



**IMPROVING STUDENTS' SKILL IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT BY USING PEER REVIEW TECHNIQUE  
(A Classroom Action Research of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP N 4 Batang Year 2014/2015)**

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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 Junior High School 4 Batang in the academic year of 2014/2015. 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 4 Batang in the academic year of 2014/2015. 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.*

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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.

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 4 Batang* 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.

In this research, the researcher would like to find out the students' improvement in writing recount text after being taught by this technique. Hopefully, the result of this study will give much benefit to the education world of Indonesia and be able to offer some significant information dealing with the application of the games in language learning activity.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Farid Helmi in 2012 conducted a research entitled "Improving Students' Skill in Writing Recount Text by Using A Personal Letter". He conducted a classroom action research to the tenth graders of MASS Proto Pekalongan in the academic year of 2011/2012.

### Writing

According to Sokolik in Linse (2006), writing is a combination of process and product. The process refers to the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers (Linse, 2006, p. 98).

### Recount Text

According to Anderson (1997: 48) a recount is speaking or writing about past events or a piece of text that retells past events, usually in the order which they happened.

### Peer Review Technique

Peer review is one of techniques in teaching writing. It is very important in writing process. Bartels (2003) states that peer review is also referred to as peer editing, peer response, peer evaluation, and peer feedback, in which students read each other's writing and provide feedback to the researcher. Peer review is an activity in process of students' writing to responding to each other's writing.

## METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

A research method which is used in this study is action research, while the approach is qualitative. Arikunto (2006: 2) also claims that action research is a kind of research done by someone who conducts the research on what he/she is really doing without changing its system. Action research has some procedures.

The steps above will be explained as follows:

### (1) Planning

Planning is the first step in doing action research.

### (2) Acting

In this step, the researcher or teacher executes carefully the plan which is made before. This step is the main step of action research.

### (3) Observing

In observation, the researcher or teacher observes the collected data during the action step. The purpose of this step is to find out whether the improvement or the change has reached or not throughout the action.

### (4) Reflecting

In the last step, reflection, the research or the teacher evaluates the effect of action in order to make sense of what has happened and to understand the problem and also describe whether there is the positive or negative aspect for the study improvement. Based on the reflection, the researcher revises the previous plan to go for the next cycle.

The subjects of this research were students in the eighth grade of SMP N 4 Batang in class VIII A in the academic year of 2013/2014. The researcher chose the eighth grade students of junior high school because the researcher found that the material was appropriate with the curriculum. Moreover, it would help them to understand more about the material which was writing recount text.

The instruments of this study were writing tests, observation checklists, and questionnaire. There were observation checklist for the students and observation checklist for the teacher. There were two

cycles in this research. In the first meeting before conducted the treatment, the researcher conducted the pre - test. It was aimed to measure students' ability in writing recount text before the researcher gave the treatment. In this research, the researcher introduced sentence race game as the treatment for the students to learn recount text. By playing sentence race game, the students knew how to write and construct a good sentence in English. In addition, they learnt grammar especially past tense and also vocabulary.

In the last meeting, the researcher conducted the post-test. Post-test was conducted to measure the students' achievement after the treatments. The purpose of the post-test was to check the students' improvement in writing recount text after they had been taught using sentence race game.

## RESULT OF THE STUDY

### General Description

This action research was conducted in class VIII D of SMP Negeri 4 Batang, in the academic year of 2014/2015. The research was conducted in five meetings started from March 23th, 2015 until April 11th, 2014. This action research consisted of three main activities. They were pre-test, first cycle and second cycle. Each cycle consists of planning, action, observation and reflection.

#### *Cycle 1*

The first cycle consisted of two meetings. The first meeting was conducted on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2015 and the second meeting was conducted on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2015. All the students were present in the teaching and learning process in first cycle.

In the first meeting, the students were introduced with peer review. The purpose of this meeting was to give the treatment related to recount text using peer review as the technique. In this cycle, the researcher started to do the first step of action research. First of all, the researcher greeted the students and

checked students' attendance. Before peer review technique was introduced to the students, the researcher explained to them about recount text about generic structures and the language features of recount text. After that, the researcher explained about peer review technique. The researcher also gave an example of how to do peer review, how to analyze, correct others' mistake, and give feedback to their friends' work. The researchers asked the students to work in pairs and gave them an example of recount text with same mistakes and distribute the peer review guidelines and peer review sheet. When they had finished doing peer review training, the researcher asked them to write a recount text as the first draft. After they finished writing the first draft of recount text, I asked them to do peer review.

