CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

This research investigates students' difficulties in writing a recount texts and their understanding of its generic structure and its related tenses. The English teacher needs to solve students' difficulties in writing a recount texts and find out how far students understand the generic structure of recount text and its related tenses. This research is expected to be beneficial for encouraging the students to learn how to master and improve the writing skills of recount text and hoped to support the English teacher on designing practical writing lessons that can overcome the students' difficulties.

Learning a language entails being fluent in both oral and written communication. However, writing is considered as the most difficult skill to learn (Richard & Renandya, 2002). It is because someone cannot rely only on the higher thinking abilities to figure out and organize the ideas to write and translate specific thoughts into a readable letter. Since writing is the most challenging skill for learners, the teacher needs to think about teaching writing effectively.

One of the genres taught in junior high school is recount text. Anderson and Anderson (1997:48) state that the recount text is a piece of text that explains previous events in order and outlines what has already happened. Similarly, Gerot and Wignel (1994:194) declare that recounts retell historical incidents to tell or amuse what happens and why. Because of these ideas, recounts are often based on the author's firsthand knowledge. However, it may also be novel or beyond the author's knowledge.

From the observation conducted by interviewing one of the teachers at a junior high school in Bandung, West Java, the students lack of rhetorical steps, mastery of language features, grammar mastery, tenses, and vocabulary

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mastery. Based on the teacher's interpretation, it is possible to infer that there are certain reasons of students' writing problems and mistakes. The causes are students has difficulties in generic structure, language feature, lack of grammar and lack of vocabulary that can influence students' writing quality. The students must also learn more about generic structure, language features, and vocabulary to understand well, build a correct sentence, read and write English correctly, and understand. Therefore, the student can create good communication and interaction in the English language. It becomes the reason why this research is conducted.

Several kinds of research regarding students' difficulties in writing a recount texts and their understanding of its generic structure and its related tenses. Musabbihin (2017) discusses the students' difficulties and their perceptions in writing recount text. Second, the research by Husna (2019) discusses the students' difficulties in writing recount text at inclusion classes. Third, the research by Harris, Ansyar, Radjab (2014) discusses the analysis of students' difficulties in writing recount text. The gap from this research is that the current research examines three aspects, mainly the students' difficulties in writing recount text to eight grade students, students' comprehension of the generic structure of many texts, especially the recount text, as well as language features used in writing the recount text, such as the past verb. Meanwhile, previous researchers were only concerned with one part of the issue, such as students' perceptions in writing recount text and what difficulties students have in writing text, especially recount text.

B. Research Questions

There are several research questions regarding the problem mention in the background:

1. What are the students' difficulties in writing a recount text?
2. How do the students identify the generic structure and use past verbs in writing a recount text?

C. Research Purposes

Regarding the research problems above, this research aims:

1. To find out the students' difficulties in writing recount text.
2. To know students' understanding of generic structures and past verbs.

D. Research Significances

1. Theoretically

This research provided data on students' understanding of generic structures and past verbs, and students' difficulties writing recount text.

2. Practically

a. For English teachers

This research contributed to English teachers paying more attention to recount form when teaching writing.

b. For the students

Students are motivated to improve their writing skills, especially in recount form.

E. Rationale

Writing is a skill that every English learner must-have. In the first and second semesters, junior high school students, in particular, will be required to comprehend and demonstrate their understanding of recount text. It can be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, trip, or weekend. Writing is a complex aptitude that needs the writer's capacity to utilize suitable vocabulary and grammar and express an idea. To write well, students must understand syntax or structure, vocabulary, idioms, arranging concepts, pronunciation, and punctuation (Raimes in Sari 2006:1). Based on Brown's opinion (1999), writing is a technique of communication that can be utilized to set up and keep in touch with others. Likewise, it can transmit data, express thoughts, feelings, and responses, then entertain and convince readers. In learning to write recount texts, many students find specific errors when learning to write recount texts and experience challenges in building and improving their creativity (Lorch, 1984). Most students dislike writing because learning to write boring and hard to understand (Sugiyono, 2010). It means that students find it difficult to arrange their thoughts while writing a recount text.

