TEACHING WRITING RECOUNT TEXT BY USING A TOPICAL APPROACH TO THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS' STATE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL NUMBER 42 OF PALEMBANG

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluates the effectiveness of a topical approach in teaching recount text writing to eighth-grade students at State of Junior High School number 42 of Palembang. Employing a quantitative pre-experimental design, the study sampled 34 students who underwent pre-tests and post-tests to measure their writing abilities. The findings indicated a significant improvement in the students' writing skills after using the topical approach. The average pre-test score was 52.5, with scores ranging from 31 to 68.5. After the intervention, the average post-test score increased to 75.7, with a range from 53 to 92.5. The t-test analysis revealed a t-obtained value of 13.31, surpassing the critical value of 1.692, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. During the pre-test, students struggled with idea generation and grammatical accuracy. Post-intervention results showed that students became more adept at generating ideas, using correct grammar, narrating experiences, and expanding their vocabulary. Thus, the topical approach proved effective in enhancing recount text writing skills among the eighth grade State of Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang.

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Keywords: Teaching, Writing, Topical Approach

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is essential because people usually share information and thoughts through spoken and written language. Communicating uses spoken language is communicating face to face or directly, while communicating in written language is expressing thoughts through writing. Many languages exist in various countries, one of which is English, an essential language in several countries: for example, in Indonesia, English is an international language because it plays a vital role in the modernization process. English is the first foreign language that must be taught in schools, according to Aditya and Ridwan (2020), who say that English is an international language that people worldwide use.

In learning English, there are four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Although writing skill is the last skill to be learned, this skill is also as crucial as other abilities because one of the goals of learning English is to be able to write English. According to Nurkholijah and Hafizh (2020), one of the skills that is very important to be mastered by English learners is writing. Pangaribuan and Prayuda (2021), state that writing has a vital role in improving communicative competence for learning

the language because writing is a productive skill that helps the language user express a message in written form.

In Indonesia, junior high school students learn several short functional texts, such as descriptive, recount, narrative, procedural, and report. These types of texts introduce students to the social function, the generic general structure of each text, and the language features used by the text type. That way, students understand the difference between text and text and can write their texts correctly according to the social function, general structure, and language features.

One of the texts that junior high school students should learn is a recount text. A recount text involves retelling past events, while a narrative text is a creative story designed to entertain and convey moral lessons. This research mainly concentrates on recount text. Anderson and Anderson (2003), a recount text typically narrates past events chronologically. The primary purpose of this text is to share past experiences by systematically recounting events. Examples of recount text include personal experiences, diaries, personal letters, and incident reports.

The teacher of English should be creative to find an excellent way to help them improve not only their writing but also their vocabulary and grammar. We should make writing an exciting subject for learning so they do not feel bored in the class using a topical approach. The topical approach in writing skills involves focusing on a specific topic or event to be recounted. The topical approach in writing skills involves focusing on a specific topic or event to be recounted

Based on the researcher's interview and investigation at State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang, the researcher found some problems in the writing process. The problems are that most students still have difficulties in constructing the idea of using English for writing and students often made grammar errors in their writing. Besides that, the students had difficulties telling their experiences, especially in writing recount paragraphs and realizing the importance of improving students' writing skills because students often have difficulty generating ideas in writing skills. For example, they often write sentences such as "Yesterday, I go to market and buy some food," which should be corrected to "Yesterday, I went to the market and bought some food." Additionally, students struggle to narrate their experiences clearly in recount paragraphs. A common mistake is writing, "Last holiday, I happy because I go beach with family," which should be, "Last holiday, I was happy because I went to the beach with my family." Furthermore, students often find it hard to generate ideas, resulting in incomplete or disorganized recount texts. By practicing brainstorming and outlining their thoughts before writing, they can improve their ability to develop paragraphs with clear and detailed supporting information, enhancing the overall clarity and effectiveness of their writing. This study focuses on teaching writing recount text by using a topical approach to the Eighth-grade Students' of State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang.

