents mentioned that they have problems with grammar, they are S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S22, S23, S24, S25, S26, S28, S29, S31, S32, S33, and S34. The following results from the explanation of respondent S2, S6, S18, S25, and S32.

Based upon the answer from “S2” who faced a problem with grammar and how to initiate or create a good sentence. “I think, I haven't problem in writing recount text. Maybe I just have a problem with grammatically or how to make a good sentence.” (S2)

The same thing with the respondent S6 who stated that he faced the problem in grammar. “Yes. I have some problems with using the correct grammar while writing recount text. Other than that, I think my vocabulary is still lacking.” (S6)

As well as S18 and S32 who responded with “Yes, sometimes I confuse with grammar (when using past tense) and also about the word choices.” (S18), and “Yes, I have. The problem when writing recount text is that sometimes I am confused about which grammar to use.”(S32) respectively.

All respondents mentioned that there were numerous difficulties in grammar was arisen, thus this is must be a problem which required deeper examination. Whether they could not comprehend the grammar or there are other factors which affecting the constructing process of recount text.

In question 8, there were 20 undergraduates (14,0%) stated that tenses provided notable challenges for them, they are S1, S3, S4, S5, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S14, S15, S17, S20, S22, S23, S24, S26, S28, S31, and S33. The following results from the explanation of the respondent S4, S5 and S20.

Based upon the answer of "S4" who had difficulty in tenses, especially in the use of irregular verbs. "Yes, Irregular verb sometimes confusing." (S4). It was known that regular and irregular verbs were the verbs division which categorized based upon changes in time or the way they were written, both possess notable differences regarding types of formation. Regular verbs were easier to memorize and comprehend, for examples: to travel, travelled, travelled - to play, played, played. Which different compared with those of irregular verbs: to cut, cut, cut - to buy, bought, bought - to take, took, taken.

The same problem was told by the respondent "S5" that his problem is irregular because due to his forgetful characteristic. "Actually, I don't have problem about the second form of verb as long as it is regular, but if it is irregular, sometimes I forget the second form of verbs." (S5). As well as the responses given by "S20" who faced difficulties regarding tenses in writing recount text. "Yes, I still got problems with the tenses because I'll forget to use past tense while I make recount text and too much put sequential words." (S20). It was occurred due to utilizing too many sequential words in composing either a sentence or paragraph. Hence, he forgot to utilize the past tense. and make him unsure of his own sentences, which make him use Google to aid him in discovering second form of verbs.

In question 9 there were 20 undergraduates (14,0) stated they possesses difficulties regarding punctuation, they are S1, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22, S24, S25, S26, S27, S28, S31, S32, and S33. The following results from the explanation of the respondent S11, S20 and S22.

Based upon the "S11" statement that she sometimes forgot where to utilize comma. "A little bit sometimes, mostly the (,) comma placement." (S11). As well as the cases with "S20" and "S22" who did not have idea in using punctuation when composing a recount text as well as confused regarding the correct writing punctuation. "I like to use punctuation in every single paragraph, for now I don't have one." (S20). "Yes, I have. sometimes, I'm still confused about the correct use of punctuation." (S22)

In question 10, the majority of the respondents did not face any problem in capitalization. Only 2 undergraduates (1,4) faced problem in this aspect. They were S25 and S26. "Yes, sometimes I am confused in using capitalization." (S25). "Yes". (26)

As for question 11, there were 14 undergraduates (9,8) stated that they have problem in conjunction, they are respondent S2, S3, S4, S7, S10, S11, S12, S14, S16, S17, S18, S21, S22, and S31. The following are the excerpts of the explanation from S12 and S22. "Sometime I just remember few conjunctions." (S12). "Yes, I have. I'm still confused about the proper use of conjunctions too." (S22)

In question 12 there were 28 undergraduates (19,6) who stated that they faced problems with the topic development, they are respondent S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22, S24, S25, S27, S28, S29, S31, S32, and S34. The following results from the explanation of the respondent S11, S17, S20 and S32.

