



Evaluating Generic Structure and Language Features of Students' Recount Texts

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Abstract

This study analyzes and assesses recount texts written by students, by focusing on the language features and language structures. This analysis is aimed at fostering student's writing abilities and communication in their personal experience. The study evaluates the generic structure starting from reorientation, events, and reorientation. The language features are evaluated based on content, syntax, and vocabulary. The data of recount texts were taken from students of SMP Negeri 1 Ketanggungan Brebes, particularly class 8A which consists of 33 students, by conducting a purposive sampling technique. The generic structure of recount texts was analyzed using a scoring rubric adapted from Gerot and Wignell (1994). Meanwhile, a content-based analysis model adapted from Brown and Lee (2015) was employed to evaluate the quality of language features, especially content, syntax, and vocabulary. The quality of students' recount texts is categorized as excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate. The result showed that 46% of students performed excellent level in orientation and 43% of students performed good level in sequence events. However, 12% of students showed an inadequate level of reorientation. It means that students have a good ability to compile the context and background of their recounts. However, some students have difficulty in concluding their recount. The quality of the language features showed that students presented the main idea and related ideas thoroughly but still needed to improve their vocabulary. The analysis results can be a reference for students to self-evaluate their writing, especially recount texts, and improve the quality. Also, it encourages teachers to apply appropriate teaching strategies in writing classrooms, which meet students' needs.

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INTRODUCTION

The skills in learning English are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Among those four, writing is regarded as the most complex skill because it needs an organized procedure (Fitria, 2020). Writing is an activity that combines physical and mental acts (Sari & Gaho, 2020). In the physical act, writing involves committing words or ideas to a medium (Pardede & Herman, 2020). Besides the mental act, students must express their ideas, find out how to express them and organize them into statements and good paragraphs (Mingsakoon & Srinon, 2018). Writing is also a process of planning, drafting, editing, and final draft. Planning, drafting, editing, and final version are the process of writing (Oktarina et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the student's writing skills in English are included in the English subject syllabus for Junior High School which contains descriptive, recount, procedure, narrative, and report. Recount text is one of the texts that must be taught to the eighth-grade students. Based on the interview with the teacher and students of SMP Negeri 1 Ketanggungan, the researchers conclude that the students have some problems with grammar, word choice, and determining suitable themes for the text. Evaluating the generic structure and language features of students' recount texts is crucial for understanding and enhancing their writing abilities. Among the four core language skills, listening, reading, writing, and speaking, writing is regarded as the most complex due to its need for a structured approach and careful organization (Fitria, 2020). To successfully articulate and organize their ideas, students must use critical thinking skills in addition to transforming their ideas into cohesive sentences and paragraphs. This process combines both mental and physical process (Sari & Gaho, 2020; Pardede & Herman, 2020). Planning, drafting, revising, and creating a final draft are some of the phases involved in the writing process (Oktarina et al., 2022).

Recount texts, which tell about past events or personal experiences is a fundamental aspect of learning a language. By mastering recount texts, students can improve their writing ability in writing and support their achievement in academic

writing (Schleppegrell et al., 2004; Hasanah, 2022). Recount texts require students to adhere to a specific generic structure, including orientation, events, and reorientation, and to utilize appropriate language features such as grammar, vocabulary, and content coherence (Faradina & Emilia, 2024).

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of teaching the generic structure and language features of recount texts to support students' writing development (Alemi & Rezanejad, 2016). However, there remains a need for more detailed analysis and evaluation of how students construct these texts, particularly in different educational contexts. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the generic structure and language features of students' recount texts (Ajayi, 2019). By focusing on orientation, events, and reorientation, this research seeks to identify common patterns and areas for improvement in students' writing (Kyaw & Zhiying, 2019; Nurkholijah & Hafizh, 2020). Additionally, evaluating language features such as content, grammar, and vocabulary will offer a deeper understanding of the quality of students' recount texts.

