A Descriptive Study of the Eighth Grade Students' Ability in Using Connectors in Recount Text at SMP Negeri 9 Jember

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Abstract

This descriptive research was intended to describe the eighth grade students' ability in using connectors in a recount text at SMPN 9 Jember. The number of population was around 240 students from class VIII A up to VIII F which were chosen purposively by proportional random sampling. This research used 20% of students from each class. So, the respondents were 40 students. The data were obtained through a guided reading test, documentation, and interview. The collected data were analyzed by using a descriptive statistics. The result of the data analysis showed that the students' ability in using connectors in a recount text were categorized into fair for about 40% as many as 14 students, poor and failed that each took 30% as many as 14 and 12 students. Unfortunately, there were no students who got score between 70-79 and 80-100 under the category good and excellent. It means that the students' ability in using connectors in a recount text was not really.

Keywords: Descriptive research, connectors, recount text.

Introduction

In learning English, the students have to master four English skills. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They also have to master two language components of English namely grammar and vocabulary. Grammar is a means of enabling pupils to devote more control and choice in their use of language [5]. grammar is primary as a means of ensuring that pupils become more skillful and confident in their use of language. Knowledge of grammar and correct word usage are necessary conditions for good writing in that language [2].

Grammar is a way of describing how a language works to make meaning within a particular culture [3]. Students need to learn about grammar and sentence structure. becaused it is important to be able to make choices in order to use language more effectively and appropriate.

In grammar, there are connectors that the students must know so that they ca write or combine words, sentences, and paragraphs using connectors correctly.

Connectors are very important in a recount text. Connectors in a recount text has function as a connector between two sentences, clauses, phrases, or words. Connectors are used to link large groups of words, phrases and sentences are used to connect paragraphs to make them coherence in a text [8]. The students often make mistakes in using connectors. However, it is not easy to learn grammar, especially connectors for students.

Based on the preliminary study that was conducted at SMPN 9 Jember, the teacher informed that in teaching connectors in recount text she taught coordinators but the eighth grade students still had problems to use that type of connectors correctly. It was further explained that the students still made many mistakes in using connectors in a recount text. It means that error related to the students' deficiency competence, while mistakes related to the students' quality performance. The teacher told that the students made errors because they did not know how to use the connectors and what types of connectors that they must

use to connect sentences in a paragraph and combine paragraph into a text. A recount text is a piece of writing that tells events in a chronological sequence [6]. Therefore, the recount text needs connectors to connect two or more events. There are many functions of connectors in a recount text. They are to add another idea, to restate, to explain or to emphasize an idea, to give an example, to show a choice, to show a difference, to show a similarity, to show a cause or reason, to show a result or effect and to show a condition. So, it is important to use connectors to understand the content or message in the sentences.

Recount text is one of the texts learnt in Junior High School and one of the texts taught at the eighth grade of the students in second semester. In a recount text, students also have to use connectors to connect ideas between sentences. So, the students have to master how to use connectors to write recount text in English. They still have problems in making a good recount text. Therefore, it is interesting to analyze the errors in using connectors in the recount texts composed by the eighth grade students of Junior High School.

Based on the background explained above it was necessary to conduct a research entitled "A Descriptive Study of the Eighth Grade Students' Ability in Using Connectors in Recount Text at SMP Negeri 9 Jember in the 2015/2016 Academic Year. The problem of this research is formulated as follow:

"How in the Eighth Grade Students' Ability in Using Connectors in Recount Text at SMP Negeri 9 Jember in the 2015/2016 Academic Year?" Hence, the objective of this research is to describe the eighth grade students' ability in Using Connectors in Recount Text at SMP Negeri 9 Jember in the 2015/2016 Academic Year.

The results of this research are expected to be an input for the English teacher to know the students' error and ability in using connectors in recount text. So, the teacher will be able to find appropriate teaching strategy to help her/him teach necessary connectors for recount text writing.

Research Method

The descriptive research was used in this research because its aim to describe a certain situation systematically, accurately, and factually. The purpose of this research was to describe the eighth grade students' ability in using connectors in recount text at SMP Negeri 9 Jember in the 2015/2016 Academic Year. The subject were the students of class VIII A up to VIII F which were chosen purposively by proportional random sampling. The number of population was around 240 students. This research used 20% of students from each class. So, the respondents were 40 students. The result of the test was calculated by using the formula to get the percentage of the students' ability in using connectors in the recount text.

