

THE QUALITY OF WORD CHOICE IN THE NARRATIVE COMPOSITIONS OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

Sherly Since⁵

Stefanus Laga Tukan, Agustinus Ngadiman⁶

Abstract. *This study was an attempt to answer the questions: Are the words used in the compositions of Writing I students specific and appropriate? Are the nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs used in the compositions under study specific and appropriate? The data source of the study was the students' Writing I final test papers of academic years 2006/2007 (15 papers) and 2008/2009 (15 papers). The results are the words made by the students from both academics are specific and appropriate in which the score is 3. There are 20 essays scored 3 or in good quality, 7 essays with excellent score (4), and 3 essays are scored 2 (fair). The nouns used are specific (good score of 3) while the verbs and the modifiers used are somewhat specific (fair score of 2). All four class-words are used appropriately in which the score is 4 (excellent). Based on the results, it is suggested the EESP authorities include vocabulary section in Writing I syllabus that is treated as equally important as any other elements of Writing. The Writing I lecturers are expected to teach the students to master and use specific and appropriate words. The students themselves are encouraged to enrich their vocabularies by reading books.*

Key words: quality, word choice, narrative composition

Introduction

In the English Education Study Program of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University (henceforth EESP of TTEF, WMSCU) at present, writing, one of the language skill subjects that the students have to master, consists of a series of writing subjects: Writing I, Writing II, Writing III, and Writing IV, each of which is assigned 3 credits. In Writing I, the students are trained to master recount and narrative genre texts, while in Writing II, they are taught to produce descriptive, news item, and report text type. Later, in Writing III, they learn about and write explanation and exposition texts. Finally, Writing IV deals with discussion and review texts. The division of the levels is determined in line with the concepts of genre-based approach pioneered by Australian English curriculum experts

⁵ Sherly Since *adalah* Mahasiswa S1 FKIP Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya.

⁶ Stefanus Laga Tukan, Agustinus Ngadiman *adalah* Dosen Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di FKIP Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya.

and practitioners and widely used in Common Wealth countries (Tukan et al, 2008, in process). At the EESP of TTEF of WMSCU, the genre-based approach to the teaching of Writing has been effective since the even semester of the 2006/2007 academic year (FKIP, 2007).

By design, Writing I, focusing on Recount which includes (auto) biography and Narrative text type, has been taught in every even semester ever since the academic year of 2006/2007. Recount is a text type that retells past activities or events, usually in the order in which the activities or events happened; on the other hand, narrative is a text type that tells a story about a true or imaginary happening. The chief difference between them is that there is a complication followed by a climax and resolution in the narrative while in recount, these elements are absent. Both, however, have orientation, chronological events, and endings. In addition, both text types share the same aims – to entertain the readers and to educate them (Harjanto & Tukan, 2006).

After a 4-month-course of Writing I, the students are expected to write good quality recount and narrative compositions. This subject (Writing I) is important since it is the basic of the Writing series in the EESP curriculum. Besides, Blanchard and Root (1998) assert that the easiest way to begin writing is to write about things one knows well: that often means writing about oneself (autobiography), one's experiences (recount), and one's imagination (narrative), just exactly the things that one acquaints with in everyday life. Apart from this, mastering Writing I is a prerequisite for the EESP students to join the next series of the writing subject – Writing II, Writing III, and Writing IV. It is assumed that the students' accomplishment in Writing I will surely help them to do their Writing assignments even of the more difficult ones such as research project reports.

Although Writing 1 deals with recount and narrative, this study focuses on narrative because narrative uses descriptive words to make a text interesting and lively, whereas recount – which aims to inform the readers about events happened in the past – does not necessarily use descriptive words (Sadler & Hayllar, 2000), (Anderson & Anderson, 2003).