Despite the substantial body of research on various aspects of writing instruction, there are gaps in previous studies regarding the analysis of students' recount text, especially in generic structure and language features. While previous studies have examined writing skills broadly and provided general insights into students' narrative abilities, there is limited research that combines a detailed evaluation of generic structure and language features of recount texts using a descriptive qualitative approach. Prior literature addresses writing proficiency in a more general context, without delving deeply into the generic structure of recount text such as orientation, events, and reorientation (Schleppegrell et al., 2004; Hasanah, 2022). The novelty of this study is that the data were analyzed using two analysis instruments. Orientation, events, and reorientation were analyzed using Gerot and Wignell's rubric, and content, syntax, and vocabulary were analyzed using Brown and Lee's rubric.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to improving student's writing skills in arranging recount text based on its structure and language features. By identifying specific strengths and weaknesses in students' recount texts, this research aims to inform teaching strategies that can enhance students' recount text. Ultimately, this study seeks to support the development of more effective teaching writing strategies in language education, benefiting both students and educators.

METHOD

The methodology of this study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which allows for an in-depth exploration of students' recount texts (Astari et al., 2022). This study analyzed texts written by 33 students at SMP Negeri 1 Ketanggungan, who were selected through a purposive sampling technique.

The students' recount texts were examined for generic structure using a rubric that was adapted from Gerot and Wignell (1994). The three main elements of recount texts that are the focus of this rubric are orientation, events, and reorientation. When using the recount text analysis criterion, the orientation should provide a comprehensive overview of the incident, including precise information about the time, location, and participants. A recount text is said to be deficient in orientation if it omits a date or background information. A thorough account of what transpired is included and the events are presented in a logical manner. Text that is in the application of the recount text analysis criterion, the orientation should clearly introduce the event, listing specific details about when, where, and who was involved. Lacking the information or omitting significant details about the occurrences will be deemed to need improvement. Reorientation successfully wraps up the narrative by offering a synopsis or introspective analysis.

The quality of the language features in the students' recount texts were evaluated using a content-based evaluation approach adapted from Brown and Lee (2015). Three primary areas were examined in this evaluation: content, syntax, and vocabulary. The content component looked at the

narrative's coherence and relevancy, the grammar component evaluated the precision and intricacy of sentence structure, and the vocabulary component assessed the appropriateness and diversity of word choices. These standards were used to grade each text, giving a thorough picture of the students' language skills in recount writing.

The gathered information was subjected to a thorough qualitative analysis procedure. The findings of generic structure and language features were used to code and categorize the texts. The students' writing skills were next examined by identifying patterns and themes. The qualitative character of the analysis made it possible to thoroughly explore the students' advantages, providing a deep comprehension of their language use and narrative abilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data collected from the recount texts of the students at SMP negeri 1 Ketanggungan Brebes is presented by the researchers in this section. The researchers identify the generic structure of recount text based on Gerot & Wignell in three classifications: orientation, events, and reorientation. Whereas the language features of recount text are based on Brown & Lee three of six classification: content, syntax, and vocabulary. The identification stage is served in this finding section. This section serves as an example to represent the findings for each classification. To determine the quality of generic structure of recount text, the researchers divided it into four levels: excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate.

Generic Structure Quality of Students' Recount Text: Orientation, Events, and Reorientation

From the results of analysing the generic structure of the recount text, a logistical picture can be drawn from students' writing text to the three aspects, namely orientation, events, and reorientation. The results of the analyses were adapted from Gerot and Wignell (1994). The students' quality in writing recount texts could be seen from the total scores which the students achieved for all aspects. Each aspect consists of four assessment indicators. They are excellent,

good, adequate, and inadequate presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Result of Generic Structure of Recount Text

Aspects	Indicators of assessment							
	Excellent (n)	%	Good (n)	%	Adequate (n)	%	Inadequate (n)	%
Orientation	15	46	10	30	8	24	-	0
Events	12	36	14	43	7	21	-	0
Reorientation	9	27	15	46	5	15	4	12

The analysis of students' recount texts, based on the generic structure elements of orientation, events, and reorientation, reveals a comprehensive picture of their writing quality. According to Gerot and Wignell's (1994) framework, the assessment was conducted using four indicators: excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate. In the orientation aspect, 46% of students achieved an excellent rating, 30% were rated good, and 24% were deemed adequate, with no students falling into the inadequate category. These findings suggest that a significant proportion of students have a strong ability to set the context and background for their recounts. However, there is still room for improvement for a notable minority. The distribution of scores for the events component reveals that 36% of students did excellent, 43% were classified as good, and 21% were evaluated as adequate; once more, no students were rated as inadequate. These findings suggest that students are reasonably adept in describing the sequence of events in their recounts, and a sizeable portion of them demonstrate a solid understanding of this crucial section of the text. A more mixed picture is painted by the reorientation component, as 27% of students received excellence ratings, 46% received outstanding ratings, 15% received adequate ratings, and 12% received inadequate ratings. According to this distribution, students find

reorientation the end of the recount to be more complex, with a higher percentage finding it challenging to sum up the events (Salamah & Sabiq, 2020). These results highlight the necessity of focused teaching methods to help students improve their abilities, especially in the reorientation component of recount writing.

