

ANALYSIS OF SECOND GRADE STUDENTS' WRITING COMPETENCE, ERRORS, AND PROBLEMS IN ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT OF SMK PGRI PALU

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kompetensi, kesalahan, dan masalah menulis siswa. Jenisnya adalah deskriptif. Subjeknya adalah siswa kelas dua pada jurusan Akuntansi di SMK PGRI Palu. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah tulisan siswa, angket, dan wawancara. Teknik analisis data dilakukan dengan menganalisis hasil tulisan siswa berdasarkan kriteria klasifikasi komponen menulis dan kemudian mengidentifikasi kesalahan yang terdapat dalam tulisan. Angket dan wawancara digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi masalah yang di hadapi siswa dalam menulis. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pertama, kemampuan menulis siswa pada komponen kerangka dan mekanika tulisan adalah baik hingga cukup. Isi dan kosakata dikategorikan cukup hingga sedang . Sementara tata bahasa di kategorikan sangat kurang. Frekuensi kesalahan yang ditemukan dalam tulisan siswa berjumlah 439. Terdapat 143 bilan frekuensi kesalahan pada penggunaan kata kerja. Kemudian terdapat 110 frekuensi kesalahan pada kesesuaian antara subjek dan predikat. Frekuensi kesalahan terkecil ditemukan pada penggunaan artikel. Terdapat 15 frekuensi kesalahan pada artikel. Ketiga, masalah yang paling umum dihadapi siswa adalah penguasaan tata bahasa, dan pengetahuan awal. Terdapat tujuh siswa yang menyatakan bahwa penguasaan tata bahasa adalah masalah yang paling sering dihadapi dalam kategori unsure kebahasaan dan delapan siswa yang menyatakan pengetahuan awal sebagai masalah dominan pada kategori diluar unsure kebahasaan. Kemampuan menulis siswa juga banyak di pengaruhi oleh kurangnya penguasaan kosakata. Selain itu siswa juga mengalami kendala dalam mengembangkan ide pokok tulisan mereka. Serta kesalahan yang sering dibuat oleh siswa dalam menulis banyak dipengaruhi oleh bahasa Indonesia.

Kata kunci: *kemampuan menulis, kesalahan tulisan, masalah menulis*

English writing competence is widely recognized as an important skill for educational, business and personal reasons. Writing is a complex process which demands on linguistic competence and culture. It is even harder to learn to write in a foreign language, and it takes considerable time and effort to become a skillful writer. Goldman and Hirsch (1986) stated that Writing usually requires the writers to cover their topic more clearly and in greater detail than speaking. In speaking or conversation, people communicate face to face so they can ask a question for detailed information, explain the topics or ideas, they

may also use gesture as a manner to emphasize the meaning of communication.

Furthermore, English Writing is widely admitted as one of the most difficult skill to do. It is quite difficult for the second language learners or foreign language learners to master. The difficulty lies not only on generating and organizing idea but also in translating those ideas into readable text. Besides, English as second language learners or English as foreign language learners have to pay attention to the high level skill of spelling, punctuation and word choice

Regarding to writing activities in the classroom, students face plenty of problems to compose good text. Those are cultural, linguistic and social problems. Firstly, culture problem relates to students' belief or understanding towards the target language. For some cultures like Indonesian culture, students tend to be timid in expressing their idea freely. Then, Students have lack of ability to interact with others by English. Written communication is rarely being used. Therefore, many students meet complicity in using English for written communication. Lastly, linguistic problems relate to grammatical rules and other language features. Many learners do not feel confident with their sentence structures. They mostly feel afraid of making mistakes.

Preliminary study done at SMK PGRI Palu reports that most of the students have linguistic constraint in composing text. The problem could be seen into the lack of knowledge in linguistic competence. For example, most students in Accounting Department of SMK PGRI Palu are not able to construct adequate utterances. It is also due to the reason that those students do not know how to write words, phrases, and sentences. the poor achievement of students writing is caused by students' producing errors in linguistic aspects because the students write by translating Indonesian sentences into English not by transferring the meaning from Indonesian into English. In addition, cognitive and affective factors also assist to the writing competence.

Writing

Writing is production of graphics symbols to form words in sequences of sentences arranged in particular order and linked together in certain ways. writing also is process of encoding a message to transfer meaning to reader (Byrne, 1990). Writing is a progressive activity. This means that when you first write something down, you have already

been thinking about what you are going to say and how you are going to say (Oshima and Hague, 1997). In addition, writing is kind of activity where the writer expresses all the ideas the paper (print) from words to sentence, sentence to paragraph and from paragraph to essay. In relation to the organization of ideas on the paper, a writer should have an ability to balance the purpose, audience, and topics as well as a speaking activity. (Kroma, 1988). It can be concluded that writing is an activity that requires writers' competence in applying rules to express the their ideas into through papers.