According to Peha (1995), whose opinion is adopted by the writer, a composition is said to be good when: (1) Its ideas are interesting and important, (2) Its organization is logical and effective, (3) Its voice is individual and appropriate, (4) Its choice of words is specific and appropriate, (5) Its sentences are smooth and expressive, and (6) Its conventions are correct and communicative. Among those characteristics of a good composition, this research focuses on choice of word, the smallest unit in writing. Without words, the writer cannot express his intended meanings in the form of a piece of writing since words “represents ideas of things” (Baker, 1972, p. 180)

However, writing is not merely arranging words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into longer texts without any

purpose. The words arranged into larger units should be meaningful and understandable to both the writer and the reader (Purnama, 2002). This importance of word choice is stressed by Guth (1969, p. 409), who claims “An effective writer knows how to use words in such a way that they carry the *intended* meaning and produce the *desired* effect. He is always looking for words that will help him say what he wants to say more clearly, more directly”. Apart from this, Peha (1995) states that when a person writes in English and decides which words to use, he has plenty of choices. Likewise, Kessler (1984) claims that words are the writer’s tool but still he should consider the variety in order to choose the precise ones. As a matter of fact, Lannon asserts “Word choice ultimately determines the quality of your writing” (1992, p. 193).

Relating to the aims of narrative – to entertain and educate the readers, the story being composed should be interesting to capture the attention of the readers and compel them to read further. To achieve this, Cowan (1983, p. 172) declares, “To hold their attention – you are going to have to draw pictures for them, pictures in words. Very likely, these specific pictures will be the thing your reader most remembers.” This is in line with Peha’s theory (1995) claiming that a composition is said to be good if it, among others, contains specific and appropriate words. He specifies these kinds of words into strong verbs, concrete adjectives, and precise adverbs. In addition, Fawcett and Sandberg (1984, p. 185) claim that, “Good writers express their ideas as *exactly* as possible, choosing *specific*, *concrete*, and *vivid* words and phrases. They do not settle for vague terms and confusing generalities.”

Ideally speaking, with good and careful word choice, the writer could create a mental picture for the readers. As stated earlier, the word choice (diction) of a good composition of any genre has to be specific and appropriate (Peha, 1995). Peha further claims that the word choice of a piece of writing is said to be specific if it uses strong verbs that tell how actions are performed, and it also uses adjectives and adverbs that make things more specific. It is appropriate if the words are used correctly in the sentences. In brief, specific and appropriate choice of words makes a piece of any written genre fresh, lively, and understandable. It is expected that the EESP students can produce compositions with specific and appropriate chosen words.

Whether this expectation has been fulfilled, needs a scientific study. So far, there has not been any reported study on the quality of word choice done at the EESP. There has been a thesis written by Soebakti (1995) about word choice or diction in the EESP but it just analyzed the errors of diction encountered in the writing exercises of the second semester of EESP students in the academic year of 1993/1994 and also studied the possible causes of making the errors. He was not concerned with the quality of the word choice itself which is also essential in giving beneficial contribution to the EESP in general and to Writing 1 lecturers in particular. That is why the writer decided to analyze the quality of the

word choice encountered in the EESP students' Writing 1 compositions, with special reference to their narrative compositions. In line with the background of the study under report, the major research questions are as follow "Are the words used in the compositions of Writing I students specific an appropriate?"

The Method

In collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher relied heavily on the qualities of a good piece of writing, especially one that deals with word choice, proposed by Peha (1995), besides her own writing knowledge and experiences as the parameters. To Peha, writing is considered good if it has among others appropriate, specific, and memorable word choice which is characterized by the use of concrete nouns, strong verbs, precise modifiers, and striking words. Besides, to assess the quality of the word choice, the writer used the rubric of word choice adopted from Peha.

Table 1
Word Choice Rubric for Quality Analysis

Category	1 – Unsatisfactory	2 - Fair	3 - Good	4 - Excellent
Specific (S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use too general and too vague words to paint pictures in readers' mind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use some specific nouns, verbs, and modifiers to create mental picture in readers' mind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use specific nouns, lively verbs, and precise modifiers adequately to add the meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use precise nouns, descriptive adjectives, strong verbs, and precise adverbs to enhance the meaning.
Appropriate (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use most words that are inappropriate that make the writing unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use several words that are inappropriate that make the writing somewhat unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use appropriate and inappropriate words adequately that make the writing somewhat clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use most words appropriately that make the whole writing clear.

