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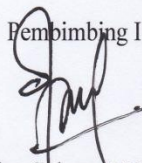
**IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL IN RECOUNT TEXT BY USING  
PERSONAL LETTER AT EIGHT GRADE OF SMP TIGA HATI  
KEPENUHAN HULU**

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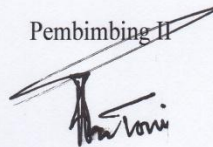
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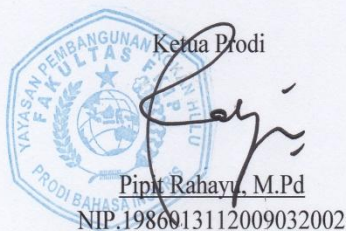
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# IMPROVING TUDENTS' WRITING SKILL IN RECOUNT TEXT BY USING PERSONAL LETTER AT EIGHT GRADE OF SMP TIGA HATI KEPENUHAN HULU

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## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis recount text siswa pada kelas VIII SMP Tiga Hati Kepenuhan Hulu, menggunakan media surat pribadi. Penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang bertujuan untuk memecahkan masalah pada kemampuan siswa dalam menulis dalam bahasa Inggris. Peneliti melakukan dua siklus dimana setiap siklus terdiri dari perencanaan, tindakan, observasi dan refleksi. Data kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui observasi, catatan harian dan wawancara, sedangkan kuantitatif dikumpulkan melalui tes. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penerapan media surat telah sukses sejak ada peningkatan pada kemampuan menulis siswa. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kemampuan menulis siswa dari rata-rata siklus 1 (60,85) ke (73,50) rata-rata di siklus 2.

**Kata Kunci :** Kemampuan Menulis, Recount Text, Surat Pribadi.

## ABSTRACT

*This research was conducted in order to improve students' writing skill in recount text at eighth grade of SMP Tiga Hati Kepenuhan Hulu by using personal letter used a Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was conducted to solve the students' problem in English Writing. The researcher did two cycles in which each cycle consisted of plan, action, observation, and reflection. The qualitative data was gained by analyzing the fieldnote, observation sheet and interview, then quantitative data were obtained from the students' writing score. The finding of this research indicated that the implementation of personal letter media was successful since there was an improvement in students' writing skill in recount text. The finding showed an improvement in students' writing skill in recount text from the average of writing test recount text in cycle 1 was (60,85) to (73,50) the average of writing skill in cycle 2.*

**Key word:** Writing skill, Recount Text, Personal Letter.

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Problem

In Academic Institutions, English plays an important role such as the language of science, technology and international communication. It is crucial to master lately since any other languages in the world. In English learning process, writing plays an important role in real life. Writing is one of the four language skills beside reading, listening and speaking.

As a part of English skill, the learners of English language should master it. It is important for person especially adolescent level in developing communication or doing approach to the other person. The importance of writing can be seen from the fact that scientific books, novels, reports, letter, newspaper, magazines, brochures, commercial advertisements are products of writing. Writing is a difficult lesson for students, especially teachers, parents and environment have to cooperate to make student realize and want to study writing well. Writing is not a easy lesson for students at junior high school, because they feel writing is not important. Moreover, English at elementary school, it is as an addition of lesson in the curriculum. Psychology a person will not follow some lesson if she or he does not like, but if she or he likes it of

course, she or he will follow the process of writing. According to Alice and Hogue (2000:2), writing is a discovery process that involves discovering ideas, how to organize them and what that you want to put over to your order, so a lot of what a writer does as a writer does not actually appear on the page. In teaching writing there are some kinds of genre must be learnt by students at junior high school, like narrative text, descriptive text, recount text, procedure text, explanation text and so on. Recount Text should be master by students junior high school, especially in eight class.

Based on the researcher observation, when she did practice teaching at junior high school, students seem to get fail in learning recount text, because of some factors. They got bored in studying recount text, students had limits vocabulary when they learnt recount text, some students lack of motivation to learn recount text; they did not pay attention to the teachers' explanation because the teaching technique and media did not encourage them to become independent learners as demanded by the curriculum; the students did not had enough interest in learning recount text. Then, it led to the participant only from a few students meanwhile other students were still passive in classroom.

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At junior high school, most of teachers teach in monotonous technique, lack of variation in using the media such as song, short stories, role-plays, pictures, TPR, TPS, Movie, personal letter and so on. This case could be observed in eight grade students of SMP TigaHatiKepenuhanHulu. In this case, the researcher found that her students were failed to attain the minimum standard score of 70. Around 94% students got between 10-69 grades. Only 6% students got grades 70-100. It means that the students still had low scores in writing skill.