Based upon the "S11" statement, she was composing the topic which was too general, she would feel confused due to many ideas come to mind. "Yes, when the topic is too general. I find it a bit confusing if there isn't any limitations for the topic." (S11). Thus, if the topic was too broad, then the undergraduate will be confused due to no existing limitations for the topic. Another answer was from respondent S17. "Yes. On this minute I have this idea, but after a minute passed I will have another idea which I think would be a good story but I cannot find the right word." (S17). Therefore, it can be concluded from the S17's answer that he would be confused regarding choosing a topic because new ideas always appeared. As for S2 and S32, they responded with "Yes, because I always think to much. Iam afraid that mine is not as good

as others story.” (S20), as well as “Yes, sometimes it's hard to developing the topic.” (S32) respectively. Hence, it can be concluded that the problems were arisen due to not focusing on developing the topic, which needed to be examined deeply.

The question 13 was “Do you have any problems in developing an orientation paragraph?”. Few respondents showcased problems in developing an orientation paragraph, 14 out of 34 respondents said that they had problems in this aspect, they were S3, S7, S9, S10, S11, S12, S16, S17, S18, S25, S27, S28, S29, and S31. Based upon the “S11” statement which he did not have any ideas for initiating writing. “Yes, sometimes I don't know what to begin with.” (S11).

The question 14 was “Do you have any problems in developing the event paragraph?”. 25 from 34 respondents mentioned that they faced difficulties in developing the event paragraph, such as respondent S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S10, S12, S13, S14, S15, S17, S18, S19, S20, S22, S24, S25, S28, S29, S31, S33, and S34.

Based upon the "S19" statement, when he was in writing process, he faced difficulties in to keep the composed sentences coherent/consistent from one sentence to another. "A little, to make it coherent." (S19). And the explanation of respondent “S20” showcased that when he shared all of his story, he will be confused in continuing his writing. “Yes, When I make the event is no longer than 2 sentences, after that I'll be blank.” (S20)

The question was “Do you have any problems in developing a reorientation paragraph?”. 21 from 34 respondents said that they had problems while developing a reorientation paragraph, they were respondent S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S16, S17, S18, S20, S21, S24, S25, S27, S28, S29, S30, S31, and S33. The explanation of respondent S11, S20, and S21. Here are some excerpts from “S11”, “S20”, and “S21”. “Yes, because earlier I didn't know that the conclusion/reorientation paragraph should be related to the orientation part.” (S11). “Yes, because I will be blank in the middle of making the event so it will be the same with reorientation. I don't know what should I write.” (S20). “Yes, I do have. It is somehow hard to put everything as a whole since I had described and explained everything starting from the orientation to events, and summarizing and thinking of other words to conclude everything that I had retell was a lil hard for me.” (S21). Overall, albeit there were different opinions regarding it, the main point was same that they did not focus on what they want to write so that this could affect them in the topic development.

The question 16 was “Do you translate from Bahasa Indonesia to English when you write?”. 25 from 34 respondents said that “Yes,” there are respondent S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S20, S21, S22, S24, S25, S31, S32, S33, and S34. Overall, few respondents had already had knowledge that the English structure was different compared to their L1, which is Indonesian. This could be seen from the explanation of respondent S20 and S21. Based upon the “S20” statement that he once translated Bahasa Indonesia into English, then a problem was arisen afterward. Therefore, now he attempted to comprehend the English structure while conducting writing process where he directly wrote sentences in English. “Yes, that Is why I always make the English one without make the story in Bahasa first.” (S20). As for S21, the respondent answered “Yes, I do have one. The grammar in Bahasa Indonesia is way too far and way too different from the English grammar, and so translating it makes a different outcome.” (S21).

Another explanation was from respondent “S32” and “S17”. “Yes, because I don't have many vocabs. When I don't know the meaning in English, I have to translate it using google.” (S32). “Yes. I often cannot make a right sentence in Indonesia so might as well it is effected my writing skills in English.” (S17).

From their explanation, although majority of them compose the sentences in their L1 (Indonesian) first and then translate it to English. For those who did this, they think that it was the easiest alternative to be done when attempting to make an English paragraph. However, this was also the source of the most common problems.

The question 17 was “Do you use a dictionary to help you in writing a recount text?.” Which responded with “Yes” by 32 out of 34 respondents. They were utilizing a dictionary to aid them in writing, such as looking for the word they needed. Based upon the “S11” statement that he utilized a dictionary as a reference to discover the synonym or vocabulary needed when he attempted paraphrasing. “Yes, I do. I use it as a reference to find the vocabulary, especially to find synonyms words when I do the paraphrase.” (S11). Additionally, it could also be seen from several excerpts of S12, S28, and S32 which gave similar responses. “Yes, I always use a dictionary.” (S12). “Yes, I have problem with unfamiliar vocabulary.” (S28). “Yes, Sometimes, because I don’t have many vocabs.” (S32). These statements proved that they mostly required a dictionary in composing their writing which could aid them in looking up a word’s meaning as well as for checking a word’s spelling.