Writing can help people think critically. It can enable them to perceive relationship, to deepen the perception, to solve problem, to give order to experience. It can help people to clarify their thought. Libblom (1983) defined writing as a way of learning to focus our mind on important matters, and of learning about them. By writing activity, a person can find the solution of difficult problem. Then, they express it by writing. This process of writing needs a greater attention to the problem. In this condition, a writer gives some efforts to explore as many ideas as possible and tries to communicate. Furthermore, an expressive skill, writing is a skill which is necessary to be developed.

Components of writing

As an integrated skill, writing requires some components that are addressed to linguistics competence which build up the unity and characters of writing. Those are related one another. Jacob and small (2003) point out five components in writing. They are content, organization, vocabulary, structure and mechanic. These can be explained as follows specifically

First, the content of writing should be clear to the readers, so that the readers can understand the message conveyed and gain information from it. In order to have a good

content of writing, its content should be well unified and completed. The term usually that was known as unity and completeness, which become the characteristics of a good writing. The writing is regarded to have a unity if it has some ideas and the sentences contained in it developed idea. The main idea is stated in the topic sentences and every supporting develops it and relates to that idea.

Second, the process of organization in writing involves coherence, order to importance, general to specific, specific to general, chronological order and spatial pattern. Initially, coherence means 'sticking together', and in a coherent essay, all ideas stick together. Chronological order in paragraph is organized chronologically; events and details are arranged in the order in which they occurred, usually moving from the first and earliest to the last or latest. Not paragraph arranged chronologically tell stories. Some give directions of explanation a process: other summarizes historical events, and still others report on the steps or action taken by an individual or organization. Nevertheless, they all share an underlying similarity; they present their ideas in the order in which they composed. Lastly, spatial order, the paragraph is to tell how something looks; the most effective organization pattern is usually spatial. If we write a description, for example; neighborhood, a room building, we want the reader to have a mental picture of what we are describing. In describing a house or building, we would probably first describe the exterior and the interior

Third, One of the requirements of a good writing always depends on the effective use of words. In personal description, word plays a dual role: to communicate and to evoke, to the readers to perceive and feel. This twofold purpose is evident even if such as a practical and common form as an advertisement.

Effective use of words also deals with connotative or figurative language. They are all important nearly all forms of writing, but particularly in personal description. In such description, word rich in association are more effective than those mainly transmit information.

Fourth, writing involves correct usage endpoints of grammar, there are many points of grammar, such as verbs, nouns, and agreement. Specific nouns and string verbs give a reader a mental image of description. These specific nouns can be characterized by using modifier of adjective, adverbs, and participle forms.

Fifth, The use of mechanics is about capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appropriately. This aspect is very important since it leads readers to understand or recognize immediately what the writer means to express definitely. The use of favorable mechanics in writing will make readers easy to understand the conveying ideas or the messages stated in writing. The mechanics are first capitalization. The use of capitalization in writing can clarify the ideas. If the sentences are not capitalized correctly, ambiguous meaning and misunderstanding will appear. Besides, through correct capitalization of sentences, it also help the reader to differentiate one sentence to others. Punctuation can be used as a unit of meaning and suggest on how the units of it relate to each other. Then, spelling. There are three important rules followed in using spelling appropriately. They are suffixed addition, plural formation, and handling error with words.

Students' writing errors

Richards and Renandya (2002) define error analysis as the study and analysis of the errors made by the second language learners and judges how learners are ignorant about

grammatical and semantically rules of the target language. Error analysis may be carried out in order to first find out how someone knows language, find out how a person's learns language, and obtain information on common difficulties in language learning.

In errors analysis of writing, there are two taxonomy. They are Surface strategy taxonomy and linguistic strategy taxonomy. Surface strategy taxonomy highlights the way surface structures which are called altered in specific and systematic ways The surface strategy taxonomy is classification system based on the ways in which the learners' erroneous version different from the presumed target version. (krashen, 1987). Under this category errors are classified into four types. They are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

The linguistic category classifications carry out the errors in term where the errors is located in overall system of the target language based on the linguistic item which is affected by the errors (James,1998). The theory indicates that linguistic category taxonomy divides errors into four categories. Those are grammatical, Syntactic, lexical, semantics and substance. Grammatical category consists of preposition, article, reported speech, singular/plural, irregular verbs, tense, and adjective. Lexical category is word choice. Syntactic category covers noun, pronoun and word order. Semantic and substantial category is capitalization and spelling.