The Results

Word Choice Quality Analysis

After analyzing the quality of word choice of the students' compositions from academic year 2006/2007 and 2008/2009, the writer finds that the quality of both academics is more or less the same. They both have the same average score (3) which is said to be good. From the academic year 2006/2007, there are 2 essays which have been scored 4,

while from that of 2008/2009, there are 5 essays are considered excellent in terms of word choice quality. Good word choice, represented by score of 3, is found in 12 essays belonging to the students of the academic year 2006/2007 and in 8 essays belonging to the other academic year. One essay of academic year 2006/2007 and two from that of 2008/2009 are scored 2 and considered as having fair usage of word choice. No essays with unsatisfactory word choice quality found from both academic year which infers that the students from both academics have already had a good knowledge in choosing specific and appropriate words in writing. The comparison result is summarized in the table below.

Table 2
Word choice Quality of the Compositions Written by the Students of the Academic year 2006/2007 and 2008/2009,

Students of Academic Year 2006/2007			Students of Academic Year 2008/2009		
Essay	Score	Quality	Essay	Score	Quality
1	3	Good	16	3	Good
2	4	Excellent	17	3	Good
3	3	Good	18	4	Excellent
4	3	Good	19	4	Excellent
5	3	Good	20	4	Excellent
6	3	Good	21	3	Good
7	2	Fair	22	3	Good
8	3	Good	23	3	Good
9	3	Good	24	4	Excellent
10	3	Good	25	3	Good
11	3	Good	26	3	Good
12	3	Good	27	3	Good
13	3	Good	28	2	Fair
14	3	Good	29	4	Excellent
15	4	Excellent	30	2	Fair
Σ	46	-	Σ	48	-
Average	3.067 ≈ 3	Good	Average	3.2 ≈ 3	Good

The Quality of Word Choices of 2006/2007 Writing I Students

As the writer analyzing the quality of word choice in the students' narrative composition of the academic year 2006/2007, the writer discovered that the students tend to repeat the words over and over again. The repeated nouns are like "boyfriend", "bestfriend", and "girlfriend" which implies that the students lack of being trained to use the synonyms that they can easily find the words in their thesaurus. The writer also found many essays share the same specific words. Specific nouns like "best friend", "boyfriend", and "students" are highlighted in 8 essays while "girl" is used in 11 essays which is more than half of the total essays. The adjectives "the best" is spotted in 5 essays and "same" is used in 6 essays. The common specific verb found in 8 essays is "leave" and

“wait” is used in 6 essays. For adverb, “together” appears in 8 essays. These findings indicate that the most students from this academic year have the same level of mastering the English words and of using the words that are specific.

The students from this academic year do not misuse the words more than 15 times. It means the students have a good understanding about the words and their meanings. Most commonly inappropriate word that found in the essays is “on someone’s face” that modifies how the tears drop, while the correct one should be “on someone’s cheek”. There are 5 essays containing inappropriate nouns since they are treated as a verb (for instance: “phoned” “propose”), or as an adjective (“brave”, “cheerful”, etc). This shows that the students still have impartial knowledge about the various forms of English nouns.

Text Word Choice of 2008/2009 Writing I Students

The writer noticed that the students from this academic year prefer to repeat the words than to give the synonyms or add other descriptions on the words used. For example, in most essays of this academic year (Essay 16, 17, 18, 22, 27, 29, and 30), the noun “carpet” is used so many times that lead the reader to boredom. Some essays contain better description by adding the color of the carpet such as “red carpet with gold yarn” and so on. There are some specific words used in several essays of the academic year 2008/2009. The nouns “carpet” and “mother” appear in the most number of essays – 7 essays. The adjective “favorite” can be found in 6 essays while the second most-commonly-used adjective “invisible” found in 3 essays. The verb “hear” is present in 10 essays while “reply” and “remember” are found in 6 essays from this academic year. For the adverb, “together” is dominant and used in 5 essays. The usage of these same words are due to the same narrative topic chosen by the students or it indicates that the students share the same knowledge of the words or being exposed in the same environment that applies those words.

The difference of ability to use the English words appropriately is demonstrated in 15 essays made by the students of the academic year 2008/2009. There is an essay with the greatest number of misused words that reaches for 30 words, however the rest of the papers show good and also excellent result in terms of using the words appropriately. The possessive nouns are used incorrectly in two essays, such as “drummer’s blink” and “photo’s Bradd Pitt” that are supposedly written reservedly. Many adjectives are inappropriately treated as nouns like “shock” and “luck”. The misused phrasal verbs also exist in 3 essays, for instance: “to take back” and “bring up” that point out the limited knowledge about the phrasal verbs themselves. Double preposition and incorrect form make some adverbs inappropriate that further indicate that the students need more explanation about the prepositions and special adverbs that have the same form as adjectives like “fast” and “close”.

