

The Effect Perception of Differentiated Instruction and Vocabulary Mastery on Recount Text Writing Skill

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the influence of students' perceptions of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery on their ability to write recount texts among junior high school students in Bogor Regency. The research employed a survey method with the accessible population consisting of eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Rumpin and SMP Negeri 1 Ciseeng. The sample comprised 88 students. Data were collected through questionnaires, a vocabulary mastery test, and a recount text writing test. The data were analyzed using correlation and multiple regression techniques. The findings indicate that: (1) students' perceptions of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery simultaneously have a significant influence on recount text writing skills ($Sig = 0.00 < 0.05$; $F = 94.343$); (2) students' perceptions of differentiated instruction significantly affect writing skills ($Sig = 0.034 < 0.05$; $t = 2.151$); and (3) vocabulary mastery also significantly influences writing skills ($Sig = 0.044 < 0.05$; $t = 2.042$).

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction, Vocabulary Mastery; Recount Text Writing, Skills

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh persepsi atas metode pembelajaran berdiferensiasi dan penguasaan kosakata terhadap keterampilan menulis teks recount pada siswa SMP Negeri di Kabupaten Bogor. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah survei dengan populasi terjangkau siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 1 Rumpin dan SMP Negeri 1 Ciseeng. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 88 orang. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, tes penguasaan kosakata, dan tes menulis teks recount. Analisis dilakukan dengan korelasi dan regresi ganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) terdapat pengaruh signifikan persepsi atas metode pembelajaran berdiferensiasi dan penguasaan kosakata secara bersama-sama terhadap keterampilan menulis teks recount ($Sig = 0,00 < 0,05$; F hitung = 94,343); (2) persepsi atas metode pembelajaran berdiferensiasi berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keterampilan menulis ($Sig = 0,034 < 0,05$; t hitung = 2,151); dan (3) penguasaan kosakata juga berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keterampilan menulis ($Sig=0,044<0,05;t$ hitung=2,042).

Kata kunci: pembelajaran berdiferensiasi, penguasaan kosakata; keterampilan menulis teks recount

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of human resources and preparing future generations to face global challenges. In Indonesia, the

government has set a vision to create a “Golden Generation” by 2045 through educational transformation, emphasizing both character formation and competency development. Within this framework, English as a foreign language (EFL) holds a vital position as it serves not only as an international communication tool but also as a medium to access knowledge, technology, and cultural exchange. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—writing is particularly essential because it requires the integration of vocabulary mastery, grammar, and critical thinking to produce coherent and meaningful texts.

Despite its importance, writing in English remains a major challenge for many students, particularly at the junior high school level. Numerous studies highlight that Indonesian students often perceive writing as a difficult skill due to limited vocabulary, lack of grammatical mastery, and differences between English and their native language. These challenges are particularly evident in recount text writing, which demands not only language accuracy but also the ability to structure events chronologically and meaningfully. Vocabulary mastery, therefore, becomes a fundamental factor influencing students’ writing proficiency, as it provides the essential building blocks for expressing ideas clearly and effectively.

In addition to vocabulary, teaching methods also play a central role in supporting students’ writing development. Differentiated instruction, which has been widely discussed in contemporary educational theory, emphasizes adapting teaching approaches to meet students’ diverse needs, readiness levels, and learning preferences. In the Indonesian context, especially under the Merdeka Curriculum, differentiated instruction has been promoted as a strategy to foster creativity, critical thinking, and collaborative skills. However, observations indicate that despite the implementation of differentiated instruction, students’ writing performance in recount texts often remains below expectations, with many achieving scores under the Minimum Mastery Criteria.

Previous studies have shown positive correlations between vocabulary mastery and writing ability, as well as between differentiated instruction and learning outcomes in language learning. For instance, research has demonstrated that students with stronger vocabulary knowledge tend to perform better in writing tasks, while differentiated instruction can enhance students’ engagement and skill development. However, there is still limited research specifically investigating the combined influence of students’ perceptions of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery on recount text writing skills among junior high school students. This research gap highlights the novelty and relevance of the present study.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to examine the simultaneous effect of students’ perceptions of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery on recount text writing skills; (2) to analyze the individual effect of students’ perceptions of differentiated instruction on their recount text writing skills; and (3) to evaluate the individual effect of vocabulary mastery on recount text writing skills. By addressing these objectives, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how internal student factors and instructional approaches interact to influence writing performance.

This study is significant both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it contributes to the body of knowledge on second language acquisition, particularly the interplay between instructional strategies and linguistic competence in developing writing skills. Practically, the findings are expected to inform teachers about the importance of combining differentiated instruction with vocabulary enrichment to improve students' writing outcomes. The scope of this research is limited to eighth-grade students at two public junior high schools in Bogor Regency, Indonesia, with a focus on recount text writing. While the study acknowledges its contextual limitations, its insights may serve as a foundation for further investigations and the development of more effective writing instruction strategies in EFL settings.