Students' writing problems

Byrne (1990) states that there two problems or factors that might cause difficulties in writing. They are linguistics and non-linguistic (psychological) problems. He states in natural, human communicates each other by speech. Writing, on the other hand, is essentially solitary activity. It makes the act of writing difficult. Forward to linguistic

competence, Grammar is one of the most difficult aspects of a foreign language to master. It is defined as the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed. Thornbury (2000) expresses that English grammar has been traditionally viewed as "a system of syntax that decides the order and patterns in which words are arranged in sentences. In short, writing skill

Furthermore, language interference also can be a part of linguistic problem. Language interference or linguistic interference refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language. Interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language, language interference is as errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue.

Limited vocabularies of target language have to be mastered by a learner. Vocabularies of certain language mostly are about words of surroundings connected to life. Thus, a learner who is willing to master another language will meet new words differ from his native words. In order to be able to write as natives of target language, vocabularies take a big role. The more vocabularies someone has, the better he masters target language.

In non-linguistic problems, emotion, attitude or interest and motivation influence learning in important way. Good language learner should control their attitude and emotion about learning and understand that negative feelings can retard their learning achievement. For example, having too much anxiety, students will have the opposite effects where those hinder language learning. Anxiety often takes forms of worry, frustration, insecurity, fear and self-doubt.

In addition, Nichols (1983) states that students' writing competence is influenced by their interest. Basically interest is mentally

conditions of someone producing a response to particular situation or object that give pleasure as well satisfaction. Further, he said that points out that interest is a subjective objective attitudes, concern or condition involving a perception or an idea in attention and combination of feeling consciousness may temporary or permanent. Meanwhile, he added that experimentally an interest is a response of liking which is present when we are aware of an object we prepare to reach to or when we aware of our disposition toward the object we like. So we can conclude that in learning process, interest should be considered whatever the students' do. They will do or do not do it.

Furthermore, social factor is very important in learning a language because it is a part of communication among people. By asking question, cooperating with others and emphasizing with others, setting up good social interaction in the class, students will get the most helpful and understanding the meaning of communication including comprehending teaching material. Cooperation with others is able to eliminate competition and brings group spirit.

METHOD

This study was categorized as qualitative research. It was descriptive design which focused on describing and understanding a phenomenon. For the purpose of this study, descriptive design was used to find out information and then to describe students' writing competence' errors, and problems. The participants of this study were the students of the second grade in Accounting Department of SMK PGRI Palu. There were fifteen students involved in this research.

Technique of data analysis

In procedure of data analysis, to answer the first research question "*how is the students writing competence?*", this study used students' writing recount text, the researcher analyzed the students writing in term of content, organization, language use, vocabulary and mechanics. After getting all the data, the researcher analyzed the data by classifying them into five categories of writing components then describing them based on writing ranges. In describing the data, this study used range classification in the term of *excellent to very good, good to average, fair to poor and very poor* category.

To answer the second research questions "*what are the students' writing errors?*", this study still used students' recount texts. The texts were analyzed to seek the frequent errors in term of verb tense, adjective, subject/verb agreement, pronoun, plural/singular noun, preposition, article, word order and spelling. The last, to answer the third research question, "*what are students' writing problems?*", this study used questionnaire and interview. Questionnaires were distributed to fifteen students as respondents. Through the questionnaire in two items, this study identified students' dominant problems in both linguistics and non-linguistics problems. the interview was adressed to three students and one teacher. The interview covered the students and teachers' perception towards writing competence. Open interview was applied through this study

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The presentation of the findings of this research findings involve firstly, the classification of the students' writing competence in the term of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics, second, the frequent errors made

by the students in term of verb tense, adjective, subject verb agreement , preposition, article, singular plural noun, pronoun word order, and spelling. Third, students' dominant problems in writing in term of linguistics and non linguistics

1. Students writing competence.

After analyzing the students writing text based on the classification of writing component profile, it was founded that the classification of the students writing in the five components of writing was distinctive. The distinctive can be seen through table below

Summary of students' writing competence

No	Writing component	Score	Classification
1.	Content	19	Fair to poor
2.	Organization	14	Good to average
3.	Vocabulary	11	Fair to poor
4.	Language use	10	Very poor
5.	Mechanics	4	Good to average

This table displays the mean score of the student writing text in the five components. The mean score of content was 19 which is classified into *Fair to poor* category. Similarly to the content, the mean score of vocabulary is 11 which was also classified into *Fair to poor* category. While the mean score of organization was 14 which was classified into *good to average* category. Then, the mean score of mechanics was 4 which were classified into *good to average* category. The lowest category was addressed to language use. The mean score of language use was 10 which was classified into *very poor* category.