One of the forms of text specified in the junior high school curriculum is recount text. Anderson and Anderson (1997:48) stated that recount text is a bit of content that retells past occasions orderly and has the purpose of portraying what has just occurred. Gerot and Wignel (1994:194) state that recounting is the act of retelling historical events in order to remind or engage people about what happened and why it happened.

Students must be familiar with the general form and language features of recount texts in order to write them. Gerot and Wignel (1994:194) indicated that the generic structure of recount text is orientation, events, and re-orientation. Also, Roison et al. (2004:45) state that the recount text is organized in a chronological order, supplemented by a progression of events. It can provide review or re-orientation toward the end of the material at times.

Other than the generic structure, students must know about the language feature of recount text. Gerrot and Wignel (1994:194) indicated the language features of recount text emphasize the particular participant, utilize material processes (action verb), circumstances, place, and time, utilize the past tense, and spotlight a worldly arrangement. Hardy and Klarwein (1990:4) include that recount text language characteristics include the use of personal recount, emotive to represent events, action verbs and mental verbs, and the use of the past tense.

From the explanation above, the teacher is expected to solve students' difficulties in writing recount text, to encourage the students in learning how to master and improve the writing skills of recount text and to find out the students' comprehension of the generic structure of recount text.

F. Previous Studies

Several kinds of research regarding students' difficulties in writing a recount text and their understanding of its generic structure and its related tenses. First, Musabbihin (2017) research indicates that most students struggle with word selection, sentence construction, material, and organization while writing a recount file. However, students' perceptions of this sort of text were difficult to comprehend, less interested, and not easy to write out. The approach used in this research is a qualitative method of data analysis. The populations of this research were eleventh-grade students of MA Muallimin NW Anjani. There were 158 students. The research consisted of thirty-nine students enrolled in the religion program I. All subjects in this category of learners were male-only. Data obtained through the test and the questionnaire. In this research, the researcher observed that the result of the data analysis could be graded as average, insufficient to one student (2,5 %), and inadequate to thirty-seven students (95 %). The study's findings indicate that the students' comprehension of recount text was inadequate.

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Second, the research by Husna (2019) reveals the students' difficulties writing recount text at the inclusion classes. The research belongs to mixed-method research using a quantitative method to analyze the students' work and qualitative method for the descriptive analysis. The participants of this research were thirty students of eighth-grade inclusion class. In collecting the data, the researcher applied the testing technique. Several steps have been taken to analyze the data: studying the student's work, calculating the average score using descriptive statistics, and descriptive analysis. The study results indicate that the students' difficulties in writing recount text are related to the material aspect, organization aspect, grammar aspect, mechanic aspect, and generic structure of the recount text aspect, especially in orientation and re-orientation.

Third, the research by Harris, Ansyar, Radjab (2014) focuses on revealing the students' ability to develop recount texts and find difficulties faced by students. This study employs a quantitative approach based on cluster sampling. The populations of this research were tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Sungai Limau. A cluster sampling technique was used to select samples, namely class X.1 and X.3. A composition test was used as an instrument. Students' writing experiments were examined using metrics, and the results were translated and became the study conclusions. According to the findings of this study, students had poor recall writing skills, with an average value of (2.3). Based on the exams, the students also encountered difficulties when writing recount texts, especially in language features. This difficulty relates to simple past tenses, action verbs, linking verbs, and pronouns. The cause of this difficulty is the interlingual transfer, the intralingual transfer, and the lack of vocabulary that students own. So, it can be concluded that students still experience many difficulties in writing a good and correct sentence in recount texts according to the applicable rules. Furthermore, based on the findings of

this study, teachers are required to have improved teaching methods, and students should do more activities to develop their writing skills.

The differences with the current research that it examines three aspects, mainly the students' difficulties in writing a recount texts to eighth students, students' comprehension of the generic structure of many texts, especially the recount text, as well as language features used in writing the recount text, such as the past verb. Meanwhile, previous researchers were only concerned with one part of the issue, such as students' perceptions in writing recount text and what problems students face in writing text, especially recount text.