Word Choice Quality of 2006/2007 Writing I Students

From 15 essays made by the students of academic year 2006/2007, it has been analyzed that the quality of their word choice is said to be good as it reaches score of 3. There are 2 essays that deserve the highest score of 4 that shows an excellent use of both specific and appropriate words. A good use of chosen words that is identified by score 3 is found in 12 essays. There is only one essay that given fair score of 2. For the details of class-words, it can be seen in the following table.

Table 3
The Quality of Specific Words of 2006/2007 Writing I Students

Essay	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs	Average
1	2	2	2	3	2
2	3	2	2	3	3
3	2	1	1	1	1
4	3	1	1	2	2
5	4	1	1	2	2
6	3	3	2	1	2
7	1	1	1	1	1
8	1	1	2	1	1
9	2	3	2	2	2
10	1	2	1	2	2
11	2	2	1	1	2
12	1	1	2	1	1
13	3	2	2	1	2
14	1	2	1	1	1
15	2	4	1	3	3
Mean	33/15 = 2.2 ≈ 2	28/15 = 1.87 ≈ 2	22/15 = 1.47 ≈ 1	25/15 = 1.67 ≈ 2	27/15 = 1.8 ≈ 2

From the table above, it is clearly seen that the students from this academic year (2006/2007) still struggle to use specific words. Their average quality in producing specific words is worth score of 2. The nouns and the modifiers used are not very specific while the average score of 1 of the verbs shows that mostly the verbs used in the compositions are general. There is only 1 essay with excellent score of specific nouns, 5 essays with good score of specific nouns, 5 essays with fair use of specific nouns, and 4 essays with dissatisfactory score that indicate the four students still struggle to differentiate between specific and general nouns. In adjectives, only 1 essay gets an excellent score, 2 essays is scored 3, 6 essays with fair score, and 6 others are unsatisfactory. For the verbs, no essay gets excellent and good score, 7 essays is scored 2 (fair) and 8 essays is said to be poor quality of specific verbs. For the adverbs, no essay gets the highest score, there are 3 essays considered good in the quality of using specific adverbs, 4 essays get 2 in score (fair), and 8

essays score dissatisfactory quality. It means that the students still face difficulties in finding the specific words, especially the verbs.

Table 4
The Quality of Appropriate Words of 2006/2007 Writing I Students

Essay	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs	Average
1	4	4	4	3	4
2	4	4	4	4	4
3	4	4	3	4	4
4	3	4	4	1	3
5	4	3	3	4	4
6	3	4	4	3	4
7	4	1	4	4	3
8	4	4	4	4	4
9	4	4	4	4	4
10	2	4	4	3	3
11	4	4	3	4	4
12	4	4	4	3	4
13	4	4	3	2	3
14	4	4	4	4	4
15	4	4	3	4	4
Mean	56/15 = 3.73 ≈ 4	56/15 = 3.73 ≈ 4	55/15 = 3.67 ≈ 4	51/15 = 3.4 ≈ 3	56/15 = 3.73 ≈ 4

The table above shows that the students from the academic year of 2006/2007 have well knowledge of English words and their meanings. The average score of the appropriate words indicates that the students have an excellent quality to use the words appropriately in the context, except for the verbs which only scores 3. Only 1 student gets lowest score in using adjective appropriately and another student gets dissatisfactory quality in using appropriate adverbs. In other words, the ability of the students in using appropriate words is vary greatly but most of the students have excellently used the words appropriately.

Word Choice Quality of 2008/2009 Writing I Students

The word choice quality of the students in the academic year 2008/2009 is evaluated as good quality since it is scored 3 in average. There are 5 excellent essays that contain many specific words but few misused words. Eight essays are said to be good as it is worth score of 3. The rest two essays are given 2 in score due to the fair use of specific and appropriate words. There are no essays with unsatisfactory result found in this academic year which shows that the students of this academic year have a good knowledge in using words specifically and appropriately.

