English Teachers' Ability in Identifying and Producing Academic Texts: A Genre-Based Case Study in Sragen

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to examine the ability of English teachers of senior high schools in Sragen Regency in identifying and producing texts with various types of genres that are needed to be developed into teaching materials. Members of High School English Teachers Association in the regency were involved in the research. An instrument in the form of test was distributed to all the members of the association measuring their capability in identifying various of texts, in producing them, as well as in using them in composing a journal article. The responses given by the teachers show that they actually do not have good knowledge and language skills in identifying as well as producing texts in certain types. Furthermore, they also got problems in positioning what type of text to which part of a journal article. This condition indicates that the teachers still need upgrading program for their language skills to compose a journal article, and in addition they need others to give a hand during the process of article writing.

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INTRODUCTION

Under any circumstances, language learning, including learning English requires a strategic transformation with regard to existing facilities and supporting elements (Khlaif, et.al., 2021; Onyema, et.al., 2020). Conditions that are less supportive will provide problems for learners in improving their language skills and abilities. There are two language skills that are considered very crucial to master, namely academic reading and writing skills. For English teachers, who are experiencing the development of their English, these two skills are perceived as problems. These two types of skills are needed by teachers because they must develop teaching materials based on the type of text that must be presented to their students. On the other hand, writing texts of various types is not only related to academic writing skills, but also requires the support of other skills, such as academic reading, grammar, vocabulary contained in learning English for Academic Purposes (Ding & Bruce, 2017; Green & Lambert, 2018).

Academic reading ability is closely related to, supportive, crucial, and goes hand in hand with academic writing ability which also influences cognitive ability, writing quality, and excellent academic achievement (Dallagi, 2020; Graham, 2020; Kim & Kim, 2020; Oncel, et. al., 2021; Yildirin, et.al., 2020; Renandya et.al,; 2020; Graham, 2020). In addition, several studies have highlighted that mastery of academic vocabulary contributes to improving the quality of scientific writing (Galante, 2020; Knezevic, et.al., 2020). Thus, mastery of academic reading and writing skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar are primary needs for teachers in producing various types of English texts that will be developed as teaching materials in their classrooms as well as will be developed for a journal article which accommodate several types of text (Evans, et.al., 2018; Han & Schuurmans, 2018). 2017).

In addition, the limited mastery of academic writing skills can be partly due to the ability to read or identify the types of text that is not strong enough, so that teachers find it difficult to produce texts with various types of genres that must be used as teaching materials or to be contributed in a journal article. These problems will have an impact on the lack of confidence of teachers in carrying out their profession, and in the end will have an impact on the quality of learning that teachers do to their students.

Meanwhile, scientific articles are one type of academic text that contains scientific studies in certain fields which are usually published in scientific journals or presented at seminars, conferences, and workshops forums. Articles presented in the last three forums are often called as papers. There are still other types of academic texts, such as books, research reports, theses, dissertations, reviews, and so on. Scientific articles can be classified into research articles and non-research articles (as well as popular scientific articles, as another subtype) (Wiratno, Purnanto, & Damaianti, 2014/2016). As the name implies, research articles are based on research. In principle, research articles are research reports presented in the form of articles. On the other hand, non-research articles are not based on research, and only represent thoughts or concepts. Non-research articles are also called conceptual articles (Wiratno, 2014). Conceptual articles generally contain theoretical thoughts about something that is presented through critical analysis. Popular scientific articles are relatively the same as conceptual articles, namely scientific articles that are more informal in style, which are marked by the use of everyday language, among others. If research articles and conceptual articles are published in journals or presented in forums such as workshops and seminars, popular scientific articles are usually published in newspapers or magazines, especially in the opinion column (Wiratno, Purnanto, & Damaianti, 2014).

In relation to produce scientific articles, knowledge and language processing skills to produce texts with various types of genres are very useful. This is due to the fact that parts of a scientific text accommodate texts with certain types of genres Gerrot & Wignell, 1995; Halliday, 1994; Martin, 1992). Therefore, if the teachers master the knowledge of the structure and texture of texts with various types of genres, then that knowledge will make it easier for them to carry out the scientific writing process. This article examines the ability of teachers who are members of the Senior High School English Teacher Association in Sragen Regency in identifying and writing texts with various types of genres which are then exploited in writing scientific articles. Introduction is written in without sub-heading. It consists of background of the problem (not compulsory), state of the art (at least 5 literatures/journals as primary source) to show novelty, gap analysis, review (if any) purpose of the research.

