



THE REALIZATION OF EXPERIENTIAL MEANINGS IN STUDENTS' WRITING OF RECOUNTS

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Abstract

The aims of the study are to explain the experiential meanings of participants' element realized in the students' recounts, to explain the experiential meanings of processes' element realized in the students' recounts, and to explain the experiential meanings of circumstances' element realized in the students' recounts. The study used is a descriptive qualitative method of discourse analysis. The data were taken from 20 students' recounts of Writing 4 at English Education Study Program of Unissula. The unit of analysis was a clause. The result of the study showed that the dominant element of experiential meanings was participants' element (46.5%). The participants' elements realized by the nominal group with the dominant participants' types in students' recounts are actor 19.8 % and goal 14.5 %. The processes' elements realized by the verbal group with the dominant process are material process in 43.6 %. The circumstances' elements realized by prepositional phrase, adverbial group, and nominal group with the dominant participants are place circumstance 43.5% and time circumstance 23.7 %. It can be concluded that the experiential meanings in students' recounts are realized by the specific participants of actor and goal, material process and circumstances of place and time.

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INTRODUCTION

Among the four proficiencies in English, English for Foreign Language (EFL) learners view that writing belongs to the most complex skill to be learned (Mulatsih, 2007). It is a complicated skill since the students need to share their ideas into the words in which they have to write a certain topic by considering context of situation in the students' writing. Rudianto (2012) finds that his students are afraid of making ungrammatical compositions, so his students focus in the accuracy of grammar that makes a better composition. It shows that EFL learners of university level tend to find difficulties in writing since they are afraid of making grammatical errors in their writing.

Those problems of writing derived from the ideas do not only deal with grammatical rules, but also the coherence and cohesion in writing. The term of coherence proposes the idea that the texts make sense, while the term cohesion deals with the requirement that the texts hang together (Thornbury, 2005). "Cohesion is a surface feature of texts...coherence results from the interaction between the reader and the text" (Thornbury 2005). In this case, the reader belongs to a teacher of writing who reads his or her students' writing. Therefore, it needs to be highlighted that the students have to write understandable writing, indeed with the correct grammar.

Realizations of producing cohesive and coherent writings cannot be separated from the realization of experiential meanings. The grammar of experiential meanings is expressed by transitivity system. Eggins (2004) proposes that experiential meanings are expressed by the transitivity system that covers the participants, processes, and circumstances. Experiential meanings are one of the grammar aspects in systemic functional linguistics. Systemic functional linguistics differs from the traditional grammar. In Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL), the term of realization is used to discover the relationship of the abstract construction of language in strands of meanings either experiential meanings, interpersonal meanings,

or textual meanings. Matthiessen, Teruya, and Lam (2010) insist that the realization is the representation in the systemic functional linguistic that associated with a term in a system.

Regarding the essential reasons to acquire writing skill, the EFL learners are asked to write in English well, particularly in English Department. Besides, the students have to deal with writing courses and writing assignments. However, the English Department students get barriers in writing. Since writing is considered to be one of the compulsory subjects in the program, the students need to improve their writing skills in different writing courses of the program. Manchon, Rinnert, and Kobayashi (2009) insist that an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting epitomizes the situated nature of writing. The writing of EFL students is affected not only by their first language, but also by the educational context where they learn to write.

Based on the open-ended questionnaire given in the researcher's preliminary research, the students of English Education Study Program of Sultan Agung Islamic University still have difficulties in writing recounts. They share that they have problems in the use of vocabulary, the use of past tense verbs, the use of inappropriate grammatical structure, and the coherence and cohesion of their recounts. These problems reflect to the notion that the students still have problem in organizing the experiential meanings in their recounts. Dealing with the students' problems in writing recounts, the realization of experiential meanings is needed as the way to explain how the students are able to express the process, participants, and circumstances that represent the field of their writing of recounts.

