

Improving Students' Skill in Writing Recount Text by Using Peer Review Technique

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted based on the fact that writing is the most difficult skill for students to master. Students face difficulties in learning writing. They are not sure of how to arrange sentences into good paragraphs, how to develop their ideas, they have lack of vocabulary and tend to use only certain words they have known in writing. They also apply incorrect grammar in their writing. Teacher considers that teaching writing is a difficult task. This final project is about teaching writing recount text by using peer review technique to the eighth graders students of SMP N 1 Tambusai Utara in the academic year of 2022. The aim of this study is to find out how peer review technique can be implemented to improve students' skill in writing recount text. In order to achieve the objectives, an action research was designed and carried out in this study. The participants of this study were 38 students of class VIII D of SMP N 1 Tambusai Utara in the academic year of 2022. Questionnaire, observation sheet, and writing tests were used as the instruments for collecting data. The results of the study showed significant improvement of the students' achievement in writing recount text. It is proven by the average results in every test; pre test (63.00), formative test (74.29), and post test (79.50). The students' writing skill (organization, content, grammar, punctuation, and style and quality of expression) in each test improved, too. Moreover, the result of the observation sheet showed that peer review technique changed the students' learning behavior being better than before. Their enthusiasm during the learning process increased in each cycle. The analysis result of questionnaire showed that peer review technique was useful to most of students to improve their learning interest in writing recount text. Their perception changed positively after having the treatment. It meant that the use of peer review technique could ease their problem in writing English especially recount text based on the results of those research instruments, it can be concluded that using peer review technique as a learning technique gives the improvement to students' skill in writing recount text.

Keywords: : *Peer Review Technique, Writing Skill*

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INTRODUCTION

English as International language has an important role in the world. Not only used in communication, but also in transferring information. There are four skills that students must be mastered in English they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills have to be mastered by the students, especially writing skill, because, according to Harmer (2004), "Being able to write is a vital skill for „speakers“ of a foreign language as much as for everyone using their own first language" (p. 3). It means that writing is the basic skill to communicate. Also, writing

is used for a wide variety of purposes. It is produced in many different forms (Harmer, 2004, p. 4). For examples, letter, book, etc. So, in everyday life, the people need to master writing.

Amongst the four language skills, though there four skills, writing is the most challenging skill to learn. It needs competencies of many language aspects, including grammar, diction, cohesiveness, and vocabulary to express the researcher opinions, thoughts, knowledges, and feelings. Furthermore, The steps of writing may include planning, drafting, editing, and final draft (Harmer, 2004, p. 5).

Through writing, people can express their idea, knowledge, and feeling to others. In fact, many students face many difficulties when they begin writing especially in writing recount text. For instance; the students spend much time to think about what they will write and the words that they should use, because they cannot get ideas quickly also they have so many error or mistakes in their writing. It is because they practice writing text rarely and not carefully correct their on writing. Also, they may not be able to put their ideas cohesively in a text.

Based on the school-based curriculum in junior high school, in English subject the students have to understand and create some short functional texts such as procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, and report. In fact, students have many difficulties to write recount text. Based on the researcher observation when the researcher had teaching practice in SMP N 1 Tambusai Utara class 8D, students find it difficult in writing . The students had some difficulties in organizing the paragraph and grammatical use. There were many mistakes in their writing in grammar, diction and also lack of vocabulary. The problem is they are not aware or do not know the mistakes that they have made.

The students' problem in writing is also caused by the difficulty of expressing ideas in writing. It is caused by their insufficient knowledge of language components such as vocabulary and grammar. Besides the difficulties in writing itself, writing problems also exist because of the students' reluctance in writing. Harmer (2004:61) states that "the students are reluctant to write because they rarely write, even in their own language". The lack of writing practice makes students perform poorly in writing. Furthermore, they are bored and uninterested with the conventional strategy of teaching recount text which has been applied.

Because of that, the teacher should give some strategies to help students increase or even solve their difficulties. These strategies should be interesting in order to interest students to write. Because basically, the students or children enjoy experimenting with writing and putting their ideas down on paper (Linse, 2006, p. 99). Based on Linse's statement, students actually have had basic interest to write. So, the teachers just need to give some motivation or direction to develop it.

Seeing those students' difficulties in writing recount text and when their teacher corrects their writing, they often just throw it away or do not see or check it again. So, peer review is adequate technique to help students correct their work when there was something wrong in their writing; this

gives the student the opportunity to reflect on their mistakes and make improvements to their writing. It also shows the teacher what the learners are able to do and what still remains difficult or unknown.

Peer review technique is an essential part of the writing process. It is utilized between the drafting and revision stages, considering the process of writing involves four elements: planning, drafting, editing, and final version.