Writing is regarded as a means of articulating ideas and opinions in written form. In line with this, Dalman (as cited in Nurlatifah et al., 2020) defines writing as a creative process of conveying thoughts into written language with specific communicative purposes, such as to inform, persuade, or entertain readers.. However, many learners perceive writing as a complex and challenging task due to linguistic, psychological, and cognitive difficulties, such as limited vocabulary, grammar errors, and anxiety (Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020; Byrne in Kristiana et al., 2021). To overcome these challenges, appropriate assessment with rubrics focusing on content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics is necessary (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019; Heaton in Suryani & Mira, 2024). Recount texts, as a genre in English writing, aim to retell past events to inform or entertain readers and typically consist of orientation, events, and reorientation (Hyland, 2004; Derewianka, 1990).

Students' perceptions of differentiated instruction also play a crucial role in shaping learning outcomes. Differentiated instruction is defined as a systematic approach that adapts content, process, product, and learning environment to accommodate learners' diversity (Heacox, 2012; Tomlinson in Suwartiningsih, 2021). This approach emphasizes studentcentered learning, flexibility, and inclusivity (Anderson, 2007; Subban, 2006). It is designed not only to help students achieve learning goals but also to enhance motivation, independence, and teacher creativity (Marlina, 2020; Fitria & Bisri, 2023). Positive perceptions toward differentiated instruction are expected to increase students' engagement and confidence in writing recount texts.

In addition, vocabulary mastery is considered a fundamental component of language proficiency. Vocabulary forms the basis of communication and supports the development of all language skills, including writing (Hatch & Brown, 1995; Laufer, 1997). Without sufficient vocabulary, learners struggle to express ideas coherently in writing (Alqahtani, 2015). Vocabulary mastery not only improves students' ability to construct sentences but also enables them to organize ideas effectively in recount texts (Lamante, 2020; Thornbury, 2022). Therefore, both differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery are strongly associated with students' performance in writing recount texts, as students with broader vocabulary and positive perceptions of instructional strategies are more capable of producing structured, accurate, and meaningful written texts.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational survey design to examine the influence of students' perceptions of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery on recount text writing skills. The research was conducted at two public junior high schools in Bogor Regency, namely SMP Negeri 1 Rumpin and SMP Negeri 1 Ciseeng, over a four-month period from March to June 2025. This approach was chosen as it allows for the systematic collection of quantitative data and the use of statistical analyses to test hypotheses regarding the relationships among the variables.

The target population consisted of all eighth-grade students from both schools ($N = 769$). Using Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error, a representative sample of 88 students was selected through purposive sampling. This sampling strategy ensured that participants were relevant to the research objectives. The sample included 43 students from SMPN 1 Rumpin and 45 students from SMPN 1 Ciseeng, reflecting the proportional distribution of the population.

Data were collected using three instruments. First, a questionnaire consisting of 50 Likert-scale items was administered to measure students' perceptions of differentiated instruction, covering indicators such as understanding, process, learning outcomes, supporting facilities, and student engagement. Second, a vocabulary mastery test with 50 items was developed, including 25 items on filling in blanks with appropriate vocabulary and 25 items on using correct past tense forms. Third, a recount text writing test was administered, evaluated using a rubric assessing content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. All instruments underwent validity and reliability testing, with Cronbach's Alpha exceeding 0.70, confirming their reliability.

The data collection process included instrument piloting, questionnaire distribution, vocabulary testing, and writing assessments, conducted systematically in classroom settings. Validity was tested using Pearson's product moment correlation, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis was performed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation) and inferential statistics, particularly multiple linear regression, to evaluate the effects of the independent variables both individually and simultaneously on the dependent variable. Prior to regression analysis, assumption tests such as normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were conducted to ensure the appropriateness of the model.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Permissions were obtained from the schools involved, and participants were informed about the objectives of the study, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was voluntary, and the data collected were used solely for academic purposes. These procedures ensured compliance with research ethics and safeguarded the rights of participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



The results of this study, involving 88 eighth-grade students from SMPN 1 Rumpin and SMPN 1 Ciseeng, revealed significant relationships among differentiated learning perceptions, vocabulary mastery, and recount text writing skills. Descriptive statistics indicated that the mean score for writing skills was 72.06 (SD = 9.43), with normally distributed data, suggesting that students' writing performance was generally high. Similarly, perceptions of differentiated learning (M = 139.99, SD = 24.56) and vocabulary mastery (M = 72.06, SD = 11.74) were also normally distributed, confirming the representativeness of the data.

