

## USING PERSONAL JOURNAL TO IMPROVE WRITING ABILITY IN RECOUNT TEXT

**Ali Syahban Amir**

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Yapti Jeneponto, Indonesia

*syahban.teaching@gmail.com*

Received: December 16, 2019

Revised: April 24, 2020

Accepted: May 10, 2020

### ABSTRACT

*The application of learning through the use of personal journal is related to the learning of the "Recount text", where this text leads to the process of retelling about experiences in the past to provide information or to entertain the reader. Based on several previous researchers, it has been suggested that learning writing through a personal journal can become a habit that has an impact on increasing students' interest in writing. The application of this learning is aimed to find an increase in learning ability of writing skills, especially in writing "Recount text". This research is a quasi-experimental design with involving experiment 1 and 2. The experiment 1 was taught with the use of a personal journal while the experiment 2 was taught with the learning as applied by the teacher. Data collection for student learning outcomes is done by giving a test of learning outcomes after being treated in each group. The findings in this study indicate that there is an increase in students' writing Recount through the use of personal journal. The mean score in the pre-test of the Experiment 1 there was an increase of 11.13%. In the experimental 2 there was an increase of 10.16%. This proves that the use of personal journal is more effective.*

**Keywords:** *Writing ability, recount text, Personal Journal, Diary.*

### INTRODUCTION

Writing skills is one of the skills that must be learned to improve students' abilities in directing the writing context effectively. In various models of communication needs, writing skills have a big role after the ability to speak, read and listen. Writing is one of the activities that is not easy, so to get past it students must increase the practice in improving their writing skills. Generally, the problem faced by students in writing is how to develop ideas. Students still do not understand the procedures for arranging ideas into good structure. This is a demand for teachers to have to find the right techniques to solve these problems.

There are many factors that cause difficulties in writing, one of which is the complexity of understanding the components in writing itself. There are five specific components in writing, including content, organization (sentence structure models), grammar (grammar), vocabulary (vocabulary), and mechanic (compilation mechanism), (Heaton, 1988, in Amir, 2016 : 12). All these

components are interconnected with each other in the preparation of a good writing. If one component is not arranged properly then the writing will not have a good framework to read. Writing activities are closely related to a person's habits. Sometimes a person will learn to write only if he is a member of a literacy group, or because at some point he is being taught to write. Habit means something that is done as a way of life. Thus, the main point in question is that a teacher can develop students' writing skills through a process of habituation, so that students can find interest in the writing produced. The teacher must believe that students do writing activities due to their habits, so they no longer find difficulties in writing.

The use of personal journal is considered to stimulate students' writing habits because has a close relationship with their daily lives. They write based on what they have experienced, or based on their habitual activities. Based on the experience of researchers when attending various training and education, researchers have hypothesized that the learning techniques presented in this study have the right target when used in early learning. This learning model is applied with a reason to improve the quality of learning that has been applied by teachers in the teaching and learning process and to find out whether there are differences in English learning outcomes that can be achieved by students.

Based on these thoughts, the researcher intends to carry out research with the title: "Using Personal Journal to Improve Writing Ability In Recount Text", in the Field of English Studies in Grade VII of SMP Negeri 3 Tompobulu, Bantaeng Regency.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Writing a personal journal can enable anyone to write their own thoughts and experiences. So, there is no need to be a great writer, or a creative thinker to finish writing in the journal. According to the KBBI (Depdiknas, 2008: 218), "Buku harian adalah buku tulis yang berisi catatan atau kegiatan yang harus dilakukan dan kejadian yang dialami setiap hari - Journal is a notebook containing notes or activities that must be carried out and events that are experienced every day."

Petelin (2017: 6), argues that one way to make thought and learning at the center of writing and to utilize their connections is to keep a journal.

According to Pasaribu (2017), the habit of writing a journal is an activity that is always carried out in the form of pouring ideas or feelings into a notebook whether it's notes, activities that must be carried out, and events that are experienced every day.