By peer review technique, students can get the four elements in the writing process. By applying peer review technique, it will help students to know what the strengths are and weaknesses or what are missing from their writing so they can revise and improve it.

Through this technique, students could exchange their writing with their partners to check the organization in writing. Bartels (2003) states that in peer review students read each other papers and provide feedback to the researcher, usually answering specific questions that teacher has provided. So, through this technique, students got good feedback to evaluate their writing better and it was very useful for students.

From these reasons, the researcher conducts an action classroom research about improving students' skill in writing recount text by using peer review technique for the eighth graders of SMP N 1 Tambusai Utara in the academic year of 2022)

METHOD

The subject of the research was a teacher who related with the topic of the study. One of the main aims of AR is to identify a problematic situation or issue that the participants – who may include teachers, students, managers, administrators, or even parents – consider worth looking into more deeply and systematically (Burns 2010: 2). Referring to Burns' statement, conducting a research with the teacher as a subject is possible to be done. Moreover, a teacher cannot be separated in the teaching learning process since they have relation each other.

An action research was conducted in this research. I conducted the research at SMP N 1 Bangun Purba. The subject of the study was an English teacher of Junior High School. The teacher was given an input in order to improve his talk that enhanced teacher-students interaction in the learning process. To analyse the interaction in the classroom, the students were also included in this study. The teacher has been teaching for 17 years. He uses English actively when teaches his students. To him interaction is also an important thing to consider since through interaction as classroom language, students' language store can be improved. The teacher also uses gesture to help the students understand what the teacher said. He mostly gives instructions in English. He also applies certain method in teaching the students to make the students be more active, like, group discussion, drill, etc.

This research use an action research design. According to Phillips and Carr (2010: 1), action research can be conducted by students pursuing teacher licensure for the first time, in other word, *preservice teachers*. As a preservice teacher, action research is possible to be conducted in a professional teacher's class in a limited period to collect the data required for the study.

Meanwhile, Arikunto (2010:3) mentions that a classroom action research is an observation toward the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The research is given by the teacher toward the students. In addition Celce-Murcia

(2001:490) argues that, "action research is an approach to collecting and interpreting data that involves a clear, repeated cycle of procedure."

Wallace (1998: 18) argues that the purpose of action research "is not to turn the teacher into a researcher, but to help him or her to continue to develop as a teacher, using action research as a tool in this process". It is supported by Burns (2010:3) that the teacher as the investigator or explorer of their personal teaching context in the action research which is aimed to identify a problematic situation or issue, looking more deeply and systematically.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) in Burns (2010: 8) mention the four steps in doing action research that are explained as follows:

1) Planning

According to Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010: 8), plan is the first stage of conducting action research. The researcher identifies a problem or issue and develops a plan of action. In this phase, the researcher considers: i) what kind of investigation is possible within realities and constraints of their teaching situation; and (ii) what potential improvements the researchers think are possible.

2) Acting

The plan is put into action over certain period of time. The interventions are „critically informed“ as you question your assumptions about the current situation and plan new and alternatives ways of doing things.

3) Observing

Then, during the action, the researcher observes systematically the effects of the action and documenting the context, actions, and opinion of those who involved.

4) Reflecting

At this point, the researcher reflects on, evaluates and describes the effects of the action in order to make sense of what has happened and to understand the issue the researcher has explored. The researcher may decide to do further cycles of action research to improve the situation even more.

Those three stages of action research must be done to create a good action research. However, the method and approach of conducting the action research vary for each person, depending on their purpose.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

I conducted a pre - test on the 8th November 2022. There were two kinds of pretest; close test and guided writing test. Time allotment that was given to the students was around thirty minutes to complete each pre-test. I arranged the sitting position based on the student's number. The aim of arranging the students' sitting position was to make sure that the students could not cheat with others.

The first pre-test was close test, there were five texts and the students should fill the blank spaces by the correct adjectives that researcher provided. The first three texts were set by the requirement of writing the appropriate adjectives. There were twenty four items that students should complete. In the fourth text, there were eight items that students would meet the rules of writing the correct comparative or superlative forms of the adjectives. The fifth text required the students to write the correct adjective order in series.

After the first half pre-test section, the students had to take the second pretest in form of guided writing test. The students should write a short descriptive text by the provided theme from me. The aim of guided writing test was to assess how far the students' ability in writing descriptive text by their own words.

Conducting Cycle 1

Cycle 1 was conducted on 12th up to 15th November 2013. In cycle 1, I had four meetings during the two weeks. There were four stages that I conducted in cycle 1. It was planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data which were prepared at stage planning was: (1) preparing learning material, (2) preparing teaching planning, and (3) preparing learning medium. I also conducted classroom interview with the classroom teacher. I asked the questions about the attitude and motivation of the students during learning activities.