Table 5
The Quality of Specific Words of 2008/2009 Writing I Students

Essay	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs	Average
16	1	1	1	1	1
17	2	3	2	1	2
18	4	4	2	3	3
19	4	3	1	2	3
20	4	3	3	2	3
21	3	2	2	2	2
22	4	1	1	1	2
23	2	2	2	2	2
24	1	4	2	3	3
25	1	2	2	2	2
26	1	2	2	3	2
27	1	1	2	1	1
28	1	1	2	1	1
29	3	2	4	4	3
30	3	3	1	2	2
Mean	35/15 = 2.33 ≈ 2	34/15 = 2.27 ≈ 2	29/15 = 1.93 ≈ 2	30/15 = 2	32/15 = 2.13 ≈ 2

The students from this academic year show a fair quality of using the specific words. The average from each class-word, that only scores 2, indicates that the students have not mastered to use specific words in the compositions. Only 4 students excellently use specific nouns in their writing, 2 students did excellently in using specific adjectives, 1 student gets the highest score in applying specific verbs, and another bright student does well in using precise adverbs. However, most of the students of this academic year still lack of knowledge about specific words that they rely heavily on general terms in their writing.

Table 6
The Quality of Appropriate Words of 2008/2009 Writing I Students

Essay	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs	Average
16	4	4	3	4	4
17	4	3	4	4	4
18	4	4	4	4	4
19	4	4	4	1	3
20	4	4	4	4	4
21	4	4	4	3	4
22	3	4	2	1	3
23	4	4	4	4	4
24	4	4	4	4	4
25	4	4	4	4	4
26	3	3	4	4	4

Essay	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs	Average
27	4	4	4	4	4
28	3	4	2	4	3
29	4	4	2	4	4
30	1	4	1	3	2
Mean	54/15 = 3.6 ≈ 4	58/15 = 3.87 ≈ 4	50/15 = 3.33 ≈ 3	52/15 = 3.47 ≈ 3	55/15 = 3.67 ≈ 4

Overall, the quality of the students in the academic year 2008/2009 in using appropriate words is excellent. Most of the students get the highest score. The average score of the nouns and adjectives is excellent, but the score of the specific verbs and adverbs is 3 which is already good.

Discussion

From the analysis, it has been found that the quality of word choice manifested in the essays of the students belonging to both academic year of 2006/2007 and that of 2008/2009 is about the same quality level that to be good. As mentioned earlier, good quality of word choice is characterized by the use of specific and appropriate words. In general, the students of both academic years have demonstrated a good use of specific and appropriate words in their narrative writing.

From the academic year 2006/2007, most students use general words in their narrative compositions. It is presented in Table 4.3.1 below that 5 students or about 33.33% of the students are not able to write using specific words. About 53.33% of the students have shown a fair quality in applying specific words in their writing. 13.33% of the students have been identified as having a good quality in specificity found in their narrative. However, none of the students have an excellent quality to use the words specifically. In table, it shows that most students (66.67%) have an outstanding quality in using the words appropriately while the rest 33.33% of the students perform good quality of using appropriate words. None of the students has the quality below the average

Table 7
The Occurrence of Specific Words Quality of 2006/2007 Students

Score	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Excellent)
Notes				
Occurrence	5/15	8/15	2/15	0/15
Percentage	33.33	53.33	13.33	0

Table 8
The Occurrence of Appropriate Words Quality
of 2006/2007 Students

Score Notes	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Excellent)
Occurrence	0/15	0/15	5/15	10/15
Percentage	0	0	33.33	66.67

From the tables below, it is found that the students from the academic year 2008/2009 cannot use specific words excellently; however, most of them have performed an excellent quality in using the words appropriately. About 46.67% of the students are said to have a fair quality. 33.33% of them shows good quality and 20% of them have poor quality. There is no student identified as having an excellent quality. In the second table presented below, it shows that 80% of the students excellently use appropriate words. 13.33% shows good quality and 6.67 of them have a fair quality. Yet, no students with the lowest quality found.

