

An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As one of international languages, English has a unique position among languages in many countries. It is a popular language which is widely taught and learnt as it is used in many life aspects, especially during the 21st century. This phenomenon happens across the globe, including Indonesia. Learning English is now considered as a necessity in the global community as so many important and useful information in human's life aspects are mostly explained and served in English, such as business, science, health, technology and so on. This is one of the main reasons why English needs to be mastered by many individuals including Indonesians.

It requires 4 (four) skills to be able to communicate well in English. They are listening, speaking, writing, and reading. While some students struggle with listening, reading, or speaking, some others find writing to be the most challenging.

Writing is a form of human communication that allows people to speak up their mind and communicate their thoughts in written form using symbols and letter characters. According to Atkins & Carver (2022) in their book *Writing Is Thinking: Strategies for All Content Areas*, writing is a utensil that students can use to express knowledge, organize their ideas, and evaluate their understanding.

Writing is an essential skill that needs to be mastered, especially by students, because they need to accomplish many academic tasks and assignments. Aside of that, writing is beneficial as it enables students to think critically and thoroughly. It is also a process to extend man's knowledge as it requires comprehension of a text.

Klimova (2012) once mentioned that writing has a special position in language teaching because it is an acquisition between practice and knowledge in listening, reading, and speaking. Students need to reach certain level of language proficiency to be able to pour out their ideas in written form, as well as to possess the ability to arrange those ideas into understandable text. This is in line with the statement from Richards and Renandya (2002 : p.303) which mentioned that generating and organizing ideas are not the only difficulties but also translating those ideas into readable text. They stated that writing becomes even more challenging if the language proficiency is not strong as it takes skill of planning and organizing. With such a complex process, students naturally believe that writing is difficult and often appears to be an overwhelming activity.

Writing itself consists of several major types, such as descriptive, narrative, persuasive, and expository. Based on the current national Independent Curriculum, narrative text as a part of writing is a lesson taught in schools. Narrative text is a text which describes a sequence of events in the past with entertaining purpose. According to Mieke Bal (2009), a narrative text is a text where a subject tells a reader a story using certain medium, from language,

image, sound, building, or the combination of the mentioned mediums. Meanwhile, Rebecca (2003) stated that a narrative text is a text which connects a sequence of logically and chronologically related events which is caused or experienced by particular component.

Narrative text can be categorized into fictional and non-fictional. Fictional narrative text includes fables, legends, novels, tales, folklores, and other imaginary-based texts. Meanwhile, non-fictional narrative text includes biography, autobiography, news, or article. Narrative text has a structure which consists of orientation, complications and resolution. Orientation is the introduction paragraph where the characters, time, and place of the story are introduced. Complication is where the main problem of the story begins and leads to the climax in the story. The story will be ended in a part called resolution where the main problem is solved and usually a moral lesson is included.

Despite of being a familiar material in schools, writing narrative text may not be an easy task for students. Harmer (2007:p.329) mentioned that some students have very low confidence and enthusiasm in writing. He also mentioned that this may come with some reasons : probably they have never written so much in their mother tongue language, or they think that they have nothing to say or can't come up with ideas. This often causes anxiety and frustration to students. Some students are able to come across ideas but are unable to organize them in a good paragraph.

Another challenge in writing narrative text is how students need to decide which language features to use to support the flow of the text. This includes

grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation (Harmer, 2005:12, 255-256). According to Merriam-Webster in Kids Definition, grammar is the study of the classes of word, their inflections, and their functions, and relations in a language. Many students find grammar to be confusing as the language structure and the word form also change depending on the time of the occasion mentioned in their story. Secondly, vocabulary is also popular as one of the challenges in writing. Often times, students know what to write but cannot express it due to the lack of vocabulary. Spelling as in the third place often confused students as some words in English sound the same but have different meaning and different spelling. The last one is punctuation. Punctuation is a visible tool in different forms made to present written texts in a form which is comprehensive and easy to read (A.Muttalib : 2020). As its function is to mark off clauses, phrases, sentences and to separate items, failure in mastering punctuation often leads to confusion for the readers of the story.

Related to this matter, some studies have been done by some researchers. To begin with, Muliani, Septha & Norahmi, Maida & Asi, Natalina. (2019) entitled “The Analysis of Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text” studied the writing challenges faced by the ninth-grade students in SMP Negeri 11 Palangkaraya in the academic year of 2018/2019. The researchers took 20 students as participants and used descriptive qualitative as the research method. As for the results, 40% of the participants found difficulties in constructing generic structure. The other 50% participants found difficulties in using language features, such as tenses, nouns, etc. As the conclusion, language features appeared to be more challenging in writing than generic structure to the students.

In addition, Falihah, Nova & Rahmawati, Eri & Baihaqi, Akhmad. (2022) entitled “EFL Students’ Difficulties in Writing Narrative Text” also studied about the challenges in narrative writing. The research was carried out at SMAN 1 Ciomas, Serang. There were 32 students of the tenth-grade involved as the participants. The objective of the study was to identify the difficulties faced by the students in writing narrative text. The research ended up finding four difficulties agreed most by the students, which are building correct sentences, using proper grammar, using proper vocabulary, and developing ideas. The conclusion of the study was students mostly found grammar and vocabulary to be challenging in writing narrative text.

Based on the facts mentioned, the writer is interested in analysing students’ difficulties in writing narrative text at the 11th grade of WR Supratman 2 School in the academic year of 2023/2024. The objective of this research is to analyse student’s difficulties in writing narrative text as well as the factors that caused the difficulties.