To address these challenges effectively, implementing a topical approach in teaching recount text writing

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is highly recommended for Students' at State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang. This method involves structuring lessons around specific themes or subjects that prompt students to organize their ideas systematically. For example, students could be tasked with recounting a memorable holiday or describing a personal achievement. By focusing on these structured topics, students learn to articulate their thoughts more clearly and cohesively in their writing. In addition to thematic guidance, integrating targeted grammar instruction is crucial. For instance, teachers can provide lessons and exercises that address common errors observed in student writing, such as verb tense confusion or incorrect sentence structure. By practicing these grammar concepts within the context of recount texts, students improve their language accuracy and enhance the readability of their compositions. Moreover, encouraging regular brainstorming sessions before writing assignments plays a vital role in developing students' ability to generate and develop ideas effectively. For instance, students could brainstorm key details and chronological events before drafting their recount paragraphs. This approach helps them organize their thoughts coherently and ensures that their writing remains focused and engaging. By implementing these strategies consistently, Students' of State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang can significantly enhance their writing skills. They will not only improve the overall quality and coherence of their recount texts but also develop valuable language proficiency that extends beyond specific writing tasks.

As a result, this study has the potential to be very useful in addressing the issues that Students' of State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang are facing when writing recount texts. It is hoped that by incorporating topical concepts into learning, students will be able to construct ideas more easily, improve their language skills, and be more motivated to express their feelings in English. In addition, it is hoped that this study will make a significant contribution to the development of innovative and effective learning methods in the field of English language education. As a result, the title of this study, "Teaching Writing Recount Text by Using a Topical Approach to the Eight-grade Students' of State Junior High School Number 42 of Palembang" emphasizes the importance of improving students' performance through relevant and practical lessons, which will help them achieve academic and professional success in the future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brown (2014), states that teaching involves demonstrating or assisting someone in acquiring new skills, providing guidance, imparting instructions, offering knowledge, and facilitating understanding. Noviati (2018), defines teaching as the process of transferring knowledge and skill from a teacher to students, to help students comprehend the material and grasp its main points. This implies that teachers must employ creativity to engage students in classroom activities and utilize diverse teaching methods to prevent monotony and sustain student interest. The role of the teacher is crucial

in the teaching and learning process, as the success of education relies on how effectively the teacher delivers the material, employs strategies, and utilizes media. Additionally, apart from teaching, teachers have a responsibility to provide support and motivation to students.

Writing conveys ideas, thoughts, or information through written language. It includes using words, sentences, and text structures to compose messages that readers can understand. Writing can have a variety of purposes, such as informing, convincing, entertaining, or expressing oneself. According to Dalman (2021), writing is communicating a message (information) in written form to others using written language as a tool or media. writing is communicating a message (information) in written form to others using written language as a tool or media. Writing is an activity language activity that produces thoughts which is done indirectly to convey a message with the medium of written language (Uzer, et al., 2021).

According to these numerous definitions, writing is a communication process that involves the use of written language to express ideas, construct texts, and employ proper text structures to convey a message that the reader can understand. Although simple, the writing process involves considerable thought and work to successfully articulate what the researcher wishes to convey to the reader. Such as, writing is a difficult but necessary talent that demands a solid command of written language as well as the ability to frame a message simply and efficiently.

The writing process is an approach to teach writing that not only guides students through the steps of writing but also builds process-focused instruction that can improve their performance. It is not just about separating writing from the result, but about providing students with problem-solving skills related to each stage of the writing process, so that they can achieve specific goals at each stage. Thus, process writing in the classroom can be considered a learning program designed to help students understand the nature of writing at each of its stages. The stages in the writing process involve planning ideas to compose a meaningful text. After completing their writing, researchers need to review and improve their work. According to Harmer (2012), constantly to a single-step process, writing involves multiple stages, namely:

a. Planning

The initial stage of writing is planning, where the researcher carefully considers and decides on the content of their writing. Some researchers may take detailed notes during this phase. Planning involves addressing three key issues: firstly, understanding the purpose of the writing, as it influences the type of text to be produced, the language used, and the information included. Secondly, considering the target audience influences not only the layout and structure of the Writing but also the choice of language, whether formal or informal. Thirdly, researchers must think about the content structure, determining the best sequence for the facts, ideas, or arguments they have chosen to include.

b. Drafting

The second stage is drafting, where the initial version of the Writing is referred to as a draft. This preliminary

version is often created with the expectation that it will be revised later.

c. Editing

Following drafting is the editing and reflecting stage. After producing a draft, researchers typically review their work to identify practical areas and those that need improvement. This process of reflecting and revising can be aided by suggestions, facilitating appropriate revisions.

d. Producing the final version

The final stage involves creating the final version. After editing the draft, researchers make necessary changes to prepare the final version for submission to its intended audience.

