

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

One of the most important essential English skills is the ability to write. This skill is one of the communication medium for people to express their thoughts, opinions, feelings, or ideas about particular information and certain experiences through words (Marpaung, 2019). According to Hasani (2005), writing is a person's activity that involves pouring ideas, feelings, and sentiments into written form to comprehend the letter's contents. It is not easy to write in English as a foreign language. This tendency can be caused by differences in vocabulary, structure, syntax, and spelling of the person's mother tongue. Writing also involves five aspects: mechanics, content, structure, vocabulary, and grammar.

Writing and grammar are inextricably linked since grammatical norms are factors students should examine before writing anything. According to Alfiyani (2013), grammar describes how words can be changed and combined into linguistic sentences. The inability of students to learn grammar makes it difficult for them to utilize language to express themselves and impacts their writing abilities. Without proper grammar, readers will not understand sentences because they do not interact directly with readers, as usually do when speaking.

Furthermore, grammar also gives much contribution in writing text. Nordquist (2019) says that correct writing simply means writing that contains no mistakes, that is, no errors of grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

Writing is frequently useful as preparation for some other activities, in particular when students write sentence as a preamble to discussion activities (Harmer 2004:33). Writing has some elements which need students' knowledge, such as spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization (MacMillan, 2017). The writing itself has various types, such as narratives, procedure, descriptive, argumentative, and recount. The researcher will only talk about one sort of text in this study. This text is a recount. Recount is a written composition that describes a series of events

or experience that occurred in the past (Astrid, 2010). Its goal is to educate or amuse the audience. The differences between recount and narrative text are, recount text retells an event based on the fact (nonfiction) while narrative is narrate a story that is not real (fiction).

The generic structure of recount text, according to Gerot and Wignel (1994), is orientation, events, and re-orientation. Recount text often begin with an orientation to introduce and offer background information necessary to guide readers' understanding of the next section of the story. Furthermore, the structure of a recount text is orientation followed by a succession of events, with evaluation or re-orientation at the conclusion of the text (Roison et al., 2004). According to Cowan (2008), the students usually write recount text in the simple past tense and have to know the simple past tense well. The simple past tense is used for events or circumstances that started and ended in the past. Because awareness of simple past tense, which is writing the experience, is required in writing recount text.

However, students generally experience difficulties, so errors are found in writing the recount text. This happened because of the need for students' knowledge about the simple past tense. Meanwhile, in writing recount text, students are required to use changes in the form of the verb and to be into the past form.

In this case, the verb form is very important because it tells the reader when the action occurs. Careful and accurate use of tenses is important to clarify writing. For example, if the verb in a passage refers to an action that occurred in the past action, then the past tense is definitely needed to be used.

Some assumptions about the students in writing recount text may exist. For instance, many assume that people who have knowledge of simple past tense, also have the ability to write recount text. Talking about the ability to write, every person has different capabilities and mistakes made while writing.

According to the study's context, the researcher is curious about students' knowledge of simple past tense and how they in writing, particularly in the past tense, and how well they use vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and

organization development, to communicate their previous activity via writing. This research aims to determine the correlation between knowledge of simple past tense and the ability of students to create recount text.

1.2. Reasons for Choosing The Topic

The researcher selects the topic for the following reasons:

1. Knowing students' ability is important because every student does not have the same ability.
2. Writing recount text is essential to research students' ability in writing recount text, and it has some aspects that students must master. The students must know the generic structure, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation related to people, places, and objects.
3. By using the simple past tense, they may start talking about what they did, what they saw, and other events that occurred in the past, and to know whether students are good in the simple past tense.

1.3. Research Question

The researcher formulates the research question based on the aforementioned context: "Is there any correlation between students' knowledge of simple past tense and their ability to write recount text?"

1.4. Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, this study aims to determine the correlation between students' knowledge of the simple past tense and their ability to write a recount.

1.5. Significance of Research

The results of this study have two implications:

1. Theoretically

The researcher expects that the study's results will be valuable as a reference for future research on the correlation between students' ability to employ the simple past tense and their writing recount text.

2. Practically

a. Students

It may help students enhance their knowledge of the simple past tense and encourage them to use it more cautiously.

b. Teacher

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will provide information to teachers about the grammatical elements that need to be emphasized to help students' skills in grammatically accurate writing in the past and will have an impact on student learning activities.