For the successful of teaching writing skill to junior high school students, the teacher must develop the curriculum, select the appropriate teaching materials, apply interesting teaching methods, and learning assessments. Furthermore, one way to help the teacher in teaching writing was by using interesting media.

Personal letter was one of the media that hopefully could help teacher in teaching writing process. Personal letter is a media to express students ideas in written form, because Personal letter could make student to be more easier to express their feeling. By using personal letter whenteaching writing skill in recount text, students would be able to tell everything, experience, event they had to share each others. Through personal letter, students could communicate each others and convey their meanings. Students would use a letter as media to communicate with others. They could tell and send the letters to their friends, their fathers, their mothers, their sisters, their brothers, about their feeling, experience, and wish.

Personal letter was one of media that could improve students writing skill, because it could express idea and become the communication tool to convey information in written by one student to another. Therefore, researcher would be used personal letters in teaching recount text in the classroom.

## **B. Purpose of the Research**

Based on the background of the problem above, and seen so many problem influence students' writing skill, this research was conducted to find out:

1. To explain the implementation of personal letter to the students' writing skill in teaching recount text at eighth grade of SMP TigaHatiKepenuhanHulu.
2. To find out the factors influence of students' response, after the teacher used personal letter in teaching writing skill in recount text at the eighth grade of SMP TigaHatiKepenuhanHulu.

## **C. Review of Related Theories**

### **1. The Nature Writing**

Writing as one of four language skills was considered as a difficult skill because the writer should make some aspects in writing such as content, organization, purpose, vocabulary,

punctuation, and spelling in a balance way. Writing is the activity or occupation of writing, for example books, stories, or articles. We can take more times to think and choose words in order to express our idea, thought, and feeling. According to Tarigan (2008:3), writing is a language skill used language to communicate indirectly and not face to face with others.

According to Byrne in Rais et al (2012:2), that writing is producing a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways. A sequence of sentences whether it is short or long after being put in order and linked together, they will form a coherent whole.

### **a. Purposes of Writing**

Tarigan (2008:24) said that there are three purposes of writing based on the types of writing in English language learning, they are: informative, persuasive, expressive, literary discourse.

### **b. Process of Writing**

According to Harmer (2004:4), there are four process of writing they are: planning, drafting, editing, final version.

### **c. Teaching Writing**

Writing is often not bound in the way conversation is. When writing, students frequently have more time to think than they do in oral activities. They can go through what they know in their minds, and even consult dictionaries, grammar books, or other reference material to help them. There are a number of strategies we need to consider to concentrate on the process of writing, they are: plan writing, drafting, reflecting and revise writing, and respond to students' writing.

## **2. Recount Text**

Recount text is a text that tells about what had happened in sequent of events. Hyland (2004:29) said that recount is a kind of genre that has social function to retell event for the purpose of informing or entertaining.

The tense that used in recount text is past tense. Social purpose of recount is to reconstruct past experiences by retelling events in original sequence. It could look at the sample of recount in personal letters, police report, insurance claims, and incident reports.

### **a. Generic Concepts of Recount Text**

In recount text there are three kind generic structures of recount text, and Hyland (2004:135) said that there are three generic structure of recount. They are: orientation, events, and reorientation.

### **b. Grammatical Features of Recount Text**

Hyland (2004:135) said that the common grammatical features or characteristic of recount text are:

1. Use of nouns and pronouns to identify people, animals, things involved.
2. Use of actions verbs to refer to events.
3. Use of past tense to locate events in relation to speaker's or writer's time.

4. Use of conjunctions and time connectives to sequence of events.
5. Use of adverb and adverbial phrase to indicate place and time.
6. Use of adjective to describe nouns.

### 3. Personal Letter

Ali and Tanzili (2006:1) said that a letter is a piece of paper or more that used as a communication tool to deliver the statement or information in written form, from one person to another. It is usually contains of feeling expression, private thing, and important thing.

Based on the paragraph above, personal letter is a type of friendly letter which provides communication between a small numbers of people, usually two of people to give information or tell about something. It contains of feeling expression, private things, and important things as a way to communicate and allows a person to leave a message and to keep in touch.

#### a. Parts of Personal Letter

Hasnun (2006:152) said that the part of personal letter include the place and date of a letter, address, greeting, the body of letter, closing sentence and signatures.

