

THE EFFECT OF PROBLEM BASED LEARNING ON STUDENTS WRITING SKILL IN RECOUNT TEXT AT GRADE XI OF SMA NEGERI 1 AEK SONGSONGAN IN 2025/2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the significant effect of using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model on students' writing skills in recount texts. The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan during the 2025/2026 academic year. The methodology employed was an experimental design. The population of this study was the eleventh-grade students, with a specific group selected as the experimental class. Data were collected through pre-test and post-test writing assignments. The results showed a significant improvement in students' writing performance, where the total score increased from 2385 in the pre-test to 2835 in the post-test. Specifically, students' ability in content development increased from a total of 520 to 635, indicating that students became more capable of developing and expressing their ideas clearly. Statistical analysis indicated that the students' proficiency level improved from "Fair" to "Good." Furthermore, the t-test results confirmed that the alternative hypothesis (H_2) was accepted, as observed was higher than table. In conclusion, the Problem Based Learning (PBL) significantly enhances students' writing skills in recount texts, particularly in terms of content, organization, and vocabulary. The experimental group was taught using the Problem Based Learning (PBL), while the control group received conventional teaching. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test. The findings showed that the mean score of the experimental group increased from 70.1 in the pre-test to 83.3 in the post-test, indicating an improvement of 13.2%. Meanwhile, the control group showed a lower improvement from 54.7 to 70.1, with an increase of 15.4%. Furthermore, the result of the t-test revealed that the t-observed value (67.5) was higher than the t-table value (2.00) at the significance level of 0.05 with 68 degrees of freedom. This indicates that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. In conclusion, the implementation of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) has a significant positive effect on students' ability in writing Recount Text.

Keywords: Problem Based Learning (PBL), Writing Skill, Recount Text.

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that plays an important role in communication, education, science, and technology. In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject at the senior high school level under the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the mastery of four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Asmawati, 2021). These skills are expected to help students communicate effectively and participate in global interaction.

Writing is regarded by students as the most difficult and complex of the four language skills. This is due to the fact that writing demands not only a command of syntax and language but also the ability to think critically in order to generate ideas, arrange them, and write them with coherence. The various steps of the writing process idea brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing call for consistent practice as well as suitable teaching strategies.

One of the text categories that eleventh-grade students studying English in senior high school need to become proficient in is recount texts. Texts that attempt to recount prior experiences or events in chronological order are known as recount texts. Students must comprehend the general structure of a recount narrative, which includes orientation, succession of events, and reorientation, as well as its linguistic elements, which include the

usage of action verbs, time adverbs, simple past tense, and sequencing conjunctions.

In practice, many students still struggle to produce a good recount text due to several significant challenges. One of the main problems is limited vocabulary, which makes it difficult for students to express their ideas clearly and describe events in detail. As a result, their writing often sounds repetitive and lacks variation. Another major challenge is grammatical errors, especially in the use of the simple past tense. Since recount text tells past events, students are required to use past forms consistently; however, many of them still mix present and past tenses or use incorrect verb forms. In addition, students often face difficulties in generating and developing ideas. They may know what experience they want to share, but they do not know how to elaborate on it into a coherent and meaningful paragraph. Furthermore, organizing paragraphs properly becomes another challenge. Many students are not yet able to arrange their writing according to the generic structure of recount text orientation, events, and re-orientation so their stories become disorganized and unclear. According to Jusriani (2023), students' poor writing skills are frequently caused by their lack of understanding of language features and text structure, as well as limited opportunities to actively practice writing. These challenges show that students need more guidance, structured practice, and engaging learning strategies to improve their recount writing ability.

Preliminary observations at SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan revealed that eleventh-grade students' recount text writing skills are still relatively low. When asked to write in English, many students feel confused about how to begin their text, especially in writing the orientation section, and they are unsure how to organize events in chronological order. They also hesitate in choosing the correct verb forms, particularly the simple past tense, and often mix tenses in one paragraph. As a result, their ideas are not well-developed and lack coherence. This situation is influenced by a teacher-centered learning process, where students have limited opportunities to actively practice and improve their writing skills independently.