According to Progoff (1992), a personal journal is a serial and continuous writing that is made by someone in response to events and experiences of his life. The difference between a personal journal and a diary lies in the reflection placed on the description of events or personal experiences that contain expressions of feelings. Whereas in diary books only write descriptions of daily events without reflection that can create new understanding.

The method of making a personal journal is a method that discusses direct teaching and is used to write daily activities or to write and learn interesting activities. This method also discusses how students can remember texts that can be read to tell texts. To apply this form, practically it can be done by the teacher or students themselves.

The teacher can ask to write a journal in a free format or also a format that is organized as in general manually, not online. Adler (2016), believes that "Writing online does not provide the same benefits as writing by hand".

Personal journal can give teachers the opportunity to evaluate and assess student writing skills. The teacher can evaluate spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure even though it does not give a rating of who owns the best journal. This can help the teacher to measure the appropriate area of instruction so that the class can be more motivated and more focused. Hiemstra (2001) suggests that writing a journal is a flexible instruction tool and is useful in the application of a writing curriculum. Although it is often used as a preliminary pattern in the activity of warming up writing in class, but in fact it can give a habit for students to freely speculate on paper, be confident in their ideas, and the writings created can be accepted as learning outcomes without being criticized.

The use of personal journal in the learning process of writing skills can build close relationships between teachers and students. When students are able to write honestly about what they are experiencing, and are free to express their

thoughts, including confusion or frustration when learning takes place, this will help the teacher to understand and find ways to give instructions individually, according to the character of the students with the aim is to provide a more directional understanding of the subject being taught.

The technique used in the use of personal journal as a learning method is the process of instruction in the form of demonstrations. The demonstration stage provides the opportunity for students to see and hear in detail about the skills being taught and are directly related to background/prior knowledge and the stages of the procedure.

The following are some of the processes carried out as planning instructions. Some of the processes below can be applied according to the needs and suitability at the application stage in the class.

- a. In the process, the teacher can use the student's journal as a medium for writing daily experiences.
- b. At the first meeting, the teacher can explain the recount text and simple past tense.
- c. The teacher can ask students to write about their experiences every day.
- d. At each meeting, the teacher can ask students to make a journal about their activities at the previous meeting.
- e. The teacher can provide corrections to student writing.
- f. After a week, each teacher's learning process can discuss the results of the correction.
- g. After a week, the teacher can ask students to rewrite their journal into the recount text.
- h. Students deposit recount text writing results.
- i. The teacher can correct student writing.
- j. At the next meeting, the teacher distributes the student's recount text and asks them to write back in accordance with the results of the correction that explains the exact structure.

The advantages of using a personal journal method are as follows:

- a. Students can work on their own and choose the writing time.
- b. Increase interest in learning, students can explore new knowledge.
- c. Students are trained to plan work independently.

- d. Bring a change of attitude.
- e. Express experiences, solve problems and consider various analysis perspectives.
- f. Summarize ideas, experiences and opinions after instruction.
- g. Can witness academic developments and personality development through a review of past activities.
- h. By reading a journal, the teacher can find out the problem of student anxiety, interest and pleasure.

The disadvantages of using the personal journal method are as follows:

- a. Teachers can potentially hurt students' feelings through criticism.
- b. Vulnerability to the honesty of students when writing daily activities.
- c. Lack of time to instruct the material being taught.
- d. Oral discussion cannot be done freely.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research was a quasi-experimental study involving two groups, namely group experiment 1 and experiment 2. The experiment 1 was taught by the use of a personal journal while the experimen 2 was taught by conventional learning as taught by the class teacher.

### **Research Sites**

The place of research was Class VII of SMPN 3 Tompobulu, which was conducted in the 2018-2019 school year.

### **Variables and Research Design**

#### **1. Research Variables**

The variables investigated in the study were learning outcomes achieved by students on the subject of writing recount text in class VII of SMP Negeri 3 Tompobulu, Bantaeng Regency with the use of a personal journal.