Experiential meanings are largely concerned with the contents and ideas. The contents and ideas of the language are used in the context that is in the text. Text does not derive from the reading passage. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004:14) propose that when people speak or write, they produce text that refers to any instance of language, in any medium, that

makes sense to someone who knows the language. In Systemic Functional Linguistic, language has been viewed in the meta-functions of language. One of the language meta-functions is ideational meanings that consist of experiential meanings and logical meanings.

According to Eggins (2004), experiential meanings cover meaning about world, about experience, about how the language users and experience what is going on in the text. Saraceni (2007) claims that transitivity focuses on the ways the doer of an action, the verb, and the object affected by the process are able to be connected by the user of language to convey divergent descriptions of particular facts and the transitivity is a linguistic framework to show ideology. Alhamdany (2012) contends that the experiential meaning is realized by using the transitivity system of the verbal and it reflects the linguistic implications in which it relates to situational variation.

There are three important elements in experiential meanings. They are participants, processes, and circumstances. Participants are the people, ideas, or things that participate in the processes. The participants carry out the processes under circumstances. The participants' roles are realized by the nominal groups. There are twenty types of participants in realizing the experiential meanings. Processes are the physical activities, mental and verbal activities, state of being and having are referred to as processes. Processes are realized by the verbal group of the clause. Circumstances are the conditions in which processes are occurring. Circumstances also answer such as when, where, why, how, how many and as what. Circumstantial elements are represented prepositional phrases or adverbial groups (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins 2004; Gerrot and Wignell, 1994).

Referring to the problems proposed in this study, the statements of problems are formulated as follows:

1. How is the participants' element of experiential meanings realized in the students' recounts of English Education

Study Program at *Sultan Agung* Islamic University?

2. How is the processes' element of experiential meanings realized in students' recounts?
3. How is the circumstances' element of experiential meanings realized in students' recounts?

Regarding the statements of problems above, the objectives of this study are The objectives of the study are to explain the participants' element of experiential meanings realized in the students' recounts, to explain the processes' element of experiential meanings realized in students' recounts, and to explain the circumstances' element of experiential meanings realized in students' recounts.

METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research design that was undertaken by a discourse analysis. Cresswell (2009: 176) defines that a qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which the researchers make interpretations of what they see, hear, and understand. The interpretations were based on the researchers' backgrounds, history, context, and their prior knowledge. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003: 505) view that discourse analysis is the study of interpretive processes that the individuals use their accounts of reality. In this study, the discourse analysis focuses on the experiential meanings in students' recounts. The source of data was the students' writing of recounts in Writing 4 of English Education Study Program at *Sultan Agung* Islamic University.

The students' writing of recounts was chosen for the data by considering that they were students' personal writing they had correct generic structure of recount texts and followed the writing instructions given. The instrument of data collection used in this study was documents of students' recount texts. The documents were used to obtain the data about transitivity analysis. The unit analysis of this study was clauses in students' writing of recount texts of

Writing 4. The clauses were analyzed by applying transitivity analysis. The methods of data analysis were choosing the students' recounts sample, analyzing the experiential meanings, interpreting the finding and checking the students' reliability and validity of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Experiential Meanings Element of Twenty Students' Recounts

Recount	Experiential Meanings		
	Participants	Processes	Circumstances
1	74	51	24
2	65	39	17
3	103	62	17
4	76	51	22
5	62	40	11
6	35	23	23
7	65	46	14
8	92	57	15
9	53	33	24
10	63	32	10
11	68	43	32
12	93	69	29
13	44	29	14
14	52	30	21
15	40	27	16
16	53	60	20
17	62	45	25
18	56	38	28
19	39	26	16
20	63	46	32
Total (2783)	1293	847	643
% (100)	46.5	30.4	23.1

Table 1 showed that participants' aspect had the highest percentage 46.5 %. Then, it was followed by processes' aspect in 30.4 % and by circumstances' aspect in 23.1 %. The findings indicated that the students expressed the experiential meanings in their recounts were dominantly by having the participants' aspect. Then it was followed by the processes and the circumstances. The dominance of participants' aspect showed that the students introduced the people, ideas, or things that participated in their recounts in which their recounts told about the students' past experiences.