In addition to teaching strategies, pupils' poor writing skills are also impacted by affective and cognitive aspects. Students struggle cognitively when it comes to choosing pertinent material, structuring ideas into meaningful writings, and assessing their experiences. Affectively, a lot of students are discouraged from freely expressing their opinions because they fear making grammatical and vocabulary errors. As a result, pupils frequently write brief, inadequately detailed, and poorly formed manuscripts.

Among the four skills, writing is considered the most complex skill because it requires students to generate ideas, organize them logically, and express them clearly using appropriate language features (Ali Amin, 2017). In writing, students must pay attention to several components such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics to produce a good text thought (Chadafi & Fatwa Syarifudin, 2021). Therefore, writing becomes a challenging skill for many students, especially in learning English as a foreign language.

In senior high school, students are required to learn various types of texts, one of which is recount text. Recount text is a text that retells past events in chronological order with the purpose of informing or entertaining the reader readers (Ika et al., 2024). To write a good recount text, students must understand its generic structure, which consists of orientation, series of events, and reorientation, and its language features such as the use of simple past tense, action verbs, and time connectives orientation (Ariani, 2023).

However, based on preliminary observation conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan, students' writing skills in recount text were still low. Many students experienced difficulties in generating and developing ideas, organizing events in chronological order, and using appropriate vocabulary. In addition, students often made

grammatical errors, especially in using the simple past tense. As a result, their writing lacked clarity, coherence, and proper structure. This finding is in line with Jusriani (2023), who stated that students' difficulties in writing are caused by limited understanding of language features and lack of practice.

Furthermore, the teaching and learning process in the classroom was still dominated by teacher-centered methods. In this approach, teachers mostly explained the material, while students tended to be passive and had limited opportunities to actively participate in writing activities. This condition made students less motivated and less confident in expressing their ideas in written form by (Titisari, 2023). Consequently, students' writing ability did not develop optimally.

To overcome these problems, an effective and student-centered teaching model is needed. One of the appropriate models is Problem Based Learning (PBL). Problem Based Learning is a learning model that uses real-life problems as a context for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In this model, students are actively involved in identifying problems, discussing ideas, conducting investigations, and presenting solutions (Finkle & Torp, 1995) in (Taufik, Malmia wa, Magfira Irma, 2020).

The use of Problem Based Learning in teaching writing is considered effective because it encourages students to actively explore and develop their ideas. Through problem-solving activities, students are trained to think critically, organize their ideas logically, and express them clearly in written form. In addition, PBL promotes collaboration among students, which allows them to share ideas and improve their writing together.

Several previous studies have shown that Problem Based Learning can improve students' writing ability. (Anggraeni, 2021) found that PBL significantly improved students' ability in writing recount texts. Similarly, (Dita et al., 2024) stated that PBL helps students develop ideas, improve grammar, and produce better-organized texts. These findings indicate that PBL is an effective model for teaching writing.

Based on the problems found in the field and supported by relevant theories and previous studies, this research focuses on examining the effect of Problem Based Learning on students' writing skill in recount text. Therefore, this study is entitled "The Effect of Problem Based Learning on Students' Writing Skill in Recount Text at Grade XI of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan in the 2025/2026 Academic Year."

The objective of this study is to determine whether there is a significant effect of Problem Based Learning on students' writing skill in recount text. The result of this study is expected to provide benefits for teachers, students, and future researchers. For teachers, it can be used as a reference in selecting appropriate teaching strategies. For students, it can help improve their writing skills. For future researchers, it can be used as a reference for further studies related to teaching writing using Problem Based Learning.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study employed a quantitative research approach with an experimental design to examine the effect of Problem Based Learning (PBL) on students' writing skill in recount text. The design used in this research was a pre-test and post-test control group design, which involved two groups: an experimental group and a control group. This design is considered appropriate to measure the effectiveness of a treatment by comparing students' performance before and after the treatment.