#### 1. Language Use in Personal Letters

According to Bodomo (2002:1), there are two-language use in personal letters, they are: First Sentence Structure, it means that accuracy of grammar may be more important than an email. Most of the time, complete sentences are expected. Second is Language use, it may be personal. For example, first and second person pronouns may be frequently used.

#### 4. Teaching Writing Using Personal Letter

According to Helmi (2012:35), in the first time, teacher will open teaching and learning process by greeting, asked students' condition and check the attendance list. Then teacher giving brainstorming by asking students about their experience when they were going last holiday. There are some questions that teacher asking the students, they are what do you think when you hear words "Holiday"? Do you going Holiday month? When do you holiday at the first time? How old are you when going holiday at the first time?. Then teacher tell the topic of this cycle is holiday.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

This research was Classroom Action research. Classroom Action Research is action research in education sector what do in class area and have the goal to repair and or to increase the learning quality. It means that classroom action research is a kind of research has quality with do specific action so it can repair and or increase the learning practices in classroom with more professional.

According to Riduwan (2012:52), action research is a process through which an

individual or group that wants a change in certain situations to test procedures that are expected to result in the changes, and then, having reached the stage of conclusion that can be responsible for carrying out the procedure.

The research was carried out in SMPTiga Hati Kepenuhan Hulu, the participants of this research were the eighth grade students of SMPTiga Hati Kepenuhan Hulu, the class had 18 students that consists of 13 females and 5 males.

In this classroom action research, the researcher planned to conduct two cycles through personal letter in teaching writing recount text, which was each cycle consists of four stages, they were: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each cycle has two meetings and each meeting took two credit hours (2 x 40 minutes = 80 Minutes).

### B. Technique of Collecting the Data

To collect the data, the researcher used four kinds of instruments they were test, observation sheet, fieldnote and interview. Weigle (2002:116) said that the rubric to give score for each component were, contents, organization, vocabulary and mechanic and last grammar the lowest score was 1 and the highest score were 4.

### C. Tehnique of Analyzing the Data

The data gained was analyzed by using statistical computation. This data was used to know the average of students' score and students' mastery learning in order to know their achievement. After conducting the test, the researcher gave score to the writing test papers of the students. The researcher used test to measure the writing recount text covering content, organization, vocabulary and mechanic, and grammar.

In this research, the researcher formulated the result to get the total score in each students' in writing recount text. The researcher used the following formula:

$$M = \frac{x}{n} : 100$$

Notes :

M : Each students score

X : Total of correct answer

N : Constant Number

(Harahap in Permai 2007)

After getting the letter grade of the students', the researcher used descriptive analysis technique (percentage) to analyze students' writing skill in recount text, The researcher used the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100$$

Notes :

P : Percentage of students

F : Average Score

N : Score Maximum

(Sujiono 2008)

According to Arikunto (2009), after getting the total mean score, the writer categories it into the following criterions:

**Table 6 : Level of students' skill in Recount Text**

No	Level of Mastery	Letter Case	Value	Criterion
1	85 – 100	A	4	Excellent
2	70 – 84	B	3	Good
3	55 – 69	C	2	Fair
4	50 – 54	D	1	Poor
5	0 – 49	E	0	Very Poor

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Description and Analysis of the Data

This classroom action research was conducted at the eighth grade students of the SMP Tiga Hati Kepenuhan Hulu. The number of students was 18. The research was done in two cycles by using personal letter to improve the students' writing skill in recount text; each cycle consisted of four meetings with the test included; each meeting had time 2 x 40 minutes. Each cycle of this research consisted of four phases; planning, action, observation and reflection.

Before carrying out the first cycle of this research, at the beginning the researcher and his collaborator gave writing test to students as to know the based score as the pre- test. The writing test was assessed based on the written scoring rubric in term of content, organization, vocabulary and mechanic and the last grammar, which was rated by three raters, and every raters got the students task gave by the researcher in every meeting test.

From the pre test given, which the topic about "Camping Experience" the researcher could found the students' based score in writing skill in recount text still low and needed to improved. It was found that the percentage of each indicator or components of writing skill in recount text were 53,6% for contents, organization was 52,1%, vocabulary and mechanic was 50, 4%. And grammar was 38, 9%.

After analyzing the data from the test, the researcher concluded that the students' writing skill in all indicators such as content, organization, vocabulary & mechanic and the last grammar, was poor. The result of each indicator was mostly in poor level. On the other hand, the media of teaching writing should be improved or changed.