Orientation

Through the orientation component, which functions as the opening section of students' writing, the level of students' recount text can be evaluated critically. This part is crucial because it introduces the primary characters, gives background information, and creates the frame for the events that will proceed. Based on the analysis that was offered, four indicators were used to evaluate the orientation aspect: excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate. 46% of students received an excellent level. The orientation section, according to the data, meaning that almost half of the students are skilled at creating engaging and educational introductions. These students successfully established the scene for their recalls, drawing the reader in and giving the events a clear context. Additionally, 30% of the students were rated as good, demonstrating a solid grasp of orientation, albeit with minor areas for improvement. Meanwhile, 24% of students were categorized as adequate, suggesting that while their orientations were functional, they may have lacked depth, detail, or clarity. Notably, no students fell into the inadequate category, which signifies that all students managed to meet at least the basic requirements for an effective orientation.

Overall, these results reflect positively on students' ability to initiate their recount texts. However, the distribution also highlights the need for continued focus on developing skills that enhance the richness and clarity of the orientation section, ensuring that a more significant number of students can achieve excellence in this foundational aspect of recount writing.

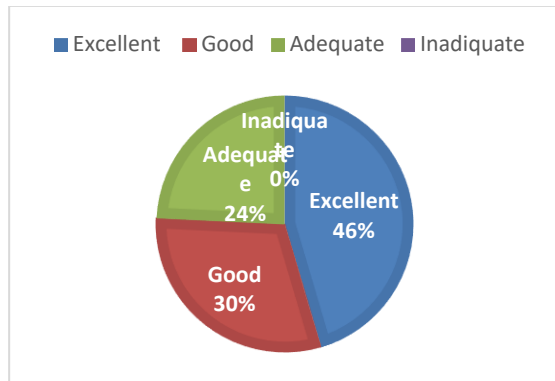


Figure 1. The Result of Orientation

Here is the description of the orientation level in recount texts for each quality level presented.

Excellent Level:

At the excellent level, the orientation effectively captures the reader's interest by providing comprehensive background information about who, what, when, and where the event occurred, and sets the scene vividly. For example, in Text 6, "*Last Sunday, my friends and I went to Waduk Malahayu. We went early in the morning and arrived there at 8 a.m. Luckily that day was sunny. It was great to feel the fresh air and the scenery around Waduk,*" the orientation clearly mentions the day, time, location, and atmosphere, and vividly describes the enjoyable experience of fresh air and beautiful scenery.

Good Level:

At the good level, the orientation adequately introduces background information about who, what, when, and where the event happened, but with less detail or creativity. For instance, in Text 7, "*Last year, I and my friends from 8A joined a futsal match in our school. It aimed to celebrate our independence day. At that time, we have to compete against class 9B,*" the orientation covers basic information about the event, including the time, location, and participants, but lacks depth and detailed description. Similarly, in Text 16, "*Last month, a friend of mine gave me a box of fried rice. She made by herself. I was so amazed by how tasty her fried rice was. It encourages me to learn how to make delicious fried rice. So, one week later I made it,*" the orientation provides basic details about the event but falls short in terms of depth and creativity.

Adequate Level:

At the adequate level, the orientation briefly introduces the setting and characters but lacks depth or fails to capture the reader's interest. For example, in Text 8, "*When I was in Elementary School, I had a quite pleasant experience. The experience was a study tour of the city of Malang with my friends and teachers,*" the orientation provides minimal detail about the event, only mentioning that it took place during elementary school and briefly describing the study tour without much elaboration. Similarly, in Text 9, "*My first day at SMP N 1 Ketanggungan was pretty funny because when I was about to introduce myself, I almost tripped. Come to think about it again, it's pretty funny. After that, I was asked by physical education teacher to greet everyone in my new class and then I went back to my home,*" the orientation provides basic information but lacks engaging detail or a thorough introduction to the experience.