The activity in the second meeting in this cycle was giving the material of simple past tense and held a formative test. The students were asked to make a recount text which theme was "Study Tour". The researcher gave them time about 45 minutes to make their recount text. Meanwhile, I recorded the students' behavior by filling the observation checklist for the students. The English teacher of the class also filled the observation checklist to observe me.

#### *Cycle 2*

Based on the first cycle evaluation, it could be seen that there were some mistakes were found in their writing product. Most of the students were not able to express their idea using simple past tense, they used the same words to express their writing (repetition), and etc. In addition, the mean score of the students' first cycle test result was unsatisfactory and under the KKM. That is why another treatment was necessary to be given to the students so that they were able to construct recount text using simple past tense.

The second cycle was conducted on April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>nd</sup> 2015. All the students joined the teaching and learning process. At

the end of the second cycle, the researcher handed out the questionnaire to the students.

The first meeting of second cycle was conducted on April 4<sup>th</sup> 2015. The procedure of teaching and learning process was almost the same with the first cycle. Before applying peer review technique, the students were given another example of recount text and exercise about past tense. They were asked to analyze and understand the text with their partner also done the exercises. Then, the researcher asked them to make a short recount text related to their past activity. After they had finished it,

the researcher asked some students to do peer review technique. The steps were the same with first cycle.

In this meeting in cycle 2, the researcher allocated the time to review the material and gave the last test which was post-test. All of the students were present on that day. Students were asked to make a recount text for about 45 minutes. The theme was about "My Holiday". At the end of the lesson, questionnaire was handed out to the students and they had to fill it.

### The Students' Score Improvement

After knowing the result of every student, in order to find out further on the students' achievement in detail, the researcher used the following formula to find out the average of the students' achievement in pre-test.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{\text{The total of the students' score}}{\text{The total number of the students}} \\ \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{2394}{38} \\ &= 63 \end{aligned}$$

The average of the students' score in pre-test was 63. According to the Harris scoring system, it could be said that their score was in the level of fair. On the other hand, their score was still low. It was lower than the minimum score (*KKM = Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) of SMP N 4 Batang, especially in English subject which was 75.00. Moreover, almost 75% of the students got less than 75.00.

Then, in calculating the average score of the students' writing skill in formative-test, it was used the same formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{\text{The total of the students' score}}{\text{The total number of the students}} \\ \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{2823}{38} \\ &= 74.29 \end{aligned}$$

The average of the students' score in formative-test was 74.29. It increased 11.29 points from pre-test. It meant that the treatment of teaching writing recount text using peer review was useful. It could improve the students' writing skill and it could be seen from the improvement of their score in formative-test. Although the score increased, their score was still fair. It was also still lower than the minimum score (*KKM = Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) of the SMP N 4 Batang. There were still students who got the score below 75.00.

Here, in calculating the average of the students' writing achievement in post-test, it was used the same formula below:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{\text{The total of the students' score}}{\text{The total number of the students}} \\ \text{The average of the students' score} &= \frac{3021}{38} \\ &= 79.50 \end{aligned}$$

The average of the students' score in post-test was 79.50; it increased from the formative-test, what a good progress. Initially their average in pre-test was 63, then it became 74.29 in formative-test, and finally their average score obtained 79.50 in post-test.

It meant that the treatment of teaching writing using peer review as the technique was helpful. It was helpful to improve the students' writing skill, especially writing recount text. It was proven by seeing their average score which passed the criterion of passing assessment (*KKM = Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) of the SMP N 4 Batang, especially in English subject which was 75.00.

The result of each test showed improvements of the students' skill in writing recount text. The average score are presented in the table below:

No.	Test	Average Score
1.	Pre-Test	63
2.	Formative Test (1 <sup>st</sup> cycle)	74.29
3.	Post-Test (2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle)	79.50

Table 1: Students' Score Improvement

In the first cycle, the improvement of the result was increased 11.29 points. In the pre-test, the average score was 63 and in the formative test, the average score was 74.29. Although the average score was lower than the criterion of passing assessment (*KKM = Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) of the SMP N 4 Batang, at least it shows an improvement from the pre-test.