Effective Writing generally captivates the reader's attention, prompting students to adhere to proper grammatical rules, select appropriate vocabulary, and ensure coherence and cohesion, resulting in well-crafted sentences with precise meaning.

To write effectively, students must focus on several aspects of writing during the writing process. One can observe the student writing-related aspects. According to Jacobs , Zinkgraf, Wourmuth, & Hearfiel (1981), there are five aspects of writing, they are:

a. Content: The authors can develop their thoughts through creative thought

b. Organization: The author's thoughts are expressed with fluidity, are well-supported by relationships between paragraphs, and follow a logical flow.

c. Vocabulary: The authors use a wide range of terms and idioms to express complex ideas, viewpoints, and emotions. Additionally, they can employ the proper word, such as an idiom or the prefix and suffix.

d. Language use: Researchers can utilize the fundamental rules of syntax, including sentence structure, tenses, numbers, word order, and function. prepositions, pronouns, and articles.

e. Mechanics: The researcher is proficient in punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, and spelling.

Differentially weighted components comprise the five aspects: content (30 points), vocabulary and structure (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points) with very low emphasis.

A recount text is a form of writing that recounts past events, typically involving the researcher sharing their own experiences or detailing occurrences from the past. It resembles a narrative text but lacks any complicating elements found in narratives. According to Mulianda and Hafizh (2013), a recount text is a kind of text that retells the series of events that happened to the participant in the past; Rosalinah, Apriella, Nalendra, and Rahayuningsih (2020), state that writing a recount text is aimed at helping students memorize events or experiences in a kind of sequence story by following the generic structure of recount text, orientations, events, and re-orientation. Wisdhawan and Kumalasari (2014), recount text as a narrative of events from the past, encompassing experiences and activities that took place previously. There are three main types of recount text: personal recounts, which include examples like diaries and personal letters/emails; factual retellings, such as

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scientific research and newspaper reports; and imaginative recounts.

As mentioned earlier, recount texts possess specific characteristic features. These include:

a. Social function

Recount texts serve the purpose of narrating events to provide information or entertainment.

b. General structure

Orientation: Orientation, also called the setting, establishes the backdrop and introduces the individuals involved. It details where and when the story unfolds, who the main characters are, and their personalities. The title of a recount text can also offer information about the story setting.

Events: The series of events encompasses the occurrences that led to the characters changing their attitude and the subsequent effects of this shift in perspective. These events are presented engagingly and organized chronologically, unfolding from the first to the last.

Re-orientation: Re-orientation serves as the concluding statement. Many recounts conclude with a final statement that delves into the author's feelings, and such reflections are often placed in this paragraph.

c. Language feature

a) Focus on specific and usually individualized participants
b) Use of material processes
c) Circumstances of time and place
d) Use of temporal sequences
e) Use of past tense

A topical approach is a method of learning or teaching where concepts are taught based on a specific topic or theme rather than chronological order or traditional curriculum structure. In this context, the focus is on learning centered on a topic or issue, allowing students to deepen their understanding of the topic through multiple subjects. According to Bruner (1960), the importance of teaching using conceptual structures organized around topics or themes. Bruner argued that students tend to understand better and remember information if taught in the context of relevant and meaningful topics. Fenstermacher, Soltis, and Sanger (2009), approach to teach its purpose is to stimulate you to think about some basic ways to conceive of the role of the teacher.