THEORY AND METHODS

Generally, an academic text is constructed on several discourse units, namely Title, Abstract, Introduction, Research Methods, Findings and Discussion, Conclusion, and References. Of these units, Title and Reference do not have sub unit within them, whereas each of other units has its sub units to support an academic text to have its social function. Related to this phenomenon, a seminar article or scientific journal article are written to be used to disseminate scientific ideas, thoughts, especially those resulting from a research to the general scientific audience. The first text was presented in a seminar scientific forum; while the second text is produced for a journal publication.

In order to have its social function, put in other words, there are several formats for the two types of scientific text above. However, in general, the two scientific texts will be built with units or sections called IMRAD which represents Introduction, Methods (Methodology) Results & Discussion, while the Conclusion is considered to have only one part, so it is easy to write.

If the seminar articles and scientific journal articles are basically built on the same units or sections, then what is the difference between these two scientific texts? Viewed from their size, usually articles for seminar proceedings are shorter than articles for scientific journals. In fact, often a seminar proceeding requires a maximum limit of 5 pages or is limited by the number of words, (which is around 2000-3000 words). Related to this condition, there are often units or parts of a seminar text that are merged—usually an Introduction will also include theory and methodology—so that the text is written with the units or sections of Abstract-Introduction-Results&Discussion-Conclusions.

On the other hand, journal articles allow for more pages or words. Therefore, the template for the format or structure of the text of a journal will generally be more complete, consisting of Abstract-Introduction-Methodology-Results&Discussion-Conclusion. This format usually includes theoretical studies in the Introduction section. However, sometimes there are also journal articles that issue theoretical presentations from the Introduction, so that the articles are arranged in the format of Abstract-Introduction-Theory-Methodology-Results & Discussion-Conclusions.

The data for this study are responses from teachers to 45 sentences stating certain conditions related to activities to identify and produce texts of various types which are packaged in a questionnaire in the form of a Goggle Form. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers who are members of the Senior High School English Teacher Association in Sragen Regency. The responses of the teachers to the questionnaire were then analyzed to find out their opinions on identifying and writing texts of various types and especially in writing scientific texts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To get an idea of the condition of the teachers' ability to identify texts with various types of genres, and about their knowledge or academic understanding of the structural and textural characteristics of each type of text, a questionnaire in the form of Google Form was distributed to teachers who are members of the association. Meanwhile, the questionnaire was composed of 45 statements with response options in the form of numbers (1) to (5). Each of these choices represents the attitude of the teachers to the conditions or cases presented in each statement. The value of each choice is as follows, (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neutral; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly Agree.

Meanwhile, the 45 statements in the questionnaire are grouped into three parts, namely Part 1 which is known as Academic Discourse, Part 2 which is referred to as Writing Metacognition; and Part 3 entitled Academic Writing. Section 1 accommodates 18

statements related to the knowledge and skills of teachers about various types of texts, from descriptive texts to discussion texts—texts that have the potential to appear and become parts of a journal articles. Some of the statements in Section 1 describe the types of texts that are considered easy, and some other statements represent the types of texts that are considered difficult by teachers, both to identify and to produce.

The texts that are stated to be easy in Part 1 are report, explanatory, exposition, and recount text. In addition, when it is associated with writing a scientific article, the easy activity is identifying the type of text contained in the methodological unit of a scientific article. On the other hand, the texts that are difficult to identify and produce are descriptive, procedure, and narrative text. Furthermore, related to the writing of scientific articles, the activities that were declared difficult were compiling the discussion text in a scientific article and identifying the texts that must be included in the Introduction, and Literature Review unit of a scientific text.

Section 2 consists of 13 statements related to strategies, or steps, and activities that teachers do when they are in the process of writing an article text. Several statements related to the steps were presented in the activities of finding as much material as possible, looking for reference sources from the internet, using personal notes, reading the text repeatedly, reading the text aloud, and checking the grammatical quality of sentences used in the text. Meanwhile, several other statements presented the mental condition of the teachers when they were in the process of writing a scientific text, such as feeling confused, feeling tired, feeling embarrassed to ask questions, and finding it difficult to do something related to the process of writing a scientific text.