Furthermore, the higher percentage of participants' aspect in students' recounts were

related to the total number of participants in experiential meanings. Experiential meanings covered twenty participants that were labeled based on the processes involved in the clause. Matthiessen, Teruya, and Lam (2010:155) argued that participants were element directly involved in the processes. Referring to the notion that each process had more than one participant, each clause could have more than one participant in one type of process. Therefore, it could be inferred that the participants' aspect was dominant in students' recounts.

The dominant participant's aspect found in the students' recounts was actor 19.8%. The

participant of actor mainly existed in the students' recounts because the recounts dominantly used material process in which the actor was the participant of material process. Another participant of material process found in the recounts was goal 187 times or 14.5 %, beneficiary 1.9 %, and range 1.4 %. Besides, the participants of behavioural process found were behavior 1.3 % and range 1.8 %. The participants of mental process consisted of senser 7 %, phenomenon 2.6 %, and inducer 0.1 %. The participant of verbal process existed were sayer 40 times or 3.1 %, verbiage 20 times or 1.5 %, and target 35 times or 2.7 %. The participants of relational process found were token 8.3%, value 6.6 %, 0.1 % , carrier 13.5 %, attribute 12.8 %, and attributor 0.1 %, . The participant of existential process found was existent 0.9 %.

Referring to the realization of experiential meanings of participants' aspect in students' recount, it could be inferred that the students' recounts realized nineteen participants of experiential meanings with the actor as the dominant participant. In realizing the participants' aspect, it could be concluded that the students expressed the participants before or after the processes' aspect. The labels of participants realized in the students' recounts were based on the processes' aspect involved. Therefore, the processes' aspect was a crucial factor in determining the label of participants. In addition, the participants' aspect of experiential meanings in students' recounts was realized by the noun group in which it included the noun, describer, classifier, numerative, determiner, embedded phrase, embedded clause, nominalization, and noun complex.

The processes aspects produced mainly in the students' recounts were the material process 43.6 %. Besides, the relational process 33%, the mental process reached 12.8 %, the verbal process 6.7 %, the behavioural process 3.3 %, and the existential process 0.6 %. By considering the realization of processes' aspect of experiential meanings in students' recounts, it indicated that the recount text type was dominant to have the material process. It was supported by Mulatsih (2007) and Nurohmah

(2013). They also found that the domination of process aspect in recount was the material process. Since the students' recounts shared about experiences in the past, their recounts were dominant to use the words that expressed the process of doing and about action. It was proven by the total number of material process realized in students' recounts that reached 43.6 %. Furthermore, the processes' aspect of experiential meanings in students' recounts was realized by the verb group that consisted of past verb, auxiliaries, and non-finite elements.

Referring to the circumstances realized in students' recounts, it inferred that the students' recounts involved six types of circumstances. The circumstances' aspect of experiential meanings in students' recounts was realized by the prepositional phrase, adverbial group, and noun group. However, the dominant circumstances in students' recounts were place circumstance in 43.5% and time circumstance in 23.7 %. The place circumstance was represented by the condition that was probed by "where" and "how far". The time circumstance was realized by the condition that was expressed by 'when', 'how often', and 'how long'.

CONCLUSION

The dominance of participants' aspect showed that the students emphasized on the people, ideas, or things that involved in their recounts in which their recounts told about the students' past experiences. Referring to the participants' aspect of experiential meanings in students' recounts realized, there are nineteen out of twenty participants involve in the students' recounts. The participants in students' recounts are represented by nominal group. The material process is mainly realized in students' recounts because the students wrote their recounts by telling their past experiences or events in which the dominant process used is the verb group of doing something bodily, physically, or materially. The circumstances' aspect in students' recounts are represented in the language as prepositional phrase, adverbial group, and noun group. The circumstance of

place and time are dominant because the students write their recounts by expressing more the condition that is probed by “where”, “how far”, “when”, “how often”, and “how long”. Therefore, the students write their recounts of past experiences in specific times and places.

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