From orientation, the researchers divided into four levels; excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate. The orientation briefly introduces the setting and characters but less depth or fails to capture the reader's interest. From the examples provided, students' abilities in writing the orientation vary significantly. In the excellent category, texts like "My Experience," "Last Year," and "Going to the Beach" effectively engage the reader by presenting detailed and precise contexts. These texts include comprehensive information about the time, place, characters, and purpose, which not only sets the scene but also captivates the reader's interest. For instance, "My Experience" provides a vivid picture of a trip to Waduk Malahayu, including specific details about the time and atmosphere, which helps the reader visualize and connect with the experience.

On the other hand, texts categorized as good, such as "An Unforgettable Experience" and the narrative about receiving a box of fried rice, still provide a clear context but lack the depth and creativity seen in the excellent examples. The primary points of the recount are introduced in these texts, but they skip over nuances that could add interest or memorability. Texts of sufficient level, such as those regarding the study excursion

in Malang and the first day at SMP Negeri 1 Ketanggungan, establish the essential aspects but fall short in either providing enough detail or holding the readers' attention. These sentences are straightforward and more direct, yet they frequently lack the engaging element that gives a story its power. The significance of thorough and imaginative orientation parts in recount text is emphasized by this analysis, as they greatly enhance the overall potency of the writing.

Events

In a recount text, the narrative takes place in the events section, which describes the series of events that make up the story's central plot. When students' recount texts are evaluated from the standpoint of events, it becomes clear how well they can interest the reader, preserve coherence, and convey events chronologically. There are four degrees of evaluation for this section: excellent, good, adequate, and inadequate.

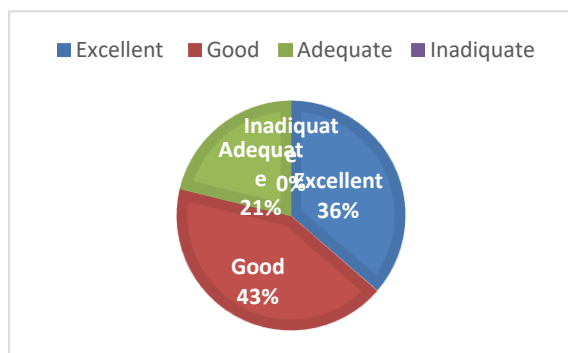


Figure 2. The Result of Events

The events in recount texts are described below in paragraph form based on their quality level:

Excellent Level:

At the highest level, events are presented in a logical and cohesive order, with detailed explanations that make the order of events prominent. Text 14 makes this evident by recounting a trip to Jakarta in a chronologically ordered manner: *“On the first day in Jakarta, we stayed in my aunt’s house. We were happy because we hadn’t seen each other for a long time. The next day my family and I went to Dufan, enjoying various rides. After trying some games, we had lunch at a food stall by the beach. On the third day, we visited Monas, where we*

queued for tickets and used a lift to see the view”. Temporal conjunction usage, including, ‘on the first day’, ‘the next day, and ‘on the third day’ aids in logically presenting the events and successfully communicating the sequence of events and experiences.

Good Level:

Events of the good level are explained in detail and in a logical order. However, they might be a little shallow. A visit to Mount Slamet is described in text 18, where this is evident: *“In the morning, my friend and I saw Mount Slamet. We rode a horseback, which was scary but fun. We then got a closer look at a mountain, took pictures, had lunch under big tree, and later visited Alun-Alun Banyumas before heading home.”* With the use of conjunctions like “then” and “after that” the events are logically ordered, but the descriptions are not as thorough. Text 19 stated similarly: *“On the first day, we set up our tent near the river and cooked lunch. We then participated in activities and had a campfire. The next morning, we did aerobic exercises, had breakfast, explored the forest, and ended the day with a campfire.”* The narrative keeps a clear flow but offers little detail.

Adequate Level:

The events are described to an adequate level, although they might not be coherent. Text 11 provides a brief description of a trip to Jakarta, for example: *“On the first day, we rested at my brother’s house after traveling. The next day, we visited a safari park and saw various animals. On the third day, we had shopping at the mall for souvenirs.”* The account is less enjoyable because of the lack of information, even though the events are presented chronologically. Likewise, the narrative of a market visit in text 12 is fragmented. *“One day, I went to the market with my father. I fell asleep on the motorbike and fell off without him noticing. People helped me and informed my father, but he did not hear them.”* While the recount is described, the incident descriptions are neither clear nor coherent.