Section 3 accommodates matters related to academic writing activities. There are 14 statements about events or events experienced by teachers in the process of writing texts with various types of genres. The fourteen statements are divided into two types, namely statements that support writing activities and statements that do not support these activities. Unfavorable conditions or activities are presented in sentences that state that making a written outline, or making the background part of the research are confusing. There are also good paragraph writing activities, or paraphrasing activities that are very mind-blowing. In addition, there are also sentences that state that writing research objectives, or writing a bibliography is a complicated job.

On the other hand, several sentences in this section express positive conditions that support the process of writing scientific texts. There are two conditions of this type, namely a sense of ease and confidence in carrying out activities related to the process of writing scientific texts. The first taste is associated with making the title, writing the introduction section, writing the methodology section, writing the results section, writing the discussion section, and writing the conclusion. Meanwhile, self-confidence is associated with writing activities in the research methodology section. All statements that are positive and negative related to the process of writing scientific texts are then submitted to the teachers to be given a response according to the conditions of each teacher. Of course there will be statements that match the conditions they experience, so they will strongly agree with that statement. On the other hand, there will also be statements that contradict their conditions, so the teachers will express strongly disagree. In addition, there will also be statements that are in accordance with some of their conditions, and not in accordance with other parts, so that there are three other options that teachers can choose according to their actual conditions. The responses given by the teachers to each statement in this questionnaire can be presented in the description below.

Section 1 accommodates statements about the knowledge and skills of teachers in identifying various types of texts. In addition, this section also provides statements about the ability of teachers to compose a journal article by positioning several types of text in

the process of writing scientific articles. The statements are divided into three classifications, namely statements about the ability and understanding of teachers about various types of texts and their use in writing a scientific article; some statements about difficulties in identifying and writing certain types of text, or types of text exploited in a journal article; and sentences stating that teachers find it easy to identify and write texts of a certain type and identify texts of a certain type in a scientific article.

There are four sentences that represent the ability and understanding of the teachers related to identifying and writing texts of a certain type. In the questionnaire, the four statements in this classification are numbered (1), (7), (11), and (11). Knowledge and understanding of academic discourse itself can be related to two things, i.e. the general structure and texture—each type will have a different text structure and text texture, so that each text has its own type and name. When a text has been built with the correct discourse unit and the correct arrangement of discourse units, then structurally the text has good format that can present the expected social function. Furthermore, to support the text structure in achieving the social function of a text, the texture in the forms of grammar quality and word choices must be considered accordingly.

Most of the teachers claimed to have general knowledge about the structure of the text or the general structure of various texts of a certain type. However, this quality decreases when the texts must be written to consider the target readers' verbal ability. This shows the teachers' lack of knowledge to modify a text with a focus on grammar and vocabulary selection. In relation to this academic condition, most of the teachers said that increasing knowledge about text structure and text texture with various types was highly correlated, so that in order to improve abilities and skills, academic activities or efforts should be carried out by them, for example by having training or by learning more about these different types of texts.

The quality of the knowledge and academic abilities can then be seen from their opinions on the activities of identifying and writing certain types of texts. When several types of texts such description, procedure, discussion, narrative, and identifying the types of texts that appear in a scientific text are said to be difficult or complicated, then column chart that represents the responses of the teachers shows the high columns on the right, such as shown by the two samples of chart below.
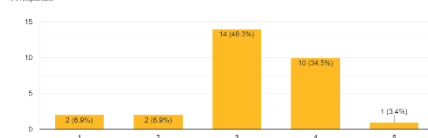
Chart 1

Chart 2

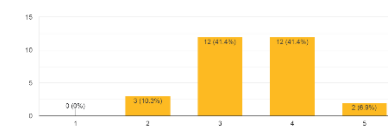The two charts above represent several statements about the difficulties and complexities that the teachers encounter in the process of identifying and writing certain types of texts, as well as in positioning these texts to a scientific article. The chart columns that tend to be higher in the right shown by the two charts above—and several other charts with similar statements—show that the teachers do experience difficulties and problems in identifying and writing certain types of text. Most of them agreed with a few sentences that said it was difficult and complicated to identify and write certain types of text.