#### **2. Research Design**

The design of this study was Conterbalanced design. The design model was:

**Table 1.** Research design models

Groups	Variable	Test
R <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>1</sub>	O
R <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	O

Source: Emzir (2010: 105)

Information:

R1: experimental 1

R2: experimental 2

X1: first treatment (Use of Personal Journal)

X2: second treatment (conventional method)

O: test of learning outcomes

**Research Implementation Procedures**

## 1. Preparation Stage

Preparation of learning tools was used to carry out the learning process. The intended learning tools include lesson plans, learning achievement tests, and others such as student worksheets and personal journal that was used.

## 2. Implementation Stage

- a. Carry out learning by following the syntax of the use of a personal journal in class R1 based on the learning tools that had been prepared.
- b. Implement learning by following the syntax of classroom teacher learning in class R2 based on the learning tools that had been prepared.

## 3. Data collection stage.

The data collection in this study was carried out by giving a test of the learning result of writing recount text after being given treatment for 4 meetings of each group.

**Research Instruments**

The data obtained was determined by the instrument used. The instrument used in this study was the test of writing recount text learning outcomes. This test was used to measure the level of student mastery of the material after learning in a certain period of time. The form of the test used was the description form.

**Techniques of Data Collection**

Data collection for student learning outcomes was done by giving a test of learning outcomes after being treated for several meetings in each group, namely

the experimental group I and the experimental group II. The data obtained was empirical data which was then be analyzed.

### Techniques of Data Analysis

1. Descriptive Statistics Analysis This analysis emphasizes the discussion of data and research subjects by presenting data systematically and not concluding research results. The types of data in the form of learning outcomes were then categorized qualitatively based on the categorization techniques established by the Ministry of National Education (Nurmalia, 2011: 36).

**Table 2.** Interpretation Table Categories Learning Outcomes Value

Nilai Hasil Belajar	Kategori
0-54	Sangat rendah/Poor
55-64	Rendah/Fair
65-79	Sedang/Good
80-89	Tinggi/Very Good
90-100	Sangat tinggi/Excellent

In addition, student learning outcomes were also directed at the achievement of individual and classical learning outcomes. Criteria for a student is said to be complete learning if they meet the “*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum (KKM)*” or standard target achievement determined by the school, while classical completeness is achieved if a minimum of 70% of students in the class have achieved a minimum completeness score.

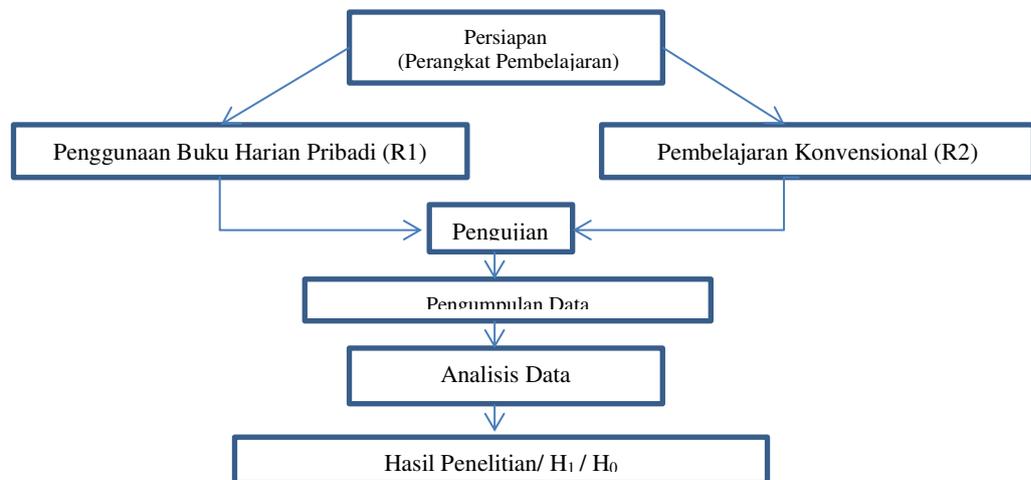
2. Inferential Statistics Analysis

This statistical technique was intended to test the research hypothesis. Before testing the research hypothesis, a normality and homogeneity test was performed. To test the null hypothesis, that the mean of the two groups was no different, then the t-Test was used. But basically both of them produced the same conclusion, which was to accept or reject the null hypothesis.