Inadequate Level:

Recounts of the inadequate level are fragmented, hard to follow, and contain events that are either inadequately reported or out of chronological order. Text with insufficient descriptions of events, which show a total lack of

coherence in the account, are indicative of this level.

The events section of students' recount text varies significantly in quality. With vivid and in-depth descriptions of events that are arranged logically and coherently, text in the excellent category have a clear and captivating narrative flow. These texts give a detailed and engrossing description of the experiences by skillfully connecting events with conjunctions. Though they may not have all of the vivid details and introspective thoughts found in exceptional texts, texts in good category nonetheless convey a logical flow of events (Amalia & Hartono, 2015). The narrative is coherent and straightforward, but because it lacks depth and specificity, the reader might not be as engrossed. Texts in the acceptable category are typically more straightforward and less interesting, but they present events in a logical order. These texts satisfy the requirement of providing a series of events, but they do so in a more straightforward way, frequently omitting the subtleties and specifics that offer interest to narrative (Mohsenzadeh et al., 2021). Although the degree of depth and participation varied, all students were able to portray a sequence of events that satisfied the fundamental standards of coherence and logical order, as evidenced by the lack of texts in the inadequate category, at least in the samples that were presented. This analysis emphasizes how crucial well-structured, in-depth events are to producing gripping recount text. In order to keep the reader interested and involved, it highlights how important it is for students to not only provide a logical flow of events but also to enhance their narratives with vivid details, introspective thoughts, and seamless translations.

Reorientation

The quality of the reorientation part in students' recount texts varies greatly. An excellent reorientation provides a detailed and reflective conclusion, summarizing events effectively and offering personal insights that leave a lasting impression. The following is a further explanation in reorientation.

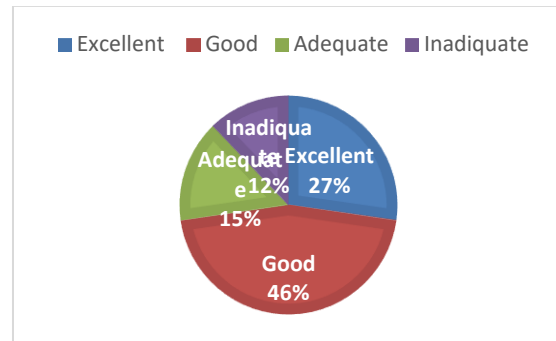


Figure 3. The result of Reorientation

This portion, highlighted in blue, accounts for 27% of the total, indicating that more than a quarter of the evaluations considered the reorientation to be excellent. This level of quality is demonstrated in Text 15 and another text. The review of these texts as inadequate suggests that reorientation does not fulfill its role in providing closure or a deeper understanding of the recount. Improving the reorientation in these cases would involve summarizing the main events and providing some form of reflection or insight, thereby enhancing the narrative coherence and leaving a more satisfying impression on the reader.

Figure 3 explained that the reorientation portion of students' recount text was rated as outstanding by 27% of the total evaluations. This percentage indicates that more than a quarter of the students excelled in crafting a reorientation that effectively summarized the events and provided reflective insights. The degree of excellent is demonstrated by text 15 and another. Nevertheless, the assessment also reveals that specific texts were judged to be insufficient in their reorientation. The purpose of the reorientation, which is to provide account closure and greater understanding, was not met by the writings. The deficiency indicates that the crucial events should be summarized more effectively and that the narrative coherence should be improved by adding reflections.

Students should be urged to provide a brief synopsis of the main points of their reorientation. In addition to make it easier for the reader to follow the narrative. This synopsis serves the underlined the recounts' key elements (Hasanah, 2022; Schleppegrell et al., 2004). For the reorientation to

be engaging, it must have a reflective element. Instruction on how to provide personal views on the events they described should be given to the students (Sartika & Nurdin, 2019). This could be what they discovered, the effects the events had on them (Faradina & Emilia, 2024). The reorientation ought to improve the narrative's overall cohesion. This entails referencing the recount's opening and body to make sure the conclusion feels like a logical conclusion.

Language Features Quality in Students' Recount Texts: Content, Syntax, And Vocabulary

Analysis of 33 students' writings of recount texts revealed the quality of language the quality of language aspects of the texts as perceived by content, grammar, and vocabulary. The purpose of this test was to gauge how well students used the recall genre to describe their experiences. From a content analysis perspective, the text was examined for the coherence and clarity of the events described, assessing if the recount successfully presented a series of events with adequate order and description. By focusing on sentence structure and fluency, syntax analysis evaluated whether students used a variety of sentence patterns and kept their writing coherent. The evaluation of vocabulary took into account the appropriateness and depth of language choices, examining whether students employed a wide variety of terms to improve their descriptions and express subtleties in meaning. The examination sought to determine how well students used linguistic aspects to convey their narrative experiences by looking at these components. Table 2 provided an illustration of it.