Consequently, as to overcome the problem of students' poor writing skill, the researcher made plans of activities done in the first cycle by applying personal letter media in writing class.

### 1. The extent to which personal letters improve students writing skill in recount text

After analyzing the improvement gained by the students in writing skill started from the pre test to the cycle 2, it could be stated that there was an improvement achieved by the students among the cycles. It could be seen from the table 18, 19 and the diagram 13 below:

**Table 18 : The Percentage of Students' Writing Skill in Recount Text From Cycle I to Cycle II**

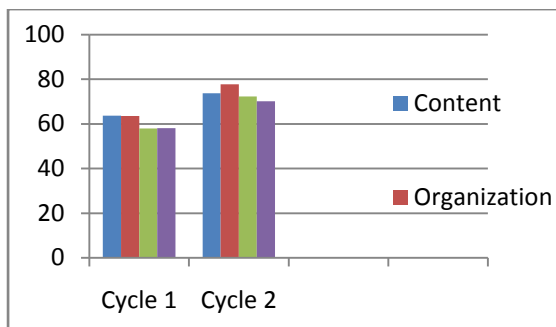
No	Component of Writing Indicators	Class Average Score in cycle I %	Class Average Score in cycle II %
1	Contents	63,7	73,8
2	Organization	63,6	77,7
3	Vocabulary and Mechanic	58,0	72,3
4	Grammar	58,1	70,2

After gave the test every meeting and test the researcher found in the second cycle there were improvement of each indicator from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Based on the table above the researcher put every data researcher found in the some criterion, to make clearly seen in the following table:

**Table 19 : The Criterion of the Students writing skill in recount text based on their Percentage Score**

No	Component of Writing Indicators	Class Average Score in cycle I	Class Average Score in cycle II
1	Contents	Fair	Good
2	Organization	Fair	Good
3	Vocabulary and Mechanic	Fair	Good
4	Grammar	Fair	Good

**Diagram 13 : Increasing of Students Writing Skill in Recount Text From Cycle 1 to Cycle 2**



The diagram above showed that there were improvement of writing skill in every cycle too from the cycle 1 to cycle 2 based on the diagram above.

## 2. Factors influence of students writing skill in recount text by using personal letter

The activities of teaching writing through personal letter media had brought a lot of improvement toward students' writing skill in recount text. In relation with the observation checklist, field note and interview from the first cycle up to the third cycle, it could be identified the factors that improve the students' writing skill such as content, organization, vocabulary and mechanic and the last grammar. They were as follows:

1. The selection of media
2. Letters practice in the paper test
3. Teachers' support to students

## CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND SUGGESTION

### A. Conclusions

After having completed analyzing the data gained from the test, observation, field notes and interview, the researcher can conclude this research, entitled 'improving eighth grade students' writing skill through personal letter media at the SMP Tiga Hati Kepenuhan hulu, academic year 2014/2015 as follows:

1. The personal letter media would helpful teaching and learning process and improving students' writing skill in recount text based on the researcher found that there are increasing of students score after apply personal letter media.
2. The factors influence the change students' writing skill are:

First The selection of media it means that the selection of letter given to students also influenced in increasing of students' writing skill. Second letters practice in the Paper it means the increasing of students writing skill in the two cycle is influenced by practicing the letters in the paper in the class. And the third teacher's support to students may be In this case, teacher's support to students make letter in experience form tell to rtheir friend to improvement in writing skill.

### B. Implications

The implications of this research could be stated as follows; personal letter media gives more chance to the students to write in the classroom through write in the paper test, sharing experience.

By exercising the activities mentioned above, they can develop their writing skill. Then, personal letter media could be applied to improve students' writing skill on English class which emphasizes on the skill to write whether at the adult level or junior high school students.

### C. Suggestion

Based on the conclusion and implication stated above, the researcher, students and everyone involved in educational institution can consider the following suggestions in order to progress the quality of teaching and learning. Especially, it can be applied in the writing class. The suggestions given are as follows:

1. It is suggested to other researchers (teachers) to apply personal letter media in teaching writing recount text because this media can improve students' writing skill in recount text.
2. It is suggested to other researchers (teachers) to apply personal letter media in teaching wringt recount text because it gives students more chance to take part in the interact and communication themselves with the teacher and their friends.

For further researcher as English teachers, it is suggested to carry out the next research on personal letter media dealing with the other language skills such as listening, speaking and reading.

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