

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

People in the world need language to communicate with each other. Language, according to Mackey (1965: 3), is an instrument of thought. Supporting Mackey's opinion, Matthew (1980:3) states that language is also like the life blood of civilization. Language is used to convey, ideas, thoughts, opinions, and feelings. By using a language, people can express their ideas and thoughts and thus communicate with other people. In this global era, English as one of the languages in the world is considered as an international language (Kachru, 2003); it is because English is used by people to communicate with other people from different countries.

Indonesian people speak local languages for daily communication and they use their mother tongue to communicate with others from different cities around in Indonesia. Some Indonesians communicate in English as a foreign language. Learning English is a new thing for them. In Indonesia, English is taught formally since the seventh grade or the first year of junior high school. English Language skills are divided into two parts: oral and written. Listening and speaking use language orally, while reading and writing use written English. Some students are able to use language orally, but they find it difficult to use written English.

Among the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), writing is considered as the most difficult skill to learn and master by the students. This is in line with what Richard and Renandya (Richard and Renandya, 2002, cited in Luu, 2011: 121) state that writing is the most difficult language skill. Further, (Richard and Renandya, 2002), state that the difficulties the learners encounter in learning to write include: (1) generating and organizing ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary and (2) putting such ideas into an intelligible text.

According to Langan (1993: 3), writing is a skill that needs to be learned and practiced. Sometimes, a limited writing skill makes it difficult for students especially junior high school students, to write in a creative way. Students in Indonesia are introduced to genres of writing since their study at junior high school. They are procedural, descriptive, recount, and narrative texts.

According to Brown (2001) as quoted by Supiani (2016: 38), teaching writing is like swimming. If someone learns to swim, a teacher will teach a student how to be a good swimmer. However, not anyone can learn to write easily and be a good writer. He/she needs much time to practice writing in order to be a good writer.

Based on her own experiences, the researcher remembers that learning to write is the hardest part of language learning encountered by her class. Today at school, writing is difficult subject and students must learn how to organize their text in a correct and logical way. The writer chose generic structure as the topic for her research because she wanted to identify the structure of the recount essays written by the eighth graders, or the second-year students of a private junior school in Surabaya.

An essay is a paper containing several paragraphs; each paragraph supports a single point (Langan, 2001:293). There are some types of essay. There are fifteen genres of essay (Gerot and Wignell, 1994: 192 - 223 cited in Pestaria, Sinurat, and Napitulu, 2014). They are narrative, recount, descriptive, report, explanation, analytical exposition, hortatory, procedure, discussion, review, anecdote, spoof, news item, and commentary. One of those written by the eighth grade students is recount essays.

According to Anderson (1997) as quoted by Aisyah Ningsih (2015: 9), a recount essay is an essay that retells past events, usually ordered in the same sequence in which they have happened. According to Gerot and Wignel (1994:194) as quoted by Nurhidayat (2011), a recount essay has a generic structure consisting of the orientation, sequence of events, and

re-orientation. Orientation means giving information concerning the setting of the scene, where and when the story happens, introducing the main characters who are playing a role in the story. Sequence of events refers to telling the readers the events of the story in a chronological sequence. The last part, re-orientation means describing the ending of the story and giving a conclusion.

Since this study focuses on identifying how well the eighth graders' recount essays are the findings of this study are expected to have theoretical and practical benefits for the English lecturer, the eighth graders, and the English department students. Accordingly, this study about the generic structure of the eighth graders' recount essays is worth conducting.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In line with the title and the background of the thesis, the research questions are formulated as follows:

Major research question:

- How is the quality of the generic structure of the eighth graders' recount essays?

Sub research questions:

1. How is the quality of the orientation of the eighth graders' recount essays?
2. How is the quality of the sequence of events of the eighth graders' recount essays?
3. How is the quality of the re-orientation of the eighth graders' recount essays?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In relation to the research questions above, this study aims to describe the quality of the generic structure of the eighth graders' recount essays. Specifically, this study aims to describe:

- a) the quality of the orientation of the eighth graders' recount essays,
- b) the quality of the sequence of events of the eighth graders' recount essays, and
- c) the quality of the re-orientation of the events of the eighth graders' recount essays.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Based on the statement of the problem and objective of the study, this study focuses on analyzing the generic structure of recount essay. To get to the results of analysis, this study focuses on finding how the orientation, the sequence of events, and the re-orientation are written. To support the analysis, the writer needs to refer to the theoretical perspective of English writing and particularly the generic structure of recount essay.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be meaningful feedback as follows:

- a. For the students to help them understand how to write a recount essay with proper orientation, sequence of events, and re-orientation' components;
- b. For the English teachers to help them understand how their students' recounts essays are;
- c. For those who are interested to conduct a further study on related topic.

1.6 Assumption

This study is based on the following assumptions:

1. The students' recount essays contain generic structure.
2. The generic structure of recount can be analyzed and judged on the basis of writing theory.

1.7 Limitation and Scope of the study

As reflected in the title, this study focuses on analyzing the generic structure of the eighth graders' recount essays. Regarding the samples of the students' written work, the researcher took and analyzed their writing exam on recount essay administered by their classroom English teacher under a consideration that the students tried to write as well as possible in the examination.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, some key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

- Essay is a paper containing several paragraphs, in which each paragraph supports a single point (Langan, 2001: 293).
- Recount is an essay that retells past events, usually in the same order which they have happened (Anderson, 1997 cited in Aisah Ningsih, 2015).
- Generic (schematic) structure refers to the structural component of a recount essay that consists of orientation, sequence of events, and re-orientation (Gerot and Wignell, 1994:194 as cited in Nurhidayat, 2011).

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the introduction that contains the background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study and outline of the thesis. Chapter II presents review of related literature which contains review of the underlying theories and previous studies. Chapter III deals with the research design, subject of the study, research data, research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedure. Chapter IV presents with the findings and discussion. And the last, Chapter V deals with the conclusion and suggestion.