According to Santrock (2019), the topical approach has advantages and disadvantages. Based on the opinion of Santrock, researchers can conclude the advantages and disadvantages of the topical approach, namely:

(a) Advantages of using a topical approach
  a) Helps teachers to teach recount text writing based on learners' wants and needs.
  b) Helps students to understand the recount text and its structure by connecting based on facts.
  c) Helps students solve problems regarding the topical approach in the form of recount text.
(b) Disadvantages of using the topical approach
  a) Students do not get a good knowledge of the topic because it is done in general or Broadway.
  b) Students find it difficult to understand the topic presented by the teacher.
  c) It is quite difficult to learn a topic in a short time.

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Based on the description of the topical approach, the researcher can conclude that the topical approach to learning focuses on a deep understanding of topics and issues through a variety of subjects. This approach allows students to engage more deeply with material presented in a relevant and meaningful context. However, there are some disadvantages as well as difficulty for students to generally understand the topic presented and difficulty learning the topic in a short time.

a. Steps for Applying Approach to Recount Text

According to Harmer (2007), the topical approach in recount text writing involves presenting a story or event based on a specific topic or theme. The steps include:

1) Planning: The Identification of topics that are interesting and relevant to students is called planning, Clear learning objectives are related to the difficulty of writing a recount, and Preparing teaching materials such as a textual account, a diagram, or a picture that corresponds to the topic. For example:

   a. The teacher asks the students to choose a topic about their summer vacation with the command sentence "write a recount text in your own words of 100 words that tell about your summer vacation experience, write where you went on vacation, how long you were on vacation, who you were on vacation with, what happened during the vacation, and why the vacation you chose to tell about."

   b. Students list the activities they did during their vacation and choose the most interesting ones to write about.

   c. The teacher provides pictures or photos relevant to the topic, for example, pictures of beaches or pictures of hiking activities.

2) Action: Students learn about the recount principle and how to arrange text following the selected topic, teachers should assist students in identifying key ideas and details that are crucial to developing coherent narratives, and the students write their recount based on the selected topic. For example:

   a. After choosing a topic, students learn the principle of recounting and how to organize a text based on the chosen topic.

   b. The teacher guides students in identifying key ideas and important details that are essential for developing a coherent narrative.

   c. Students write their recount based on the chosen topic, following the structure taught by the teacher.

3) Observation: The teacher guides each student during the writing process by providing appropriate feedback, whether in an individual or group setting and the teacher explains to the students how to format a recount and use language appropriate for the text. For example:

   a. During the writing process, the teacher provides appropriate feedback to each student, both individually and in groups.

   b. The teacher explains to the students how to format the recount and use appropriate language for the text.

c. The teacher monitors each student's progress and provides additional guidance if needed.

4) Reflection or Evaluation: Students and teachers review each other's work and the evaluation is conducted based on previously established criteria, such as language proficiency, structural clarity, and grammatical accuracy. For example:

a. After completing their writing, students and teachers conduct a review of each other's work.
b. The evaluation is based on previously established criteria, such as language proficiency, clarity of structure, and grammatical accuracy.
c. Students and teachers can discuss what works and what needs to be improved in their
d. work to improve their writing in the future.

3. METHODS

In this research, the researcher used a pre-experimental design using a one-group pretest-posttest design. This quantitative research method allows researchers to test hypotheses and understand cause-and-effect relationships between variables.

The sample consisted of 34 students from class VIII.7 of SMP Negeri 42 Palembang. The researcher used purposive sampling to select this class because the students had difficulty in constructing ideas in English writing, often made grammatical errors, and had difficulty in writing story paragraphs.

In this study, one of the data collection methods is a written test. Students were asked to create a recount text about their personal experience using a topical approach. This test was designed to determine and explain students' effectiveness in producing recount narratives.

The researcher analyzed the data using t-test, specifically paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test. These tests were used to compare the students' pre-test and post-test scores and to determine whether there was a significant difference in their writing skills after the application of the topical approach. The analysis was conducted at the 0.05 level of significance.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study tested the effectiveness of using a topical approach in teaching writing recount text to eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 42 Palembang. This study used a pre-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest method.

Statistics

		Posttest	Pretest
N	Valid	34	34
	Missing	0	0
Std. Deviation		9.11219	10.36127
Minimum		53.00	31.00
Maximum		92.50	68.50

In this study it was found that the pre-test results were The average score was 52.5, with a minimum score range of 31 and a maximum score of 68.5 while the post-test results were The average score increased to 75.7, with a minimum score of 53 and a maximum of 92.5.