From the results of inferential research shows that student learning outcomes data were normally distributed and had the same variant (homogeneous). Likewise, hypothesis testing shows that  $H_0$  is accepted.

## Research Flow Chart

**Figure 1.** Research flow chart



## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To find out the increase in the ability to write recount texts by using a Personal Journal in terms of the achievement of student learning outcomes, the process of analysis can be drawn from the component aspects of writing English, including: content, organization, language use / grammar, Vocabulary, Mechanism. This analysis emphasizes the discussion of data and research subjects by presenting data systematically and not concluding research results.

### Student Writing Ability Test on Pre Test

Pretest is used to find out the basic skills (prior knowledge) of the two groups that have been tested with the following results:

**Table 3.** The Students' Results in Pre Test

Score	Classification	Experimen 1		Experimen 2	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
90-100	Sangat Tinggi/Excellent	0	0.00	0	0.00
80-89	Tinggi/Very Good	16	51.61	2	6.45
65-79	Sedang/Good	15	48.39	24	77.42
55-64	Rendah/Fair	0	0.00	5	16.13
0-54	Sangat Rendah/Poor	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>		31	100.00	31	100.00

From the above table, it was found that most students in the pretest in Experiment 2 were in the Good category, namely as many as 24 students (77.42%) out of 31 students and only 2 students (6.45%) got the Very Good category. While most students in the Experiment 1 reached the Very Good

category of 16 students (51.61%), and 15 students (48.39%) received the Good category.

To support or strengthen the description of the table above, testing the mean value and standard deviation is used to determine how the data is distributed in the sample, and how close the individual data points are to the mean sample value, as in the following table:

**Table 4.** The Students' mean scores before giving treatment

Group	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Qualification
<b>Experiment 1</b>	85.25	7.79	Tinggi/Very Good
<b>Experiment 2</b>	77.22	6.43	Sedang/Good

Table above shows the mean scores of students in the two groups before being given treatment / material according to the treatment of each group. The mean value of students in the Experiment 1 reached 85.25 and entered the Very Good category, while the Experiment 2 only reached 77.22 so it is in the Good category. The data indicates that there are significant differences in student writing competency in the pretest.

The description of students' pretest results on the five components of writing English text can be seen in the following table:

**Table 5.** The Students' mean scores before giving treatment in five writing components

Komponen Menulis/ Components of Writing	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
	Mean Score	Mean Score
<b>Content</b>	88.70	79.78
<b>Organization</b>	87.09	78.38
<b>Vocabulary</b>	87.90	77.90
<b>Language Use</b>	79.16	76.45
<b>Mechanism</b>	77.09	68.70

From the above table it can be concluded that there are significant differences in the results of the five component tests between the two groups.

### Test Students' Writing Ability on Post Test

After students from each group received treatment, both the Experiment 1 using the Personal Journal, and the Experiment 2 using conventional teaching methods by the teacher, the results were obtained according to the following table:

**Table 6.** The Students' Results in Post Test

Score	Classification	Experiment1		Experiment 2	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>90-100</b>	Sangat Tinggi/Excellent	13	41,94	3	9,68
<b>80-89</b>	Tinggi/Very Good	18	58,06	16	51,61
<b>65-79</b>	Sedang/Good	0	0,00	12	38,71
<b>55-64</b>	Rendah/Fair	0	0,00	0	0,00
<b>0-54</b>	Sangat Rendah/Poor	0	0,00	0	0,00
<b>Total</b>		31	100.00	31	100.00

From the table above it was found that there were 13 students (41.94%) in the Experiment 1 achieving Excellent classification, whereas in the Experiment 2 there were only 3 Students (9.68%). The Very Good Category for Experiment 1 was 18 students (58.06%) and Experiment 2 was 16 students (51.61%). For the Good category only in the experimental 2 were 12 students (38.71%) while for the Experiment 1 there were not students.

