



THE QUALITY OF GENERIC STRUCTURE OF DISCUSSION TEXT WRITTEN BY THE XII GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 LUBUK ALUNG

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Abstract

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif yang bertujuan untuk melihat kualitas *generic structure* dari teks *discussion* yang ditulis oleh siswa yang terdiri dari *statement of issue, arguments for, arguments against, and recommendation*.. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan rubrik skoring yang di adopsi dari Brown (2010) untuk menganalisis kualitas dari *generic structure* siswa dalam menulis teks *discussion*. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas 3 SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung. Sampel dari penelitian ini berjumlah 30 siswa dari kelas XII IPA 3 yang didapat melalui teknik *cluster sampling*. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan instrumen berupa tes menulis teks *discussion*. Peneliti menyediakan tiga topik berbeda sebagai pilihan oleh siswa dalam menulis teks *discussion* dengan waktu yang disediakan adalah 90 menit. Hasil dari tulisan siswa tersebut digunakan sebagai data dalam penelitian ini. Berdasarkan data yang diperoleh, kualitas teks yang ditulis siswa ditinjau dari segi *generic structure* berada dalam kategori *fair*. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa 30% dari tulisan siswa memenuhi kriteria dalam penulisan *statement of issue* dari teks *discussion*. Sedangkan untuk penulisan argumen pro dan kontra yang dikategorikan bagus dan memenuhi kriteria adalah mencapai 67% dari '*arguments for*' dan 53% dari '*arguments against*' yang ditulis oleh siswa. Selanjutnya, dari hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa 59% dari *recommendation* yang ditulis oleh siswa memenuhi kriteria.

Key words: discussion text, kualitas tulisan siswa, generic structure

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of skills that should be mastered by students in Senior High School. As stated in curriculum 2006, there are four skills that should be learnt in English. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students will learn how to write after they mastered the other skills. It means, writing takes an important part of English skill since it helps everyone to communicate. As stated in Lou and Spaventa (2001:6), writing is an important way of communicating.

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Based on English curriculum 2006, writing is taught through various kinds of texts such as descriptive, narrative, report, discussion and review text. One of the important texts that student should master in Senior High School, especially for grade XII is discussion text. This text gives students a space for showing and sharing information, knowledge, ideas and opinions. This kind of text guides student to think of one debated issue that has advantages and disadvantages. As stated by Derewianka (1990:70), discussion text is a text which discusses two sides of an issue and putting both sides of the argument before stating a position of the writer.

Moreover, a discussion text provides two contrastive arguments on issue to inform the readers about what is being discussed. In writing a discussion text, writers are required to balance the arguments of both sides, arguments for and against. On the recommendation, the writers can decide on which arguments they stand. According to Andersons (1998), a discussion text consists of three parts; first, statements of issue which is gives readers boundaries about what is going to discuss; second, arguments which are divided into two sides, arguments for and against; and third, recommendation which sums up all the arguments and allows writer to decide his/her position in the subject.

Discussing something in writing is not easy for most of people. It can be seen from the observation that researcher has done. Some students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung said that writing a discussion text is difficult for them. Their English teacher said he cannot get the idea or messages from those writings, because the messages in students' texts are not clearly shared. He finds students are unable to write a good writing which is suitable with generic structure and language features of the texts. Also, students do not know about the tenses that should be used in their writing. Even some students knew nothing to write about discussion text.

Since a discussion text is one of text taught in third grade students of the senior high school, it is important for English teacher to know how good discussion texts written by students and what the difficulties that most of students faced. So that, the researcher wants to conduct a research to analyze the students' discussion texts in order to know the quality of students' discussion texts. In this case, the researcher focuses on the generic structure of discussion text written by the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

In relation to the aim of the study, this research used descriptive research. Gay (2000), a descriptive research describes about people, or a phenomenon like the way they are. This kind of research is done by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting some comprehensive data to get insight or understandings of people or the phenomenon which is being research. The result of this study indicates the quality of generic structure of discussion text written by the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung.

The generic structures of discussion texts analyzed in this research were written by 30 students from the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung. The instrument of this research was writing test of a discussion text. There were three topics about discussion text analyzed in this research. The topics are about the

advantages and disadvantages of internet, computer, and national examination. These three topics are taken from students' interest. Students were asked to choose only one topic that they had experienced about. They were asked to write about at least four paragraphs or more which consist of 200 words. The time to write the text is 90 minutes.