After receiving the results of the pre-test, the t-test analysis was performed using the matched t-test formula.

$$t_{abt} = \frac{\overline{X1} - \overline{X2}}{\overline{SD}}$$

Before calculating the matched t-test result, the researcher computed the SD (Standard Deviation). The standard deviation could be calculated using the following formula.

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - \left(\frac{1}{n}\right)(\sum D)^2}{n-1}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{21860.8 - \left(\frac{1}{34}\right)(791.5)^2}{34-1}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{21860.8 - \left(\frac{1}{34}\right)(626472.25)}{33}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{21860.8 - 18425.65}{33}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{3435.15}{33}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{104.09} = 10.20$$

SD (Standard error of difference between two means) was obtained by using the following formula

$$\overline{SD} = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{n}}$$

$$\overline{SD} = \frac{10.20}{\sqrt{34}}$$

$$\overline{SD} = \frac{10.20}{5.38}$$

$$\overline{SD} = 1.75$$

The result of the data analysis obtained "t" was analyzed by using the matched t-test The formula of matched t-test was:

$$t_{abt} = \frac{\overline{X1} - \overline{X2}}{\overline{SD}}$$

$$t_{abt} = \frac{75.8 - 52.5}{1.75}$$

$$t_{abt} = \frac{23.3}{1.75}$$

$$t_{abt} = 13.31$$
Level of significance was 5%

$$t_{tab} = df(n-1)$$

$$t_{tab} = df(34-1)$$

$$t_{tab} = df(33)$$

$$t_{tab} = 1,692$$

$$t = t_{obt} > t_{tab}$$

$$t = 13.31 > 1.692$$

Statistical analysis conducted paired sample t-test showed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores (t-obtained = 13.31, t-table = 1.692, $p < 0.05$).

The t-obtained result found that the "t" value was 13.31, where the t-table value was 1.692 at the 5% significant level. This means that the t-obtained is higher than the t-table so that the treatment given to students through a topical approach can affect students' ability to learn writing skills, from a lower to a better level. It can be concluded that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected.

The results showed that the topical approach was significantly effective in improving students' recount text writing ability. Students showed significant progress in various aspects of

writing, including idea generation, grammatical accuracy, storytelling ability, and vocabulary use. This study shows that the topical approach can be an effective method to improve writing skills, especially in teaching recount texts to junior high school students.

The Discussion of the Results

The findings of this study presents the topical approach is a highly effective method to teach recount text writing to eighth grade students at Junior high school number 42 of Palembang. The significant improvement in students' writing skills was evidenced by the substantial increase in scores from pre-test to post-test, with the highest score increasing from 68.5 to 92.5. Statistical analysis, which resulted in an earned t-value of 13.31 compared to a t-table value of 1.692 at the 5% significance level, further confirmed the effectiveness of this approach. In addition, qualitative observations revealed notable improvements in students' ability to construct ideas, use proper grammar, narrate experiences, and use a wider vocabulary in their story texts. The results of this study suggest that the topical approach is an effective method for improving various aspects of English writing skills among junior high school students, especially in the context of recount text composition.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of using a topical approach in teaching recount text writing to eighth grade students at SMP

Negeri 42 Palembang. A significant improvement in students' writing ability was seen from the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores. The mean score increased from 52.5 in the pre-test to 75.7 in the post-test, with the highest score increasing from 68.5 to 92.5. Statistical analysis using the corresponding t-test resulted in an obtained t-value of 13.31, which exceeded the critical value of 1.692, confirming the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. Qualitative observations showed that pre-test students struggled with idea building, grammar usage, narration of experiences, and vocabulary in their writing. However, after implementing the topical approach, the students showed marked improvement in these areas. They showed improved abilities in generating ideas, applying proper grammar, articulating their experiences in story texts, and using a wider vocabulary. These findings strongly suggest that the topical approach is an effective and engaging method to improve various aspects of English writing skills, especially in writing recount texts for junior high school students.

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