Before conducting the acting, I conducted the pre-test in order to assess the initial students' achievement in writing descriptive text. The objective of the conducting cycle 1 was to accustom the students with linguistic competence . The linguistic competence components such as wrote the words and collocation appropriately, wrote the appropriate adjective, wrote the correct adjective order, wrote the correct phrase structure, used the modifiers would be given at this cycle.

In order to achieve the linguistic competence that were stated in cycle 1, I would conduct some activities based on the result of the cloze test on pre-test.

Conducting Cycle 2

Cycle 2 was conducted on 19th up to 22nd November 2022. In cycle 2, I had four meetings during the two weeks. There were four stages that researcher conducted in cycle 1. It was planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data that was prepared on stage planning was: (1) preparing learning material, (2) preparing teaching planing, and (3) preparing learning medium. In cycle 2, I would concern with the actional competence at which the students would get the explanation about descriptive text as whole.

Table 4.2. Writing skills that must be achieved in cycle 2

Aspect of good writing	Achieved
Content / idea	
- Has excellent support - Is interesting to read - Has unity and completeness	
Organization	
- Has topic sentence with clear controlling idea - Has supporting sentences - Has concluding sentence - Has coherence and cohesion	
Grammar / structure	
Demonstrate control of basic grammar (eg. Tenses, verb, forms, noun forms, preposition, articles)	
Word choice / word form	
Demonstrate sophistication choice of vocabulary items	
- Has correct idiomatic use of vocabulary - Has correct form word	
Mechanics	
Demonstrates good control over use of capital letters, periods, commas, and semicolons.	

Before conducting the acting, I analyzed the result of the students' writing in previous cycle. The objective of conducting cycle 2 was to accustom the students with the actional competence, at which defined as competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent. The conceptualization of actional competence in writing was mainly about rhetorical competence. At the end of the study, the students were expected able to write the descriptive text at the semantic level, it's mainly concerned with the ways in which such things as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions are organized within the whole text. I would concern with such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns

Conducting Post-test

I conducted post-test on the 26th November 202. In the post- test the students did the responsive writing, they had to write descriptive text. Time allotment that was given to the students was around thirty minutes. The aim of post-test was to assess the final achievement of students' ability in writing descriptive text.

At post-test I assessed the discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and the use of spatial ordering. In other words, they had written the sentences that were ordered according to space. In addition, the post – test was also conducted to assess the actional competences.

One of the primary benefits of using Attribute Charts strategy was that it assisted the learner. The basic writing skill of the students could be improved using that strategy, in which the students began with exploring ideas in order to make the students understand the use of adjective and other language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. From the research, the conclusion could be deduced from several aspects, namely students' result, students' individual observation sheet by teacher, students' interview sheet and students' direct observation by teacher's notes.

Conducting Interview of students' writing

The purpose of conducting an interview of students' writing was to measure the validity of the results of the post-test. The interviewee was Rosmanidar, English teacher of SMP N 1 Bangun Purba in academic year 20122/2024.

In the post- test, I concluded that the students' writing products had achieved the semantic level. As mentioned in the previous chapter, semantic level dealt with the requirements such aspects as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions were organized within the whole text.

Semantic level took into account such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns. The purpose of conducting interview of students' writing was to make a deal with the researcher's conclusion that stated that students' writing result had achieved the semantic level.

The writing aspects that assess by the interviewee were organization, content, grammar, style in expressing ideas, and punctuation. Each criterion was graded from the range of one (worst) to five (best), with each grade representing how well the students did their writing. In the end of interview, I had to calculate the total number of students' score and find out the average of the students result using the same formula.

Result of Interview of Students' Writing

At post-test I assessed the discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and used spatial ordering. In other words, they had sentences that were ordered according to space. In addition, the post – test was conducted to assess the actional competence.

From the data, the interviewee concluded that the students' writing products had achieved the semantic level. Semantic level dealt with the requirements such aspects as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions were organized within the whole text.

The discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and used spatial ordering were achieved by the average of the students' result (71.5). In other words, they had sentences that were ordered according to space.

Table 4.8. Interview result of students's writing

students' code	Aspects					TOTAL SCORE
	G	C	O	M	S	
S-1	3	3	3	2	3	56.0
S-2	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-3	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-4	3	3	4	4	4	72.0
S-5	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-6	5	4	5	4	5	92.0
S-7	3	3	3	4	3	64.0
S-8	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-9	2	3	3	2	3	52.0
S-10	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-11	5	4	4	5	5	92.0
S-12	3	3	2	2	2	48.0
S-13	3	2	4	4	2	60.0
S-14	3	3	2	4	2	56.0
S-15	4	2	2	4	2	56.0
S-16	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-17	2	3	3	4	4	64.0
S-18	5	5	5	5	4	96.0
S-19	3	3	3	3	2	56.0
S-20	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-21	4	5	5	4	4	88.0
S-22	3	4	3	3	3	64.0
S-23	3	4	3	2	2	56.0
S-24	4	5	5	5	5	96.0
S-25	3	3	2	2	2	48.0
S-26	3	3	4	4	4	72.0
S-27	5	5	5	5	4	96.0

S-28	5	4	3	2	2	64.0
S-29	3	3	3	3	3	60.0
S-30	3	4	4	4	4	76.0

The conclusion that was made by the interviewee was in line with the conclusion that I had made. The students had written the descriptive text in the semantic level. This took into account such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns.