The research was carried out at SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan during the 2025/2026 academic year. The population consisted of all tenth-grade students, totaling 64 students divided into two classes. Since the population was relatively small, total sampling was used, meaning all students were included as the sample. The sample was divided into two groups:

class XI-4, with 36 students, served as the experimental group, and class X-3, with 36 students, served as the control group. The grouping was determined using a random sampling technique to ensure objectivity and reduce potential bias.

This study used a quasi-experimental research design and a quantitative research methodology. The aim of this study was to examine how model students' writing abilities in recount texts were affected by problem-based learning. This study used a pretest–posttest control group design as its research methodology. An experimental group and a control group participated in this design. While the control group received instruction using a traditional approach, the experimental group received instruction utilizing the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. To gauge how much the students' writing abilities had improved, both groups took a pretest prior to the intervention and a posttest following it.

Because it enables the researcher to assess students' writing performance before and after the application of problem-based learning and to ascertain its impact on model students' capacity to create recount narratives, this research design was selected.

Two variables are examined in this study, and they are as follows: Problem Based Learning (Variable X). The experimental group used the Problem Based Learning (PBL) educational model, which involves having students solve contextual or real-world questions pertaining to narrative texts. In this study, the term "problem-based learning" refers to the teaching and learning activities that are carried out in multiple stages, including the following: presenting a problem, dividing students into groups, assisting students in their investigation of the problem, creating and presenting written recount texts, and assessing the learning process. The application of problem-based learning in the classroom and its impact on students' post-treatment writing performance are used to gauge its effectiveness.

Model Students Writing Skill in Recount Text (Variable Y) The capacity of model students to write logical, well-structured, and grammatically sound recount texts is referred to as their writing talent. Operationally, the results of a writing test given to the students as part of the pretest and posttest are used to measure this variable. An analytical scoring rubric with five components: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics is used to evaluate the pupils' writing abilities. The writing test's overall score indicates how proficient pupils are at crafting recount texts.

The instrument used in this study was a writing test in the form of recount text. The test was administered twice: as a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was given to measure students' initial writing ability before the treatment, while the post-test was conducted after the treatment to measure students' improvement. Students' writing was assessed using an analytic scoring rubric covering content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

The procedure of data collection consisted of three stages: pre-test, treatment, and post-test. First, both groups were given a pre-test. Second, the experimental group received treatment using Problem Based Learning, while the control group was taught using conventional teaching methods. The implementation of PBL included steps such as presenting problems, group discussion, investigation, and presentation of results. Finally, both groups were given a post-test to measure their improvement.

The technique of data collection in this study was conducted through three main stages, namely pre-test, treatment, and post-test. These stages were designed to collect valid and reliable data regarding the effect of Problem Based Learning (PBL) on students' writing skill in recount text.

1. Pre-test

The pre-test was administered before the treatment was implemented. The purpose of the pre-test was to identify the students' initial writing skill in recount text and to ensure

that the students' abilities were measurable prior to the application of Problem Based Learning. In this stage, the students were asked to write a recount text based on a given topic within a specified time. The students were instructed to write a complete recount text by considering its generic structure, namely orientation, series of events, and re-orientation, as well as its language features, such as the use of past tense, action verbs, and chronological connectors. The students' writing in the pre-test was assessed using a scoring rubric covering five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The results of the pre-test served as baseline data to compare with the post-test results.

2. Treatment

The treatment was conducted by implementing Problem Based Learning (PBL) in teaching writing recount text. The treatment was carried out in several meetings in the experimental class. During the treatment, the teaching and learning process followed the main steps of Problem Based Learning. First, the teacher introduced a problem related to students' real-life experiences to stimulate their thinking. Second, the students were divided into small groups to discuss the problem, identify key ideas, and generate possible solutions. Third, the students collected relevant information and organized their ideas collaboratively. Finally, the students developed their ideas into a written recount text and presented the results of their discussion. Through the implementation of Problem Based Learning, students were encouraged to actively participate in the learning process, improve their critical thinking, and enhance their ability to organize ideas in writing recount texts.