In order to see how the quality of generic structure of discussion text is, rubric scoring from Brown (2010) was used. The scoring is presented below:

Tabel 1: Rubric Scoring for Students' Discussion Text (Brown 2010:286)

Criteria/ Score	5 Excellent	4 Good	3 Fair	2 Poor	1 Weak
Generic Structure					
Statement of Issue	Effective introductory paragraph, topic is stated with background information and outlines, statements of issue leads to body; arrangement of material shows plan (could be outlined by reader);	Adequate introduction (contains an introduction that details and outlines the issue);	Mediocre or scant introduction (contains an introduction to the issue or topic);	Shaky or minimally recognizable introduction; attempts an introduction, may be short/confused organization can barely be seen;	Absence of introduction; minimal evidence of an introduction; no apparent organization of body;
Arguments For	supporting evidence of arguments for given (stating who, what they think, and why as evidence for the argument, includes examples);	supporting evidence of arguments for given (stating who, what they think, and why as evidence for the argument, includes examples); some ideas aren't fully developed;	problems with the order of ideas in body; the arguments for may not be fully supported by the evidence given; problems of organization interfere	severe problems with ordering of ideas; lack of supporting evidence;	severe lack of supporting evidence; writer has not made any effort to organize the composition (could not be outlined by reader)
Arguments Against	supporting evidence of arguments	body of text is acceptable, but some	problems with the order of ideas	severe problems with ordering of	lack of supporting evidence;

	against given (stating who, what they think, and why as evidence for the argument, includes examples);	evidence may be lacking, some ideas aren't fully developed;	in body; the arguments against may not be fully supported by the evidence given; problems of organization interfere	ideas; lack of supporting evidence;	writer has not made any effort to organize the composition (could not be outlined by reader)
Recommendation or Conclusion	recommendation or conclusion (justifies writer's opinion and support this with evidence)	Adequate conclusion (provides a justification for writer's opinion)	Mediocre or scant conclusion	conclusion weak or illogical; inadequate effort at organization	Minimal evidence or absence of conclusion;

Based on the instrument above, the quality of generic structure of discussion text written by the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung were categorized into 5 categories. They are excellent, good, fair, poor, and weak. To categorize each component of generic structure in students' discussion texts, researcher was helped by a scorer who is experts in writing. She is writing lecturer in English Department of Padang State University.

C. DISCUSSION

Generally the result of the quality of generic structure of discussion text written by the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung is in fair category. The description can be seen from the following table:

Table 2: Categorization of Generic Structure in Students' Discussion Text

Category	Number of Texts			
	Statements of Issue	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Recommendations
Excellent	7	2	0	6
Good	2	18	16	11
Fair	12	6	8	9
Poor	9	3	4	3
Weak	0	1	2	0
Amount	30	30	30	29

Table 2 shows that there are 30 texts analyzed in this research. One of the students' texts did not arrange a recommendation of discussion text. This means all of students' discussion texts contain the statements of issue, 'arguments for', and 'arguments against'.

Table 3: The Description of the Quality of Students' Statements of Issue

Quality	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	7	23%
Good	2	7%
Fair	12	40%
Poor	9	30%
Weak	0	0
Total	30	100%

The data above present the percentage of the quality of statements of issue in students' discussion texts. It shows that 30% of students' statements of issue fulfill the required aspects of developing a statement of issue in a discussion text. These texts contain statements of issue that lead the body paragraph, the introduction is stated briefly but understandable. It is in line with the theory from Barwich (1999:94), a discussion begins with a brief introduction describing the situation. In other words, Jordan (1999) said a good introduction will not be too long, but its length will vary according to the type of writing. However, this finding means more than a half of students' discussion texts did not achieve all required aspects of developing a statement of issue in a discussion text. Most of students' writings were not presenting an effective introductory paragraph and the arrangement of material shows plan cannot be outlined by readers.

Table 4: The Description of the Quality of Students' Arguments for

Quality	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	2	7%
Good	18	60%
Fair	6	20%
Poor	3	10%
Weak	1	3%
Total	30	100%

Furthermore, the data above show that 67% of students' 'arguments for' offered the required aspects of developing body paragraph of a discussion text. It means most of students can arrange well the 'arguments for' of a discussion text. The aspect is supporting evidence of arguments (stating who, what they think, and why as evidence for the argument, include example).