Table 9
The Occurrence of Specific Words Quality of 2008/2009 Students

Score Notes	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Excellent)
Occurrence	3/15	7/15	5/15	0/15
Percentage	20	46.67	33.33	0

Table 10
The Occurrence of Appropriate Words Quality
of 2008/2009 Students

Score Notes	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Excellent)
Occurrence	0/15	1/15	2/15	12/15
Percentage	0	6.67	13.33	80

The nouns used in all 30 essays are mostly specific. There are 5 essays which show an excellent use of specific nouns. Seven essays apply specific nouns well. Seven others use the specific nouns fairly while the rest 11 use few nouns that are specific which then categorized as unsatisfactory in terms of specific words. Some specific nouns like “girl”, “best friend(s)”, “boy(s)”, “boyfriend(s)”, and “eyes” are present in most number of essays. The first noun “girl” is found in 15 essays of both academic years while the later words are present in 9 essays. There are

many repeated proper nouns exist in each essay which indicate that the students from both academics have a good understanding that proper nouns are specific.

In average, there is a fair use of specific adjectives in all essays. The details are as follow: 3 essays are given perfect score of 4, 6 essays are worth score of 3, 11 essays are scored 2, and 10 essays have the lowest score. Seven essays share the same specific adjectives like “the best” and “same” while 6 of them apply “favorite” in their composition which mean the students still have lack of knowledge about adjectives that can modify the nouns vividly.

Not all essays contain specific verbs throughout the paragraphs. The average score of using specific verbs in all essays is 2 that is said to be fair. There is only one essay given perfect score for its specific verbs usage. Another essay shows good use of specific verbs throughout its paragraphs. There are 17 essays that contain few strong verbs (the score is 2) and 11 essays that mostly use general verbs that is scored 1. The verbs “hear”, “leave”, “reply”, and “remember” are often used in most essays in which the first word appears in 16 essays, second word is used in 12 essays, while the last two words are used in 11 essays. These findings show that almost half of the essays apply at least four same verbs.

Some specific adverbs are used in all thirty essays that to be averagely scored 2. There is only one essay applies excellent use of specific adverbs throughout its paragraphs. Six essays show a good use of specific adverbs, while 10 essays are given 2 in score as they contain some specific adverbs, and 13 essays are scored 1. The following adverbs commonly found in the essays are “together” and “at Widya Mandala University”. The word “together” exists in 13 essays while the latter in 7 essays. This result shows that there is lack of mastery in using various adverbs that are specific.

The students from both academic years have used most English words appropriately. It can be seen from the average score of their words which reaches 3. This means the EESP students are able to use the English words contextually appropriate.

Most nouns are used appropriately in the essays. There are 23 essays scored 4 for its appropriate use of nouns. 5 essays are said to be good in terms of using nouns appropriately. Only 1 essay has been scored 2 and another is scored 1. From the essays, it is found that 2 essays have applied the collective noun inappropriately which should be “a bouquet of flowers” that is written as “banquet of flowers” and “bucket of flowers”. Other nouns are misused as it is in the adjective and the verb forms, for instance “phoned” and “brave” that are supposed to be “phone call” and “bravery”.

In adjectives, the common thing that makes the words misused is due to its improper forms that are written in either the verb form like “love” instead of “lovely” or in the noun form like “woods” instead of “wooden”. However, the adjectives are well-used in most essays that only

1 essay has the lowest score, 3 essays are given score of 3, and 26 essays are in excellent use of adjectives.

The verbs used in the essay are mostly appropriate that in average, this type of content-words is scored 4 based on its appropriateness. The verbs that are used inappropriately found in the essays are “reply” and “find” which the two words should be written as “replied” and “found” in the past form. However, some students misuse the words to become “replay” or “replaid” and “to found” or “founded”. The phrasal verb “come over” is misused two times from both academic years that supposedly written by simple “come”. These misused words indicate the students’ confusion over similar verbs that have different meanings.

An excellent use of appropriate adverbs is demonstrated in almost all essays. There are 21 essays that score 4, 6 essays are given 3, 1 essay is given 2, and other 2 essays are scored by 1. The adverbs “on someone’s face” appear some times throughout all 30 essays. It is inappropriate when modifying the verb “slap” and the words “tears drop” and the adverbs should be written as “on someone’s cheeks”. This infers that some students lack a sense of awareness when describing an action that makes their sentence sound illogical or awkward.