The question 18 was “Has your lecturer ever used English teaching media to write recount text taken from magazines, newspapers, and pictures?”, the question 19 was “Are you interested the teaching media that your lecturer used in teaching recount text?.” Almost all of them said that “Yes.”, and the question 20 was “Do you like the way of your lecturer in teaching recount text?.” Almost all of them said “Yes.”. All of the three questions were responded with “Yes.” by almost all of them. Respondent “S11” said that he liked how the lecturer teach, he explained that his lecturer elucidated the material in detail. “Yes, I do. My lecturer explained every details about it. And He corrected directly or immediately when we (the undergraduates) make mistakes, it is really helpful.” (S11). S15 and S20 also gave similar response. “Yes, he teaches us in a simple way, all the explanation is clear and good enough for us, I think we just need more exercise to make a good recount text.” (S15), and “Yes, the lecturer made the class alive by asking the question for the audience. Sometimes I scared because my internet connection bad here.” (S20) respectively.

The Description of the Interview Result

For supporting the acquired data, interviews session was also employed by the analyst as a study instrument which was done by interviewing the undergraduates regarding problems that was arisen when writing that had been enquired in their questionnaire as well for. The result could be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Interview report

No	Question	Answer	Conclusion
1	Is there any problem in writing recount text?	Yes, I have problems in writing recount text	Undergraduate has problems in writing recount text
2	What are the problems that you faced in writing recount text?	I think I have problem in organize ideas, lack of vocabulary, and lack of understanding about grammar.	Undergraduate has problem in organize ideas, lack vocabulary, and lack of understanding about grammar.
3	Do you have problem in content when writing recount text?	Yes, sometimes the paragraph has no unity	The first problem in writing recount text was content. Sometimes, the undergraduate write paragraph which has no unity. Unity means that the paragraph explain one idea

4	Do you have problem in organization when writing recount text?	Yes, I often write recount text without a conclusion in the last paragraph, because of forget or confuse	The second problem in writing recount text was organization. Organization in recount text included orientation, events, and conclusion/re-orientation.
5	Do you have problem in vocabulary when writing recount text?	Yes, I think I lack of vocabulary	The undergraduate has problem in vocabulary
6	Do you have problem in language when writing recount text?	Yes, sometimes I did not pay attention about sentence pattern in writing recount text, grammatical use still not appropriate with recount text.	In language, the undergraduate have problem to make sentence correctly. Sometimes, he forgot to change sentence into past tense form.
7	Do you have problem in mechanics when writing recount text?	Yes, I less attention in punctuation and capitalization	The last problem in writing is mechanics. the undergraduate said that he does not pay attention about punctuation when he is write recount txt.

From the table above, we could settle that the problems are regarding how to organize idea, lack of vocabulary, as well as lack of grammatical comprehension. Furthermore, they faced difficulties in composing recount text related with the aspects of content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics.

Study Discussion

In this study, the undergraduates had several problems which could be seen in each category below:

1. Content Problem

The problem regarding choosing topics or content in composing recount text resulting with the discovery that this problem was quite large faced by undergraduates, as many as 28 (19.6%) indicated that they had problems in writing while the remaining 7 (6.9%) undergraduates said they did not.

Some undergraduates had problems in composing a recount text particularly relating to the content. From the questionnaire and interview answers, they could not share what they thought or knowledge they had regarding the story with what have been written, their writing unclear enough and often too short, which was caused by the restriction arisen due to insufficient vocabulary. The relationships of elements within and across the sentences were not affectively exploited by them.

2. Organization Problem

Organization in recount text encompasses with orientation, events, and re-orientation. Some undergraduates stated that they could not implementation of a good organization, because they lack, to begin with, orientation and then followed by series of events, and the last, re-orientation.