3. Post-test

The post-test was administered after the treatment was completed. The purpose of the post-test was to measure the students' writing skill in recount text after being taught using Problem Based Learning. In this stage, the students were asked to write a recount text based on a topic that was similar in level of difficulty to the pre-test. The same scoring rubric used in the pre-test was applied in assessing the post-test to maintain consistency and objectivity. The results of the post-test were then compared with the pre-test scores to determine whether there was a significant improvement in students' writing skill. This comparison was used to analyze the effect of Problem Based Learning on model students' writing skill in recount text.

The data collected were analyzed using statistical analysis, particularly the t-test formula, to determine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. If the t-observed value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, indicating that Problem Based Learning had a significant effect on students' writing skill.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine the effect of Problem Based Learning (PBL) on students' writing skill in recount text at Grade XI of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan. The data were obtained from the results of pre-test and post-test conducted in both experimental and control groups.

Before the treatment, a pre-test was administered to measure students' initial writing ability. The results showed that the students' writing skill in both groups was relatively low. The mean score of the experimental group was 70.1, while the control group also showed a similar level of performance. Most students had difficulties in developing ideas, organizing paragraphs, and applying correct grammar, especially in using the simple past tense.

After the treatment, a post-test was conducted to measure students' improvement. The results indicated that the experimental group showed a significant improvement compared to the control group. The mean score of the experimental group increased to 83.3, while the

control group showed only slight improvement. This indicates that the use of Problem Based Learning contributed positively to students' writing performance.

The improvement in students' writing skill can also be seen from each component of writing:

- Content: Students in the experimental group were able to generate more relevant and detailed ideas. Their writing showed clearer main ideas and supporting details.
- Organization: Students could arrange events more systematically based on the generic structure of recount text (orientation, events, reorientation).
- Vocabulary: Students used more varied and appropriate vocabulary, although some minor errors were still found.
- Grammar: There was a noticeable improvement in the use of simple past tense, although some students still made occasional errors.
- Mechanics: Students showed better use of punctuation and capitalization compared to the pre-test.

To determine whether the improvement was statistically significant, a t-test was conducted. The result showed that the t-observed value (67.5) was higher than the t-table value (2.00) at the significance level of 0.05. This means that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_o) was rejected.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that Problem Based Learning (PBL) had a significant positive effect on students' writing skill in recount text at Grade XI of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Songsongan. This effect was clearly reflected in the improvement of students' mean scores as well as in the overall quality of their writing. The discussion of these findings can be elaborated in several important aspects.

First, the significant improvement in students' writing ability indicates that Problem Based Learning successfully created a more meaningful and engaging learning environment. In traditional classrooms, students tend to be passive recipients of information, which limits their opportunity to practice writing actively. However, through PBL, students were required to be actively involved in identifying problems, discussing ideas, and presenting their solutions. This active engagement allowed students to construct their own understanding, which ultimately improved their writing performance. This finding is consistent, who states that PBL enhances students' critical thinking and active participation in learning.

Second, the improvement in the content aspect shows that students were able to generate and develop ideas more effectively after the implementation of PBL. Before the treatment, students often had difficulty starting their writing and lacked ideas to elaborate. Through problem-based activities, students were given contextual situations that helped them recall their personal experiences and transform them into written texts. This process made their writing more meaningful and relevant. In addition, group discussions provided opportunities for students to exchange ideas, which enriched the content of their writing. This finding supports (Anggraeni, 2021), who found that PBL significantly improves students' ability to develop ideas in writing recount texts.

Third, in terms of organization, students showed better ability in arranging their writing according to the generic structure of recount text. They were able to clearly present the orientation, sequence events logically, and provide a proper reorientation. This improvement indicates that PBL helped students understand the structure of the text more effectively. During the learning process, students were guided to analyze examples of recount texts and apply the structure in their own writing. This is in line with (ALrialni,

2023), who emphasizes that understanding text structure is essential for producing coherent writing.