In the second cycle, the result of the post-test score also showed a good improvement. The students' average score had increased better, from 74.29.9 to 79.50. It was more than the criterion of passing assessment or *KKM*.

From the diagram above, we can see that there is an increase of the students' average score. It meant that the treatment of teaching writing using sentence race game was helpful. It was really helpful to improve the students' writing skill, especially writing recount text.

### Analysis of the Result of Observation Checklist

The researcher used observation checklists for this action research. The checklist for the students checked their behaviour and responses toward the teaching learning process. The observation checklist for was done by the English teacher of SMP N 4 Batang.

Observation checklist for the students was categorized in four categories ways, they are: (a) the students' attention to the teacher's explanation (b) the students' active participation during the lesson (asking and answering questions, giving opinion, etc) (c) the students' positive response toward peer review technique (d) the students' seriousness in writing recount text. The observation sheet then be analyzed to see the students' behavioral changes in the learning process.

Overall, the result of observation sheet showed that the students' seriousness in writing recount text increased from first cycle and second cycle

### **Analysis of the Result of Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed to the students on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 after the post-test was conducted. It was aimed to investigate students' perception towards the use of Peer Review in teaching recount text. There were 10 items in the questionnaire which given in *Bahasa Indonesia* in order to help the students got the best understanding of each item. From the students' responses of the questionnaire, the researcher could draw the interpretation as follows:

Item number 1 stated that students liked English subject. The result of the questionnaire showed that 24% of students strongly agreed, 71% of students agreed, and 5% of students disagreed that writing in English subject was likeable. None of them strongly disagreed with that statement.

Item number 2 stated that students liked writing in English subject. The result of the questionnaire showed that 21% of students strongly agreed, 68% of students agreed, and 11% of students disagreed that writing in English subject was likeable. None of them strongly disagreed with that statement.

Item number 3 stated that the learning activity in the school was interesting. From the questionnaire result, there were 24% of students or 9 students strongly agreed, 65% of students or 25 students agreed, 11 of students or 4 students disagreed, and 0% or none of them strongly disagreed with the statement.

Item number 4 stated that whether the students were excited about the technique use.. There were 42% of students strongly agreed, 58% of students agreed, and none of them disagreed and strongly disagreed. It meant that they were interested in the technique I used.

Item number 5 stated that the students enjoyed learning through peer review. There were 42% of students strongly agreed, 58% of students agreed, and 0% of students disagreed

or strongly disagreed. It meant that the technique was enjoyable.

Item number 6 stated that the situation of the teaching learning process was enjoyable after being taught by peer review. There were 37% of students strongly agreed, 58% of students agreed, and 5% of students disagreed and none of them strongly disagreed.

Item number 7 stated peer review technique could improve the students' understanding of how to compose a good writing. It found that 37% of students \ strongly agreed, 60% of students agreed and 3% of students disagreed and none of students strongly disagreed.

Item number 8 stated peer review applied by the researcher in writing recount text could help the students improve their writing composition. There were 45% of students strongly agreed, 55% of students agreed, 0% or none of the students disagreed or strongly agreed. It could be seen on students' improvement in aspects of writing in each test.

Item number 9 stated that peer review applied by the researcher in writing recount text could help the students improve their writing. Item number 10 stated that writing practice by using peer review was necessary to be used continuously.

Based on the questionnaire analysis, it showed that peer review technique teaching helped the students to improve their writing skill especially recount text. It could be seen on the tests result, the students' score in writing recount text was increasing.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the students' achievements results, the writer draws some conclusions. They are: the students' achievement of writing recount text of the eighth grade of students of SMP N 4 Batang in the academic year of 2014/2015 was improving after being taught by peer review. It was proved by the data shown that there is improvement in this research. The average of the students' writing score in the pre-test was 63, and it increased

11.29 points become 74.29 in the formative test and become 79.50 in the post-test.

Students' learning behavior had been changed from first cycle and second cycle. The students' learning behavior got better and better including their active and also their confidence in giving constructive feedback to their partner draft of recount text. The result is based on the analysis from the observation checklist about students' behaviour and also the analysis of the questionnaire.

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