The area of this research was determined by using purposive method. A purposive method is a method based on a certain purpose and reason [1]. This research was conducted at SMPN 9 Jember because of some reasons. They were: 1)the teaching materials of recount texts has been given at SMP Negeri 9 Jember based on the 2006 Institutional Based Curriculum. 2) The English teacher allowed the researcher to conduct this descriptive research to the eighth grade students. 3) The Headmaster has given permission to the researcher to conduct this descriptive research. Based on these reasons, the required data can be obtained.

The primary data of this research were collected by using a guided reading test on recount text conducted on December 16th , 2016. The test was constructed in the form of objective test that was gap filling. Objective test form was used because it has more consistent and high reliability. The number of the test items was 25 consisting of test items of 4 coordinators, 8 subordinators, and 13 transitions. Dealing with the scoring, each correct answer was scored by 3 for the first task. For the second and the last task, each correct answer is scored by 4 and 6. Thus, the total score of the test was 100 points. The test was administered in 45 minutes. The result of the students' grammar test was calculated by using the percentage formula to determine the proportional of each type of test item.

In this research, the interview was conducted with the English teacher to obtain the information dealing with the use of connectors in a recount text writing to the eighth grade students of SMPN 9 Jember, the technique used by the teacher in teaching connnectors in a recount text, the common type of connectors that were taught to the students, the types of exercises given, and the general problem faced by the students in learning connectors used in a recount text.

To know the level of the students' ability, using percentage as follows:

$$E = n/N * 100\%$$

Research Results

The result of interview with the English teacher, she informed that in teaching connectors in a recount text, she taught coordinators but the eighth grade students still had

problems to use that type of connectors correctly.

Based on the five categories, the highest categories that the students achieved was fair who got score between 60-69. The difference between fair and poor was 10%. While the KKM that used in that school especially for English was 75. Unfortunately, there were no students who got score between 70-79 and 80-100 under the category good and excellent.

Discussion

From the results of data analysis, the highest percentage of the students' ability was "Fair" as many as 40%. While the lowest percentage were "Poor" and "Failed" as many as 30% respectively. The KKM that used in that school especiallly for English was 75. Unfortunately, there were no students who got score between 70-79. The category good and excellent was still very difficut to achieve by students.

The factors of the eighth Grade Students' low ability in using connectors in Recount Text at SMPN 9 Jember may be caused by the following reason:
1.) The English teacher just taught about coordinators from three types of connectors;
2.) The students did not know what types of connectors that they must used in a recount text.

When he has something that he doesn't know, he may guess what is should be there. Foreign language learners commit errors largely because of the lack of their knowledge of the target language [5].

The following sentence was the example of connectors' error: 1) Retno is not only provided the drinks, and also snacks. This sentence was the example of connectors' error about coordinators type. In this sentence, some students like Reza Aditya add connectors "add" before also. The sentences should be "Retno is not only provided the drinks, but also snacks. The meaning of coordinators as word that connects word or group of words that perform the samr fuction in a sentence [4]. It can be concluded that coordinators are words that are used to join the whole sentences together. The coordinators are *and, for, but, yet, or, nor.* Usually a comma is put before the coordinator. Related to the previous research finding, there were some differences between this research with those two researchers. First, in Taufan's research showed that there were 27 students or 87,10% had excellent classification in gaining the score between 80-100, there were 3 students or 9,68% who had good classification in gaining score between 70-79. Then the failed classification was 1 student or 3,23%. Second, in Ratih's research showed that errors in the use of grammatical errors as many as 86 errors and 45% as the percentage. So, there were some difference between this research with those research.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, it could be concluded that the students' ability in using connnectors in recount text was fair for about 40%,

poor and failed 30% respectively. Unfortunately, there were no students who got score between 70-79 and 80-100 under the category good and excellent. It means that the students' ability in using connector in recount text was not really good. They were weak.

Students should study about connectors more. So, they can apply connectors without any difficulties. They also have to practice using connectors in recount text to develop their understanding about connectors. For the English teacher, the researcher found many errors in the students' guided reading test in using connectors. It means that the students still have difficulty in applying connectors in a recount text. It becomes a must for the English teacher to teach other kinds of connectors. After that, the English teacher should give the student some assignment about the using of connectors in a recount text. It is helpful for the students to apply the other kinds of connectors that has been learned. The English teacher also has to give the students a feedback. So, the students will know the errors they made and they will not make the same errors later. The Future Researcher are suggested to use this result of research as information and reference for conducting further research which focuses on the use of connectors or their mechanics in order to make students to understand about connectors.

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