3. Vocabulary Problem

Vocabulary is another difficulty faced by the undergraduates in writing, they had a problem regarding vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the audience, which was caused by their limited capability in vocabulary aspect. Besides, they had problems with the word classes like adjectives, nouns, adverbs, as well as verbs which sometimes were incorrectly or inappropriately utilized based upon their function, as many as 29 (20.3%) undergraduates mentioned that they had limitations in vocabulary, while only 5 (5.9%) said they were not. Thus, generally, the respondents state that possessing insufficient vocabulary greatly affects the capability for composing recount text, the study results were in line with Harris, et al's (2014) study, which discovered that undergraduates utilized some inappropriate vocabulary for showing their

ideas. Furthermore, it was in accordance with Brown's (2004) opinion as well who stated that good writing must possess several elements, including vocabulary mastery.

Vocabulary is a language proficiency core component which providing the majority of the basis in making learners speak, listen, read, and write well (Richard & Renandya, 2002, p. 255). Without mastering vocabulary, learners will have less chances and opportunities for employing their language learning, such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, utilizing the different language contexts, reading, or watching television. Particularly in writing, undergraduates would find it difficult in presenting their thought. Strakey (2004, p. 21) stated that one among the finest ways for conveying ideas accurately in an essay is by utilizing the appropriate words. By doing so, undergraduates could ensure readers to comprehend their writing pieces. Hence, by employing appropriate words, writers were capable of convincing and attracting readers' interest to read. Readers would keep reading when they discovered words which could give meaning to them, therefore making them always memorize those words. Alternatively, if writers implemented incorrect and ambiguous words, it would make readers felt confused in comprehending their composed recount text content.

4. Language Use Problem

Undergraduates' problem in this aspect were generally in grammar and tenses. This study showcased that in composing recount text, the main difficulties was in grammatical aspect which was addressed by 30 (21.0%), that was possessing the biggest percentage, while those who stated not as much as 5 (4.9%). The study results were in line with the discovery in Karmida's study (2014) which stated that most undergraduates faced difficulties in grammar, particularly tenses, which might be caused by the respondents being studied were the students of SMPN 31 Banjarmasin. However, this study results were greatly different with Sari's study (2017) which was conducted on first semester undergraduates of the English Education Study Program FKIP UMSB Padang Panjang Academic Year 2017/2018 which resulting with the low grammatical errors percentage that was only 4%.

Grammatical difficulties were the next main problem for the undergraduates. Based upon the undergraduate's answers, the analyst discovered that the undergraduates had a major problem in grammar. Most of their grammatical difficulties were in the utilization of simple past tense. They did not know and still unsure whether utilizing simple present or simple past tense in their writing pieces. Grammar is one among the key ideas in written form to clearly comprehend recount text results. Undergraduates often got confused in utilizing tense in the sentences. For instance, in composing recount text the undergraduate should utilize the simple past tense, but they often utilize simple present instead for constructing the sentences.

Furthermore, the study results also showcased that the problem in composing recount text was tenses. There were 20 (14.0%) undergraduates who faced difficulties in this aspect while those who answered were not as many as 15 (14.7%), which was in line with the study results of Karmida (2014) that undergraduates faced problems regarding tenses. These difficulties were arisen due to some undergraduates found it difficult to find appropriate utilization of past simple or past continuous tense in written form.

5. Problem of Mechanics

Undergraduates' problems in this part were generally in punctuation, capitalization, and conjunction.

a. Punctuation

The punctuation problem is a fundamental difficulty in writing. Based upon the study results it was showcased that there were 20 (14.0%) undergraduates who stated that they faced a problem in punctuation while the remaining 15 (14.7%) said no. Thus, it could be settled that in this section, half undergraduates

faced problem in this aspect which was in line with Sari's (2017) study which indicating that punctuation provided problem in composing recount text.

Based upon the undergraduates' responses, they could not comprehend well regarding the utilization of the punctuation marks correctly for conveying information accurately and effectively. It is the full stop which had been utilized adequately and correctly. The commas which were utilized extensively in order to help the readers for conveying the intended meaning in long sentences were not adequately utilized which reduced not only the comprehension but the accuracy as well. Unfortunately, the undergraduates who were partaking in this study still had difficulties in using punctuation mark, especially in fullstop and commas.

b. Capitalization

Moreover, the subjects were facing difficulties in capitalization, contrasting to the study results of Sari (2017) which showcased that 32% of undergraduates facing difficulties in constructing recount text in capitalization aspect. In this study, most undergraduates around 33 (32.4%) stated that capitalization were not a problem for them, only 2 (1.4%) who stated that it was giving them difficulties.