Furthermore, when the teachers had several sentences stating that identifying and writing certain types of texts was easy, they gave a response that ultimately supported their response to statements about the difficulties and complexities they had before. Several sentences stating that it is easy to identify and write report texts, explanatory texts, exposition texts, and recount texts, as well as identify the types of texts that are present in the methodology, discussion, and conclusion units of a scientific text. In general, the teachers' responses to these statements show their consistency in their ability to identify and write certain types of texts. The charts representing the teachers' responses to some of these statements tend to have high bars in the left area, as shown by the two examples below.
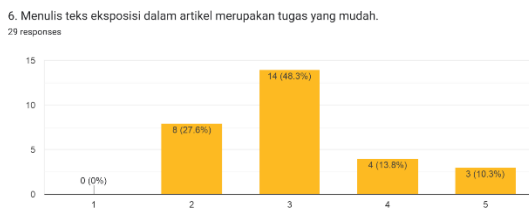

Chart 3

Chart 4

The two pictures above show that the teachers seem consistent with the quality of their knowledge and academic understanding in identifying and writing certain types of texts. The high bars in the left side show that most of the teachers' responses mostly disagree with the statements presented, or in other words they deny the sentences stating that identifying and writing certain types of text are easy.

The second part presents 13 statements related to the metacognition of writing. The sentences presented in this section describe the strategies and activities carried out by teachers during the process of writing a scientific article text. These strategies and activities are metacognitively stated in a positive manner and some are presented in a negative tone. The teachers' responses to the written metacognition statements can be shown by several graphs that globally summarize the teachers' tendencies in assessing each statement.

There are four sentences that accommodate positive strategies, namely that finding as much writing material as possible will greatly assist the process of writing articles, that article writing can be done without making a work plan, that searching for sources from the internet maximally is an effective way to find writing material, and that using personal notes from referenced sources will make it easier to write journal articles. The teachers' responses to the three statements showed a similar pattern—they supported all three statements as presented in the three charts below.

Chart 5

Chart 6

Chart 7

The three charts above show a trend to the right which indicates that teachers agree with three strategies that can help them in the process of writing articles, namely collecting a lot of material, using the internet and searching for materials and using personal notes from several references used in writing articles. On the other hand, one statement about this strategy gets the opposite response pattern to the other statements. The sentence which states that the teachers can finish writing scientific articles without having to make a work plan or schedule is denied by most of the teachers. This response shows that the process of writing the article still requires a strategy that can help or facilitate the completion process. Therefore, although the appearance of the chart for this statement is contrary to the previous three charts, the meaning of this chart is actually the same and supports the other three charts

In addition, there are three sentences that present strategies or steps in a negative tone. In one sentence, the teacher respondents were described as feeling confused if they had to collect the results of previous research to use as a reference; the second sentence expresses the confusion of the teachers if they have to do a critical review of references in the form of journal articles; and the third sentence says that teachers feel ashamed if they have to ask or consult with those who are more capable in writing scientific texts.

The response patterns of teacher respondents to these three statements are as follows.

Chart 9   Chart 10   Chart 11

The first two charts presented above display the abilities of the teachers who are less than optimal in the two activities that must be carried out in the process of writing a scientific article, namely collecting various journal articles that have studies similar to the topic that the teachers want to research. The confusion in collecting these references further increased when the teachers had to critically read all the references to be able to find the research gap that would be used as the topic of their research. In relation to this condition, the teachers implicitly state the need for others who can help or accompany them during the process of writing scientific articles. This desire is shown by Chart 11 which represents the responses of the teachers to their statement of shame when they have to consult or ask questions in the process of writing scientific articles. Most of the teachers denied this statement—they didn't agree with it.

Part 2 of this questionnaire also provides six sentences that accommodate statements related to the activities that the teachers do in the process of writing articles. Like the strategy discussed earlier, activities related to the process of writing scientific articles are also divided into two groups, namely activities that are positive and other activities that are negative. The three sentences that express positive activities are associated with the need to check the draft many times, the need to read the text aloud to make sure the article is easy to understand, and the need to examine the sentences used to compose the scientific article. Most of the teacher respondents tend to agree with the three statements. On the other hand, there are three sentences that present negative statements related to activities in the process of writing scientific articles. These three

sentences express fatigue, confusion, and shame when they have to revise parts that are not good, check the content for good arguments, and when they have to involve other people to do proofreading of drafts of articles written. For the first two statements the teachers expressed their agreement. The two charts for responses to these two statements tend to be heavily to the right, indicating that teachers agree with feeling tired and confused when they have to do the two activities. This condition can actually show that the skills and abilities of teachers are less than optimal in revising parts that are not good, and in checking the substance of articles to be able to present quality arguments. Meanwhile, the third statement that expresses shame when it comes to involving other people to be proofreaders of the draft article gets a response that is mostly on the left side of the chart—most of the teachers disagree with that statement. This indicates that the teachers need other parties in the process of writing their scientific articles.