Having done the analysis concerning on the word choice, the writer feels that the superlative form in both adjectives and adverbs are not necessarily considered as specific as happens in the adjective “the best” or “the most shocking” considering that those modifiers are still vague and do not clearly show what makes the thing “the best” or in what way the thing becomes “the most shocking”. However, the theory from Peha and that of other writing experts state that all modifiers written in superlative forms are said to be specific as it refers to one person or one thing only.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the students under study are able to write compositions using specific and appropriate word choice. Most students still struggle to use specific words in their writing that make them tend to repeat the words so many times. Even so, it has been identified that the students have fairly used the specific words in their writing which has average score 2. The students under study also demonstrate a good knowledge of English words and meanings that in average, their usage of appropriate words has been scored 3 which means good. Based on the two characteristics, most of the essays under study are worth score of 3 that resulted in good result or score 3 of the average scores of the thirty compositions concerning on their word choice.

Although the overall score indicates that the students have a good ability in using specific and appropriate words, the writing lecturers are still expected to make efforts to make the students improve their writing in terms of word choice since so many times the students deal with word repetition that creates boredom for the readers.

Suggestions

The last part of this study contains several suggestions that are delivered to the EESP authorities, Writing I lecturers and the students of EESP of WMSCU. The suggestions are given to improve the students' ability to write the compositions by using words that are specific and appropriate in context. The writer also gives the suggestions for further researches concerning on word choice.

Suggestion for EESP Authorities

As to minimize the word repetition made by the students when writing their compositions, the writer feels the need for EESP authorities to include vocabularies section in Writing I syllabus and in the students' textbook that this section really becomes a part of the core in Writing I lesson and not treated as an additional activity or as a trivial matter that further makes the teachers simply ask the students to read and memorize the words by themselves.

Suggestion for Writing I Lecturers

The writer suggests that Writing I lecturers still make their best efforts in teaching and training the EESP students in using words specifically and appropriately in the context. The writer thinks that the lecturers can implement triggering activities concerning on word choice based on the types of genre writing or on the topics being taught. For instance, the lecturer can introduce the verbs "swerve" and "collide" when writing on a topic like "accident" and the like through mind-mapping or others that encourage the students to create the specific words by themselves. It is suggested that the lecturers deepen the students' knowledge over specific and appropriate words in order to improve their word choice quality.

Suggestion for Further Researchers

At the end, since this study was limited to the time, the instruments, and the relating sources, the writer of this thesis is not able to claim that the findings of this study is typical to all EESP students at any university and all English learners. Therefore, the writer suggests this study be continued by using better instruments and adequate relating sources, or using more data to be analyzed from different types of genre writing so that the results will reflect the more accurate and updated common words that are used vaguely and inappropriately.

References

(n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2010, from Commnet: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/adjectives.htm>

- (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2010, from Commnet: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/adverbs.htm>
- (2009). Retrieved February 26, 2010, from EnchantedLearning: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/grammar/partsofspeech/adjectives/>
- (2009, December 22). Retrieved February 27, 2010, from Scribendi: http://www.scribendi.com/advice/all_about_adjectives.en.html
- (2009). Retrieved February 26, 2010, from EnchantedLearning: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/grammar/partsofspeech/adverbs/>
- (2009, November 17). Retrieved February 27, 2010, from Scribendi: http://www.scribendi.com/advice/all_about_adverbs.en.html
- Agustien, H. I., Yuliani, M., & Purwati, M. (2008). *New English for a Better Life Grade XI*. Bandung: Pakar Raya.
- Barker, W. D. (1971). *Reading and Writing Skills* (3rd ed.). McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY.
- Blanchard, K., & Root, C. (1998). *GET READY TO WRITE*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative Research For Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Brown, C. A., & Zoellner, R. (1968). *THE STRATEGY OF COMPOSITION: A Rhetoric with Readings*. New York: The Ronald Press Company.
- Brown, D. K., & friends. (1995). *OXFORD Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (J. Crowther, Ed.) London: Oxford University Press.
- Burroway, J. (1992). *WRITING FICTION: A Guide to Narrative Craft* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Charles H. Vivian, P. D., & Jackson, M. A. (1961). *ENGLISH Composition*. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc.
- Chew, M., & Kaur, S. (2003). *The New STUDENT'S COMPANION FOR LOWER SECONDARY*. Singapore: System Publishing House Pte. Ltd.
- Cowan, E. (1983). *WRITING Brief Edition*. United State of America: Scott, Foresman and Company.
- Dagher, J. P. (1976). *Writing: A Practical Guide*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