Table 1 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test
Perceptions of

	Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction Methods	Vocabulary Mastery	Writing Recount Texts
N	88	88	88
Normal	139.99	72.06	72.06
Parameters ^{a,b}			
Mean			
Std.			
Deviation	24.561	11.749	9.437
Most			
Absolute	.068	.087	.093
Extrem Positive	.051	.087	.093
e Negative			
Differences	-.068	-.077	-.084
Test Statistic	.068	.087	.093
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200 ^{c,d}	.097 ^c	.055 ^c

A. The result of the correlation coefficient calculation of the influence of variables X1 and X2 on variable Y.

Table 2 Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.830 ^a	.689	.682	5.321

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Vocabulary Mastery
Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction
- b. Dependent Variable: Writing Recount Texts

It can be seen above that the multiple correlation coefficient of the independent variables, Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction Methods (X1) and Vocabulary Mastery (X2), simultaneously on Recount Text Writing Skills (Y) is



0.830. The calculation of the significance test for this multiple correlation coefficient can be found in the Appendix. From the calculation, it was obtained that the correlation coefficient is significant. In other words, there is a significant effect of the independent variables, Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction Methods (X1) and Vocabulary Mastery (X2), simultaneously on Recount Text Writing Skills (Y), with a value of 0.830.

Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination is 0.689, indicating that the contribution of Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction Methods (X1) and Vocabulary Mastery (X2), simultaneously on Recount Text Writing Skills (Y), is 68.9%, while the remaining 31.10% is influenced by other factors.

B. Recapitulation of the Calculation Results of the Significance Test of the Regression Coefficient of the effect of Variables X1 and X2 on Variable Y.

Table 3 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5342.162	2	2671.081	94.343	.000 ^b
Residual	2406.554	85	28.312		
Total	7748.716	87			

- Dependent Variable : Recount Text Writing Skills
- Predictors: (Constant), Vocabulary Mastery and Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction

The Sig value is the number listed in the Sig column. The F-calculated value is the number listed in the F column, while the F-table value is the value from the F distribution table at a 5% significance level with numerator degrees of freedom (k) = 2 and denominator degrees of freedom ($n - k - 1$) = 85, where n is the number of respondents and k is the number of independent variables.

From the table, it can be seen that $\text{Sig} = 0.000 < 0.05$ and $F\text{-calculated} = 94.343$, thus H_0 is rejected, which means that the regression coefficient is significant. In other words, there is a significant effect of the independent variables, Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction (X1) and Vocabulary Mastery (X2), simultaneously on the dependent variable, Recount Text Writing Skills (Y).

From the results of this regression test, it can be concluded that there is a significant simultaneous effect of the independent variables, Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction (X1) and Vocabulary Mastery (X2), on Recount Text Writing (Y).

C. Recapitulation of Regression Line Equation between Variables X1, X2, and Y

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Tolerance	IF
(Constant)	25.191	3.555		7.085	.000		
Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction	.166	.077	.431	2.151	.034	.091	0.991
Vocabulary Mastery	.329	.161	.409	2.042	.044	.091	0.991

From the table, it can be seen that $\text{Sig} = 0.034 < 0.05$ and $t\text{-calculated} = 7.085$, thus H_0 is rejected, which means that the independent variable X_1 (differentiated instruction) has a significant effect on the dependent variable Y (recount text writing).

From the results of this regression test, it can be concluded that the independent variable X_1 (differentiated instruction) has a significant effect on the dependent variable Y (recount text writing). Overall, the study demonstrates that pedagogical strategies and lexical knowledge jointly enhance students' writing performance. These results highlight the pedagogical significance of differentiated instruction and vocabulary development in junior high school English classrooms.

Future research may explore broader contexts, additional variables, and longitudinal designs to further validate these findings.

D. Implications

These findings imply that internal student factors such as learning methods and vocabulary mastery need to be seriously considered in writing instruction. Teachers are encouraged to integrate strategy training and foster habits that improve vocabulary mastery to support the development of students' writing skills. These results may also serve as input for curriculum designers to develop more student-centered writing programs.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the effects of differentiated instruction and vocabulary mastery, both individually and simultaneously, on eighth-grade students' recount text writing skills in public junior high schools in Bogor Regency. The findings



demonstrated that both variables had a significant joint effect on writing skills (Sig = 0.000 < 0.05; F = 94.343). Moreover, differentiated instruction (Sig = 0.034; t = 2.151) and vocabulary mastery (Sig = 0.044; t = 2.042) each significantly contributed to students' writing performance. These results highlight the importance of instructional approaches and linguistic competence in enhancing students' ability to construct recount texts effectively.

The study contributes to the field by providing empirical evidence that students' perceptions of differentiated instruction and their vocabulary knowledge are critical internal factors influencing writing proficiency. The findings suggest that teachers should adopt systematic and continuous differentiated instructional practices and foster vocabulary enrichment through varied and contextualized learning activities. Students, in turn, are encouraged to actively engage in learning, broaden their vocabulary, and consistently practice writing to improve their language competence.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations in terms of sample coverage and methodological scope. Future research is recommended to employ a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data, to capture a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between learning perceptions, vocabulary mastery, and writing skills. Expanding the research to different educational levels and broader contexts would also enrich insights into differentiated instruction in language learning.

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