Section 3 of the questionnaire presents statements related to the process of writing scientific articles. Fourteen sentences in this section are presented either for positive or negative statements. Six sentences state that some of the activities of writing part of an article are an easy or simple job. On the other hand, there are eight sentences stating that writing certain parts of a scientific article is a job that is not easy, confusing or difficult to do.

Six sentences with positive statements highlight the ease of writing part of a journal article, namely the title, introduction, research methods, results section, discussion section, and conclusion section. Some of the teachers gave responses that tended to deny the positive statements. The response patterns of the teachers are shown by the high bars in the left side of the following charts.

Chart 12   Chart 13   Chart 14

The display of bars in the three charts above can indicate that for the teacher, writing parts of an article is still difficult. This case happens not only for long and complicated unit such as findings and discussion, but also for shorter and simpler one such as the title of such an article.

Meanwhile, there are eight sentences containing negative statements. These sentences state that making a scientific article format and outline is not easy to understand, making paragraphs with high readability is tiring, paraphrasing is not easy, writing a research background is confusing, writing research objectives is a complicated job, writing a literature review makes depressed, and writing bibliography with the software was difficult for teachers. Meanwhile, the responses of the teachers to these negative statements were quite diverse. There is a statement that most teachers agree on—the bars in the chart tend to be higher in the right area as shown in the picture below.

36. Melakukan parafrase untuk menghindari plagiasi (menurunkan angka turnitin) sering menguras pikiran saya.
29 responses

Chart 15

Responses that appear like this indicate that the teachers support the statements presented in this sentence—statements about the difficulty of paraphrasing activities to avoid plagiarism when teachers have to quote from reference sources. On the other hand, there are two negative statements that get a response with a left-leaning pattern as presented by the chart below.

38. Saya akan bingung jika harus menulis latar belakang penelitian.
29 responses

39. Menulis tujuan penelitian merupakan pekerjaan yang rumit bagi saya.
29 responses

Chart 16   Chart 17

With the display pattern of these two charts, it can be interpreted if the teachers do not find it difficult to write two parts of a scientific article, namely the background of the research, and the research objectives. Most of them disagree with the sentence which states that writing these two parts is a difficult job.

In addition to the two opposing chart patterns above, there are responses from teachers who tend to be neutral towards the two statement sentences, namely those related to the writing format which is said to be difficult and related to making a written outline which is also said to be confusing. For these two statements, most teachers tend to be in the middle position—neither agree with the statement nor deny the statement.

32. Format dari penulisan artikel jurnal ilmiah cukup sulit untuk saya pahami.
29 responses

33. Membuat kerangka tulisan untuk artikel jurnal ilmiah biasanya membuat saya bingung.
29 responses

Chart 18   Chart 19

Although there are some teachers who agree or deny the two statements regarding the difficulty of making scientific article writing formats and frameworks, the two charts above indicate that most of the teachers have no problem with the two jobs. For them, making writing formats and frameworks is an ordinary job that can be done to support the process of writing scientific articles.

CONCLUSION

The questionnaires distributed to teachers who are members of Association of Senior High School English Teachers in Sragen Regency consist of three academic domains, namely academic discourse, writing metacognition, and academic writing. The first part contains several statements related to the knowledge and academic ability of teachers about texts with various types of genres and how these types of texts are used in writing scientific articles. Section 2 presents sentences that state the strategies, steps, and activities carried out by teachers during the process of writing scientific articles, and Section 3 presents statements about academic writing activities carried out by teachers. Some of the statements in each section are presented in a positive tone, while other sentences state something negative.

In general, the teachers' responses to all the statements presented in the three sections indicate that they still have problems in identifying certain types of text, and also have difficulty in steps or activities related to writing scientific articles. This is due to the lack of knowledge and skills needed to identify linguistic characteristics and write certain types of texts. Conditions like this further make teachers need the help of other parties both in improving knowledge and language skills as well as in the process of writing scientific articles.

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