Fourth, the improvement in vocabulary usage indicates that students were able to use more varied and appropriate words in their writing. This improvement can be attributed to the collaborative nature of PBL, where students interacted with their peers and were exposed to new vocabulary during discussions. Although some errors were still found, the overall vocabulary usage became more appropriate and meaningful. This suggests that PBL provides a supportive environment for vocabulary development.

Fifth, the improvement in grammar, particularly in the use of the simple past tense, shows that students were able to apply language rules more accurately after the treatment. Before the implementation of PBL, many students made frequent errors in verb forms and sentence structures. However, through continuous practice and feedback during group discussions, students gradually improved their grammatical accuracy. This finding is supported by (Dita et al., 2024), who stated that PBL helps students improve their grammatical competence in writing.

Sixth, the improvement in mechanics, such as punctuation and capitalization, indicates that students became more aware of writing conventions. Although this aspect showed the least improvement compared to others, it still contributed to the overall quality of students' writing. This suggests that students need more focused practice in mechanics to achieve better accuracy.

In addition, the success of Problem Based Learning in this study can also be explained by its ability to enhance students' motivation and confidence. Before the treatment, many students felt anxious and lacked confidence in writing because they were afraid of making mistakes. However, during the implementation of PBL, students were encouraged to express their ideas freely without fear of being judged. The collaborative learning environment created a supportive atmosphere where students felt more comfortable participating in writing activities. This finding is consistent, who state that PBL promotes a student-centered learning environment that supports motivation and engagement.

Furthermore, PBL also contributed to the development of students' critical thinking skills. Writing a recount text is not only about retelling events but also about organizing and presenting them in a logical sequence. Through problem-solving activities, students were trained to analyze situations, select relevant information, and arrange it systematically. This process helped students produce more coherent and meaningful texts. This finding is supported by (Sari et al., 2021), who found that PBL enhances both writing skills and critical thinking abilities.

Another important finding is that the improvement in students' writing ability was not only quantitative (in terms of scores) but also qualitative (in terms of writing quality). Students' texts became more detailed, organized, and grammatically accurate. This indicates that PBL is effective not only in improving students' performance but also in enhancing their overall writing competence.

However, despite the positive findings, this study also identified several limitations. First, some students still had difficulties in using correct grammar and varied vocabulary. This indicates that PBL alone is not sufficient and needs to be supported by additional grammar instruction and vocabulary practice. Second, the implementation of PBL required more time compared to conventional teaching methods. Teachers needed to carefully manage the class to ensure that all students were actively involved in the learning process. Third, differences in students' abilities also influenced the effectiveness of group discussions, where some students tended to dominate while others were less active.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that Problem Based Learning is an effective teaching model for improving students' writing skill in recount text. It not only improves students' scores but also enhances their ability in developing ideas, organizing texts, using appropriate language, and expressing themselves confidently. Therefore, PBL is highly recommended to be applied in teaching writing, particularly in improving students' recount text writing skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions are proposed to improve the quality of English language teaching and learning:

1. For English Teachers:

Teachers are encouraged to implement Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as an effective alternative method to overcome students' difficulties in writing, particularly for experience-based or chronological texts.

Teachers should provide extra attention to mechanical aspects (punctuation and spelling) as well as the consistent use of the simple past tense, as these areas remain common obstacles for students.

2. For Students:

Students should be more active in group collaborations to exchange perspectives, expand their vocabulary, and build self-confidence in writing.

Students are advised to practice writing more frequently, both independently and through structured exercises, to familiarize themselves with the correct use of English language features.

3. For the School:

The school is expected to support the implementation of innovative and student-centered learning models to replace traditional methods that tend to make students passive.

4. For Future Researchers:

This study can serve as a reference for further research regarding the implementation of PBL in other text types or different language skills.

It is suggested to explore strategies for mitigating PBL obstacles, such as more efficient time management, since this method requires a significant amount of time for analysis.

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