- Drs. Stefanus Laga Tukan, M., Ngadiman, D. A., Saputra, S. O., & Saputra, S. V. (2008). *The Qualities of the Compositions Produced by S1 Students of the English Education Study Program*. 11-17.
- Fawcett, S., & Sandberg, A. (1984). *A Guide to Writing. Evergreen*. (2nd ed.). USA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Features of Text Forms: Narrative*. (2006, July 28). Retrieved May 13, 2009, from English Online: http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/resources/text_forms/narrative.html
- Frank, M. (1972). *MODERN ENGLISH: a practical reference guide*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Golafshani, N. (2003, December). *The Qualitative Report*. Retrieved November 30, 2009, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR8-4/golafshani.pdf>
- Good, D. W., & Minnick, T. L. (1979). *Handbook*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Guth, H. P. (1969). *WORDS and IDEAS*. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- Hacker, D., & Renshaw, B. (1989). *Writing with a Voice: A Rhetoric and Handbook* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Hammond, E. R. (1983). *Teaching Writing*. McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Harjanto, I., & Tukan, S. L. (2006). *Write With Us Book One: Recount Narrative*. Surabaya: English Department of Unika Widya Mandala.
- Howell, J. F., & Memering, D. (1993). *Diction: Brief Handbook for Writers* (3rd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Jordan-Henley, J. (1988). Retrieved April 20, 2009, from <http://www.rsc.c.tn.us/owl&writingcenter/OWL/Narration.html>
- Kessler, L. (1984). *When Words Collide*. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Kigotho, M. (2002). *International Education Research Conference*. Retrieved April 20, 2009, from <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/kig02111.htm>
- Lannon, J. M. (1992). *The Writing Process (A Concise Rhetoric)* (4th ed.). New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc.
- Macken, M. e. (1991). *A genre-based Approach to Teaching Writing Years 3-6. An Approach to Teach Writing K-12*. New South Wales: Common Ground.

- McMillan, J. H. (1992). *Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Mersia, M. (2001). *An Analysis of Vagueness on "Reader's Column" in Jawa Pos newspaper*. Surabaya: Widya Mandala Catholic University.
- Mukarto, & friends. (2006). *English On Sky: Book 3*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Munroe-Chandler, K. J. (2005). Retrieved March 4, 2010, from Athletic Insight:
<http://www.athleticinsight.com/Vol7Iss1/QualitativeResearch.htm>
- Murray, D. M., & Emeritus, P. (2004). *The Craft of Revision* (5th ed.). Canada: Thomson Heinle.
- O'Donoghue, & T., P. K. (2003). *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting*. Routledge.
- Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary* (3rd ed.). (2005). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peha, S. (1995). *Teaching That Makes Sense*. Retrieved September 30, 2009, from www.ttms.org.
- Peha, S. (1995). *What Is Good Writing?* Teaching That Makes Sense, Inc.
- (1975). *The Sense of Style*. In D. R. Pichaske, *WRITING SENSE: A Handbook of Composition*. New York: The Free Press-A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co, Inc.
- Purnama, G. O. (2002). *Writing Stages and Strategies of Attacking Writer's Blocks Taken by the Second Grade Students of SMUK Santa Agnes in Writing a Narrative Composition*. Thesis .
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Simon, & Schuster. (2003). *The Narrative Essay. A Newsweek Education Program Guide for TEENS* .
- Soebakti. (1995). *An Analysis of Problems in Dictions Encountered in the Writing Exercises of the English Department Students*. Thesis .
- Stephanie Macceca, M. A. (2003). *6+1 TRAITS of Good Writing Grades 5-6*. (M. E. Jennifer Overend Prior, Ed.) United States of America: Teacher Created Materials, Inc.
- Strunk, W. C., & E. B. (1979). *The Elements of Style* (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc.
- Warriner, J. E. (1986). *Warriner's ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Wikipedia. (2009, October 20). Retrieved November 30, 2009, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangulation_\(social_science\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangulation_(social_science))

Wrobel, S. (2008). Retrieved April 17, 2009, from http://www.scottwrobel.com/ADD%20Course/narrative_writing_basics.htm