Analysis on students' individual Observation

The purpose of conducting an observation was to measure the students' motivation during research. The observer was Rosmanidar, in academic year 2013/2014.

The initial data that researcher got from the classroom teacher, Mrs.Siti Chalimah was used as the base data of students' learning motivation. Then, at cycle 1 and cycle 2, I will be assisted by an observer, Sri Lestari. The observation sheet for each observer was in the same form, it was rubric form. The processes observed were responding, willingness, activeness, contribution and enthusiasm in doing the assignments and tasks in the class.

To help the observer in collecting the data, I gave a sticker for each students and they had to stick it on their uniform. The given number was same with the students' serial number. From the notes that made by the observer, I got that the enthusiastic of the students in learning writing by using Attribute Chart was good. The observer, Srilestari, gave me the result of the observation which the students actually could improve their own skill in writing by using attribute chart. In addition, the use of Attribute Chart also made the students having the sense of deliberation when they had to work in group.

Analysis on the Result of the Classroom Teacher Interview

This interview was intended to find out how the classroom teacher thought about the classroom that was taught using attribute charts in descriptive writing. The teacher who was assigned for this interview was Mrs. Siti Chalimah. She was being the observer that assessed me during the learning process. I gave the lesson plan and the interview sheet in the form of rubric. At the end of answering the rubric, the classroom teacher could write the conclusion and suggestions for me.

The interview was addressed to the English teacher. The purpose of this interview was to get the description of the teaching learning process by using the Attribute Chart. After assessing the lesson plan, the classroom teacher answered the questions in the given rubric. At the end of answering the rubric, the classroom teacher could wrote the conclusion and suggestions for the researcher. The conclusions were; (1) the use of Attribute Charts in teaching

descriptive writing was helpful for the students in improving the students' writing abilities. The students could use the appropriate adjectives to describe the object of description were achieved. (2) Attribute Charts used as a strategy during the teaching writing descriptive process to the seventh grade students had given the significant improvement for the students. It could be seen in the final achievement of the students in which they could produce the better descriptive text compared with their initial writing.

CONCLUSION

The first aim in this study is to give information to the researcher that there was a problem or not in students' skill in writing recount text. Students' problem in writing recount text was noticed by the researcher when she gave the pre test in the first time of this study. The researcher found that most of the students got difficulties in writing, in terms of organization, content, grammar, punctuation and style also lack of vocabularies.

Knowing that most of eighth graders in State Junior High School 1 Tambusai Utara got difficulties in writing recount text, the researcher then proposed a technique to improve students' skill in writing recount text. The technique proposed by the researcher was called peer review technique. Peer review is an activity in process of students' writing to responding to each other's writing.

Then, this study was to investigate how peer review technique was implemented. The technique used in every cycle. There was two cycles and each cycle consisted of two meetings. The students done the peer review technique based on peer review guidelines and peer review sheet. The last aim of this study was to investigate the improvement of students' skill in writing recount text by using peer review technique at eight grade students of State Junior High School 4 Batang. The students' improvement could be seen from the analysis in the test including pre test, formative test, and post test. The result showed that the implementation of peer review technique could improve students' writing skill, especially in writing recount text. The students' improvement in writing skill is including some aspects of writing (organization, content, grammar, punctuation and style). The mean of students' score from pre test to formative test improved from 63.00 to 74.29. The next improvement was showed by the mean of the student's result from formative test to post test, which is 74.29 to 79.50. Both cycles showed good result and positive progress which indicated that peer review technique improved students' skill in writing recount text at eighth graders students in SMP N 1 Tambusai Utara.

In addition, this study also investigated the students' learning behavior during peer review technique was implemented. It could be seen from the questionnaire. Based on the questionnaire, it showed that the students' interest in learning English improved, peer review technique improved the students' motivation in writing recount text, the use of peer review technique helped the

students to improve their skill in writing recount text, students felt many differences in their writing skill before and after peer review technique had been implemented, the technique was very important to the students so that they wanted it to be done continuously. Not only from the questionnaire, but also it could be seen from the observation sheet. Students' learning behavior had been changed from first cycle and second cycle. The students' learning behavior got better and better including their attention, activeness, seriousness and also their confidence in giving constructive feedback to their partner draft of recount text.

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