The mean score and standard deviation can be seen in the following table:

**Table 7.** The Students' mean scores after giving treatment

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualification
<b>Experiment 2</b>	87.38	5.86	Good
<b>Experiment 1</b>	96.38	7.79	Good

The description of the results of the post test in the two groups about the components of writing English text, namely:

**Table 8.** The Students' mean scores after giving treatment in five writing components

Komponen Menulis/ Components of Writing	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
	Mean Score	Mean Score
<b>Content</b>	97.95	90.69
<b>Organization</b>	98.70	88.54
<b>Vocabulary</b>	96.12	86.12
<b>Language Use</b>	94.12	85.22
<b>Mechanism</b>	88.06	77.09

From the presentation of the table above, it can be mentioned that the increase in the ability of students in the experimental 1 and Experiment 2 after receiving each treatment had differences. Experiment 1 got better results than Experiment 2.

### Significance Test (t-test)

This test is used to determine the significance of differences in students' writing ability between the two experimental groups on the pretest and posttest. If the probability value of the two Experiments groups is smaller than the value of  $\alpha$

(alpha) = 0.050 in the pretest and posttest, it can be concluded that Alternative Hypothesis (H1) is accepted and Null Hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

The following results of t-test testing from previous data:

**Table 9.** The Students' t-test results

Variables	Probablity Value	Alpha	Remarks
<b>Pretest of Eksperimen 1 and Eksperimen 2</b>	0.000	0.050	Significantly different
<b>Posttest of Ekperimen 1 and eksperimen 2</b>	0.000	0.050	Significantly different

From the above table, it has been obtained that the value of probability is smaller than alpha ( $0,000 < 0.050$ ) in the pretest and posttest, it can be concluded that Alternative Hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Means the use of Personal Journal has an influence in improving students' ability to write Recount Texts in English learning, especially in the content, organization, vocabulary, language use / grammar and mechanism components. In the analysis, it was also found that in the experimental 2 there was a significant increase, but the range of improvement scores for the experimental 1 was (11,13) and higher than the Experiment 2 (10,16). This is evidenced by the mean pretest score for Experiment 1 reaching 85.25 and post test reaching 96.38, which means an increase of 11.13. While the pretest for the Experiment 2 reached 77.22 and 87.38 posttest, only an increase of 10.16. This means that the use of a personal journal can improve the ability to write recount texts in the field of English studies, and is also effectively used to improve students' writing abilities in general.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study it can be concluded that the use of Personal Journal can improve students' ability to write Recount Texts in the Field of English Studies, especially in the components of content, organization, vocabulary, language use / grammar and mechanism. So this research indicates that Alternative Hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

Referring to the results and discussion, the researcher suggests that in the application for students, both in formal and non-formal classes, the teacher or

researcher can use the personal journal method to improve other skills besides writing skills.

## REFERENCES

- Adler, N. J. (2016). *Harvard Business Review-Leader's Handbook :Want to be An Outstanding Leader? Keep a Journal*, USA: Harvard Bussiness School Press.
- Amir, A. S. (2016). *Improving Students' Descriptive Writing Skills Through Systemic Approach*. Unpublished Thesis. PPs UNM.
- Depdiknas (2008). *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka
- Nurmalia (2011). *Efektifitas Pendekatan Realistic Mathematic Education (RME) dalam Pembelajaran Matematika Pada Siswa Kelas VII SMP Nasional Makassar*. Unpublished S1Thesis. Unismuh Makassar.
- Pasaribu, O. L. (2017), *Kebiasaan Menulis Buku Harian Dengan Menggunakan Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning Pada Siswa Kelas VII SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Medan Tahun Pembelajaran 2017/2018*, Jurnal Basastra, 6(4), 210-218.
- Petelin, R. (2017), *How Writing Works*, New South Wales: Allen & Unwin.
- Progoff , I. (1992), *At a Journal Workshop: Writing to Access the Power of the Unconscious and Evoke Creative Ability (2nd ed)*, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

### ***How to Cite (APA style):***

Amir, Ali Syahban. (2020, May). Using Personal Journal to Improve Writing Ability in Recount Text. *Exposure: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 9 (1), 1-12. Retrieved from <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/exposure/article/view/2863>