The students writing classification in content represented that the students writing was not regarded to have a unity of some ideas. The students writing had less supporting sentence to the main idea. Even some of the students writing was composed by

inconsistence of information. Then, the process of organization in the students writing involved good chronological order and spatial pattern. The students wrote adequate description of their personal experience. The students writing figured logical sentences but incomplete sequencing. So some of the students writing had less cohesive.

In the term of vocabulary, the students writing classification was due to frequent errors of choice and confusing meaning. Some of the vocabulary was not enough to evaluate or to be obscured toward the topic sentence. Furthermore, the students writing competence in language use was categorized as lowest competence among the five components of writing. The students competence in language use are due to the incorrect usage of grammatical term such as verb tense, subject verb agreement, noun, and word order. The dominant incorrect grammatical verb was the verb tense. The students seemed to have misunderstanding of using past form in appropriate way. The students also had problem in relating the subject and the verb. In addition, some of the students' sentence contained the inconsistence of writing word into good word order. The students writing word order was still based on the word order of Indonesian language.

In the term of mechanics. Those students only had a few errors of punctuation. The students' problems in mechanics were addressed to the sentence which involved incorrect capitalization such as name of place and the initial sentences. in addition, the students tended to write misspelling words. Their poor handwriting showed a few frequent errors of word spelling.

2. Students' writing errors

Through this study, it was found that the students' poor level in writing competence was impressed by the numerous frequencies of

errors which were produced by them in writing. The dominant frequent errors were verb tense. There were 143 frequent errors of verb tense. There were then 110 frequent errors of subject/verb agreement. There were 39 frequent errors of word order. It was then followed by adjective; there were 31 frequent errors of adjective. There were 30 frequent errors of spelling. There were 24 frequent errors of preposition. Furthermore, singular/plural noun and pronoun almost had the same level. The frequent errors of singular plural noun were 26. And in the term of pronoun, there were 21 frequent errors of pronoun. The minority frequent errors were remained by article. There were 15 frequent errors of article.

Grammatical problems have already been a great issue in English language teaching especially for those who learn English as second or foreign language. Through study in SMK PGRI Palu, The findings report that students' frequent errors in writing recount text are mainly referred to verb tense and subject verb agreement. Although not all errors are due to mother tongue interference, a number of errors identified in the use of verb tense, subject verb agreement, and copula 'be' are reflected the interference of Indonesian language. Thus, the problems of learning English writing in school level can still be largely due to grammatical form of Indonesian language. In Indonesian language, there is no rule of changing the verb in all pattern of sentences. And also there is no term of copula "be" in Indonesian Language. In addition, the pattern of Modifier-Head or Head-Modifier is significantly different usage in the both English and Indonesian language. When writing, students may not realize or be concerned much about the difference between Indonesian language construction and English constructions. Therefore, the writing skill which required high demand of grammatical

role seems still to be the hardest skill to learn among the four skill in English.

3. Students writing problems

The students' dominant problems in writing are grammar and prior knowledge. There are seven students who reported grammatical competence as dominant problem and eight students reported prior knowledge as dominant problem in non-linguistics. In short, the students writing competence are due to their lack of vocabulary mastery. The students find it difficult to develop the topic cause of having less prior knowledge. The students writing erroneous is due to their Indonesian language interference

Students' writing competence is further influenced by their daily school activity. There is a broad issue that reveals the link between having low literacy skills and social status to the learning outcomes. Social factors may cause a learner to lack motivation, concentration or the confidence to believe they can improve their skills. It can be seen through the interview that some of the students are afraid of asking to the teacher. They tend to ask their friends to overcome their writing problems.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIOS

Conclusions

The students' writing competence is the component of content is *fair to poor* category. The students' *fair to poor* level is dominated by the lack of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary mastery. Most of the students do not know about the sentence pattern and verb tense. The competence of the student writing is due to grammatical competence.

In addition, the students writing errors are dominated by verb use and subject verb agreement. The ungrammatical pattern of students writing is due to the interference of the construction of Indonesian language. In

writing activities, the students use Indonesian language construction to their target language. The phenomenon exists towards the influence of bilingualism background. Third, while in non-linguistic problem, prior knowledge, attitude are the students' dominant writing problems. The students do not have enough prior knowledge to develop the topic and the students are afraid of making mistakes. Furthermore, the students attitude toward English contribute to their motivation in writing.

Suggestions

The students writing competence in vocabulary and language use is the crucial problems that should be worked out by the teacher. The teacher who are interested to apply activities of writing process should pay attention to the linguistics competence of students and both Prior knowledge and students 'attitude.

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