Table 2. Results of Language Features analysis

Categories	Interval	Total
Excellent	76-100	12
Good	51-75	14
Adequate	26-50	7
Inadequate	0-25	0

The narrative consistency and clarity of the students' recount text were assessed in terms of content. The ability to describe experiences in

adequate depth was demonstrated by the students in the "excellent" and "good" categories, who typically presented a coherent and well-structured sequence of events. On the other hand, students who fall into the "adequate" or "inadequate" categories may find it challenging to put together a cohesive and thorough story. Students should be given tasks that emphasize rationally and thoroughly sequencing events as well as instruction on the narrative structure of recount texts to improve. The analysis addressed sentence structure and fluency in terms of syntax. Typically, students who scored in the "excellent" and "good" categories maintained writing fluency and displayed a variety of sentence constructions. However, students who fall into the "adequate" and "inadequate" categories may use repeated language. Teaching different sentence patterns, giving real-word examples, and encouraging students to use sentence diversity to keep the reader interested are all examples of improvement stages (Riswandi et al., 2019).

The evaluation of vocabulary encompassed the suitability and in-depth linguistics choices. While students in the "adequate" and "inadequate" categories may exhibit limited vocabulary use, students in the "excellent" and "good" categories typically employ a precise and varied range of terms. This can be improved by introducing new words, giving practice using them in various situations, and motivating students to read more high-quality materials to increase their vocabulary. We can determine the advantages of students' recount text by looking at the data in Table 2. Students can improve their writing quality in terms of vocabulary, syntax, and topic by following the improvement procedure. When appropriate direction and ongoing practice, students are expected to write more effective and engaging recount texts (Yulianawati, 2018).

The study also highlighted how these findings have wider implications for curriculum development and educational practice (Firmansyah, 2015). According to Basith & Syafii, (2020), focused language training in the curriculum not only improves students' writing abilities but also gives them the communication skills they need to succeed in a variety of academic and

professional settings. Establishing a solid foundation in narrative writing through methodical language development can help schools better equip students to express themselves clearly and persuasively both orally and in writing. This all-encompassing strategy not only fosters academic achievement but also equips students to communicate effectively and confidently in their future undertakings (Cocchetta, 2021). Therefore, funding language-rich teaching methods is essential for fostering students' overall growth and guaranteeing their preparedness for the demands of the global society of the twentieth century (Mariam et al., 2022; M. P. Sari et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The study found that in the orientation aspect of recount texts, 46% of students achieved excellent levels, demonstrating their ability to set the context and background of the story clearly and engagingly, while 30% were rated good and 24% adequate, with no students falling into inadequate level. In the events aspect, 36% of students performed excellently, 43% good, and 21% adequate, indicating that most students could arrange the sequence of events coherently, with no poor ratings. However, in the reorientation aspect, the distribution was more varied, with 27% of students reaching excellent level, 46% good, 15% adequate, and 12% inadequate, suggesting that concluding or wrapping up the story is a more challenging area for students. In this study, the quality of language features in students' recount writing was evaluated through content, syntax, and vocabulary analysis of 33 student texts. Based on the study, it concluded that almost all students' writing in content is excellent. They can consistently present a clear thesis statement and explore related ideas. The quality of students' writing viewed from syntax is in a good category. The writing features generally correct syntax with some variation in sentence structure. Meanwhile, the quality of students' recount text viewed from vocabulary is an adequate category. The writing included a limited range of vocabulary with some repetition, but meaning is generally conveyed.

By analyzing the generic structure and language features of students' recount texts, the study aimed to assess how well students applied generic structure and language features to communicate their experiences in the recount text. This study has contributed to teachers applying appropriate teaching writing strategies to enhance writing abilities. Based on Brown and Lee's scoring rubric, there were six elements for analyzing language features of recount text. The limitation of the study is that the researchers only analyzed three of six elements: content, syntax, and vocabulary. The next researchers may complete evaluating language features including three further elements; organization, discourse, and mechanics to ensure the future study is flawless.

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