The utilization of capital letters correctly is a writing norm which is compulsory in all languages. Several undergraduates still faced problems in capitalization, such as its utilization after periods, at the beginning of a person's name, a place name, and the city or country name.

c. Conjunction

This study discovered the writing difficulties regarding conjunction. It was shown that there were 14 (9.8%) undergraduates who faced difficulties in this aspect, but those who faced this difficulty were in smaller number comparing to those who did not, namely 21 (20.6%) undergraduates.

Conjunction is considered as one among difficulties the undergraduates faced due to their answer where some stated that they were struggling when required to utilize appropriate conjunctions for linking words, phrases, as well as clauses within a sentence, or for merging two components in one sentence for expressing certain meanings.

Brown (2004, p. 246) stated that when undergraduates attempted to construct good compositions in producing a good as well as meaningful writing, several compositions were required. Those were:

1. Content, which is the familiarity regarding expressed ideas of what we need to write that was substantive as well as relevant to assigned topics.
2. Organization, the writing pieces should flow fluidly by clearly stating/supporting the main idea, organizing the writing piece to be cohesive, as well as clearly showcasing the relationship between the main idea its supporting sentences.
3. Vocabulary, how and what words along with lexical item chosen by the writer for constructing writing which consists of effective word that could showcased the word mastery and appropriate register possessed by the writer.
4. Language use, is the words forming and sentences construction rules in writing as well as what structures and lexical items chosen by writer to give a particular tone on giving some sense in the writing pieces.
5. Mechanics, the utilization of language graphics convention which including the capitalization, spelling and punctuation use.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based upon the findings, the analyst concludes the undergraduates of Intermediate Writing class of FKIP ULM Banjarmasin in constructing recount text. The chosen undergraduates faced difficulties in constructing recount text in several aspects, such as content, vocabulary, organization, language, and mechanics, with grammar possessing highest percentage. 30 undergraduates (21%) stated that they had difficulties with grammatical aspect. Several undergraduates felt difficult and uncomfortable to create a correct sentence due to the lack of grammatical mastery, therefore they unsure or insecure for sharing or proceeding with their ideas in writing. As for difficulties in vocabulary, 29 undergraduates (20,3%) stated that they had problem due to not possessing sufficient vocabularies. Most of the undergraduates opened a dictionary, either digital or printed, when they attempted to make a sentence in English from Indonesian. They did not construct their writing pieces by guessing the words meaning based on the context which showcased their vocabularies were not sufficient. Then, 28 undergraduates (19,6%) stated that they had difficulty in finding main idea or the topic. The undergraduates did not possess specific ways on how to find main idea easily. The difficulties regarding tenses and punctuation were both occurred to 20 undergraduates (14,0%). Then conjunction along with capitalization errors were occurred in less percentage with 14 undergraduates (9,8%) and 2 undergraduates (1,4%) respectively.

Suggestions

After the study was carried out, several suggestions could be proposed in hope that the writing difficulties could be decreased thus ease the EFL teachers in conducting the educational process.

1. To make the undergraduates be more focused toward the material as well as aid them to be happy and relax, the teacher should implement brainstorming as warming-up before initiating the educational process in the classroom.
2. The undergraduates were expected to possess sufficient vocabulary and grammatical comprehension for constructing English writing well. Hence, they should begin to stop translating from Indonesia into English due to possible errors which possibly arise due to the different construct in their L1 and English as their L2, especially emphases past tense vocabularies which must be utilized in recount text that is not utilized in the undergraduates' L1 (Indonesian).
3. Regarding the vocabulary component problems, undergraduates were required for reading many English texts to enrich their knowledge. Alternatively, teacher could provide a list of vocabulary aid the memorizing process.
4. The undergraduates should be more vigorous while partaking in educational process, such as by enquiring the lecturer/teacher regarding recount text particular aspect which they failed to comprehend.
5. The lecturer should give feedback towards the undergraduates' pieces of writing to aid their writing mastery progress.
6. Writing is a capability which requires constant process and practice. Thus, one should practice writing routinely from the basics, started from the simplest one such as regarding daily activity then proceed to more complex topic as retelling past experience through recount text.

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