Example 1

Some people agree with national examination because make teacher and students work harder to achieve the best results. National examination make students to motivate get high score. National examination exercise student to honest. National examination is to create a good standard of education in Indonesia which can produce qualified graduates.

(Text 8)

Closure similar to Example 1 which the text has many arguments in a paragraph without a counter one, there is also no supporting evidence for each point of arguments found in Example 2.

Example 2

Generally, the people who use the computer for their work, it help them so much, they can do the work/task early. Computer is not tired and sleep, so much ready to operate every time in people need. Computer can manner and read data, and computer also can save the data too much, it's easy and efficient.

(Text 26)

Besides these two examples of students' discussion texts, there were others which either has problems with ordering ideas in the body paragraph and the less of students effort in organizing the composition which made reader cannot outline the message from the texts made by students.

Table 5: Description of the Quality of Students' Arguments Against

Quality	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	0	0
Good	16	53%
Fair	8	27%
Poor	4	13%
Weak	2	7%
Total	30	100%

The table 5 above shows that there were only 53% of students' texts which fulfill the required aspects of developing the 'arguments against' of a discussion text. The similar case is also found when analyzing students' arguments against, the result shows that a half of students' arguments against did not fulfill the aspects of developing a body paragraph of a discussion text. Most of students' arguments against did not support by supporting evidences.

Moreover, the result in this research also indicated that both students' arguments 'for' and 'against' were not balance, because students tended to focus only in a perspective of an issue. It assumed that in students' discussion texts, the issues from two opposing points of view were merely able to be discussed. The texts just focus on elaborating the writers' opinions. It also means the texts discussed the writer's standpoint, not the issue which has both two perspectives. This is not accordance with the basic concept of a discussion text which its objective is to discuss the two or more points of view of an issue, not to promote a side of an issue. The finding is consistent with the previous research conducted on Oktaviani (2014) which students were difficult to position themselves as the writers who are discussing an issue, but they tended to be the writers who are defending their stands. Furthermore, this finding is indicated that the students cannot produce the best quality of a discussion text because they just stand in a position when arguing the pro and contra of an issue. It means they cannot differentiate between an exposition text and a discussion text. It can be known from the quality of students' discussion text which is 11 texts whose arguments for and against are in different category. (See appendix 5)

Table 6: The Description of the Quality of Students' Recommendations

Quality	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	6	21%

Good	11	38%
Fair	9	31%
Poor	3	10%
Weak	0	0
Total	29	100%

Moreover, in this study, the recommendation were analyzed for the presence or absence the required aspects. The result showed only 41% of students' texts which were not clearly stated the conclusion according to the issue in statements of issue. The remaining 59% of students' texts either sum up the arguments discussed or wrote the writers' position.

From the findings above, there was a cause that might be affected the quality of generic structure of discussion texts written by students. It was the limitation of time to learn a discussion text. The students just learned about writing a discussion text in once. It makes the quality of students' generic structure of discussion texts was in fair category. Because of this limited time, the students were unable to write a discussion text by applying an appropriate generic structure of discussion text.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the quality of generic structure of discussion text written by the XII grade students of SMAN 1 Lubuk Alung is in fair category. Each components of generic structure in students' discussion text averagely is in fair category.

Moreover, it also could be concluded that there are some problems found in students' discussion texts. *First*, 21 of students' statements of issue are not clearly structured. It was similarly to the arguments for and arguments against, 10 texts are not clearly structured the ideas in arguments for, 14 texts are not clearly structured the ideas in arguments against. *Second*, it was found that there are 8 texts of arguments 'for' and 'against' which have no counter arguments which are followed by supporting evidence. *Third*, there are 12 texts which are in inadequate effort at organization and minimal evidence in recommendation, and 3 texts have absence of writer's position or point of view.

Related to the result of this research, some suggestions are proposed; *first*, it was suggested for the English teacher to explain the generic structure of a discussion text more clearly and deeply in order to increase the quality of students' discussion texts; *second*, the teacher should give more practices for students in making a discussion text through various ways or strategies that students are interested in related to the structuring of ideas in a discussion text; *third*, it was suggested to the English teacher to stimulate the students to build ideas related to the topic given. It will make students are able to develop those ideas to be a good writing of discussion text; *fourth*, the English teacher should give students various kinds of topics that can improve students' writing of arguments from many points of view; *last*, for the next researcher who will conduct a research related to students' discussion text can go further research

about the reasons why most of students' arguments for and against seem not balanced.

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