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**OBSERVING CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING ON STUDENTS'
ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT**
(CASE STUDY: SMP SWASTA BINA BANGSA, BATUBARA REGENCY)

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Medan, Indonesia*

ABSTRACT: *Contextual learning theory occurs only when students (learners) process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frames of reference (their own inner worlds of memory, experience, and response). This approach to learning and teaching assumes that the mind naturally seeks meaning in context-that is, in relation to the person's current environment-and that it does so by searching for relationships that make sense and appear useful. This study is intended to discover the effect of contextual teaching and learning on students' achievement in writing recount text. It is conducted at eight (VIII) grade students of SMP SwastaBinaBangsa, Batubara Regency. Based on the calculation, it shows that the reliability of the test is 0.99. Then, after analyzing the data, it was found that the value is 5.65 with the degree of freedom (df) = 38 at the level of significance $p(0.05) = 2.024$. It means that it is higher than tt $(5.65 > 2.024)$. The result shows that contextual teaching and learning has a significant effect on students' achievement in writing recount text in this school.*

KEYWORDS: *Contextual Teaching and Learning, Students' Achievement, Writing,Recount Text*

INTRODUCTION

It cannot be argued that English language holds an important role in the global society.English isused as a means of international communication in practically all fields oflife: economics and business, international relations (diplomacy), the media, and even education. Thus, the urge to learn and master English has become a must. Since communications do not always happen orally, but it can also happen in written way, it becomes essential to be skilled in writing. The development of writing skill, like in speaking skill, needs an understanding of how to put the linguistic components (knowledge of vocabularies, grammar, and structure (genre)) altogether to be able to produce a text. Recount text is one of the many texts students must learn in English class at School. Recount text is a text which has the purpose to inform past activities. In Indonesia, limited exposure to English in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) causes students to lack confidence to write in English. When they are asked to write, they struggle with many problems in conveying what they want to say: selecting proper words, using correct grammar, generating ideas and developing them into a proper organizational pattern.

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METHODOLOGY

The majority of students in our schools are unable to make connections between what they are learning and how that knowledge will be used. This is because the way they process information and their motivation for learning are not touched by the traditional methods of classroom teaching. The students have a difficult time understanding academic concepts (such as math concepts) as they are commonly taught (that is, using an abstract, lecture method), but they desperately need to understand the concepts as they relate to the workplace and to the larger society in which they will live and work. Traditionally, students have been expected to make these connections on their own, outside the classroom.

Building upon this understanding, contextual learning theory focuses on the multiple aspects of any learning environment, whether a classroom, a laboratory, a computer lab, a worksite, or a wheat field. It encourages educators to choose and/or design learning environments that incorporate as many different forms of experience as possible-social, cultural, physical, and psychological-in working toward the desired learning outcomes.

In such an environment, students discover meaningful relationships between abstract ideas and practical applications in the context of the real world; concepts are internalized through the process of discovering, reinforcing, and relating. For example, a physics class studying thermal conductivity might measure how the quality and amount of building insulation material affect the amount of energy required to keep the building heated or cooled. Or a biology or chemistry class might learn basic scientific concepts by studying the spread of AIDS or the ways in which farmers suffer from and contribute to environmental degradation.

Writing Recount Text

Writing has been with us since thousands years ago. In the ancient time, the forms of writing found were pictures representing symbols, in which each symbol represented respective messages. This form of writing usually could be found carved on the walls of caves. Nowadays, writing has become more important than ever. Writing can be an effective way of communication in almost all aspects of life. There are many definitions of writing proposed by experts. Aristotle (1938: 115) in Coulmas (2003: 2) states that words spoken are symbols of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are symbols of words spoken. Another expert, Rokhani (2002:9), said that writing is one o f four language skills which have an important role in conveying thoughts, ideas or opinion in written form (quoted in Hasibuan, 2013: 6).

WhileMeyers (2005:2) states: Writing is a way to produce language which you donaturally when you speak. Writing is communicating in verbal way. Writing is partly a talent, but it is mostly a skill, and like any skill, it improves with social function, communicative purpose, and characterized by linguistic and rhetorical structures. Nowadays, people recognize genre-based writing as a process to write based on genre. Through this genre-based writing process, students can understand how a specific type of writing works in a society. Thus, the students can write for a specific purpose and ultimately, they can compose a text beyond the sentence level and apply their abilities to a new writing situation (Lee, 2012: 2).
Several types of genre as follows:

a.   *Descriptive* has the purpose to describe things and person.
b.   *Recount* has the purpose to inform past activities.
c.   *Narrative* has the purpose to narrate problematic past events in orderto amuse or entertain and even think.
d.   *Procedure* has the purpose to describe the steps to accomplish forthings or jobs done.
e.   *Explanation* has the purpose to explain a process of formation.
f.   *Discussion* has the purpose to offer viewpoints related to some socioeconomic problems.
g.   *Exposition* has the purpose to expose arguments or opinion.
h.   *News item* has the purpose to inform newsworthy events of the dayand other natural phenomena.
i.   *Report* has the purpose to provide information about natural or non-natural phenomena.
j.   *Anecdote* has the purpose to share with others an account of unusualor amusing event.
k.   *Review* has the purpose to evaluate the quality of books and otherworks o f art.

Based on the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) of English subjectfor junior high school students are expected to learn writing based on thesegenres: *recount, procedure, report,* and *descriptive*. This study focuses onwriting recount text for the second graders o f junior high school.Recount text is a text which has the purpose to inform past activities.It tells a certain past event in chronological orders. The key questions tothis kind of text are: *What did you do?* Or, *Did you see anythinginteresting to inform us?*Recount text and narrative text seems similar in a way, telling acertain past event in chronological orders. But the two kindso f text aredifferent in terms of communicative purpose. Recount text is used tomerely inform the readers about past activities; while in narrative, featuresa conflict or problematic experience which has the problem solving(resolution). Thus, these two texts also have different rhetorical structures.In daily life, we can find the recount text in forms o f personaldiaries, biographies, letters, and speeches (Anderson and Anderson, 2003;49) in Nurohmah (2013: 90).

Assessment of Writing Recount Text
Assessment in writing is really needed to see the students' achievement. There are five components which is commonly used to assess students'writing according to Jacobs (1981) in Hasibuan (2013: 11) to see theirachievement, they are:
those five components can bearranged to help teachers to determine the score students get from writingtheir recount texts. Assessment rubric for writing recount text can be seen inthe table below:
a.   Content: The ability to think creatively and develop thought including all of the relevant to assigne topic;
b.   Organization: The ability to write in appropriate manner for a particularpurpose with particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, to organize and other relevant information;
c.   Vocabulary: the ability to write the word effectively and to appropriate register;
d.   Language use: the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences;
e.   Mechanics: the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar written language, e.g. punctuation and spelling.

Table.1
Assessment Rubric for Writing Recount Text

No	Performance Indicators	Scores				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	First paragraph introduces the topic clearly and grab thereader's attention					
2.	The content/ idea of the text is in line with the topic/ title.					
3.	Overall writing makes sense/ has a clear message.					
4.	Series of events run in a chronological (time) order.					
5.	The background information covers the words *who,what, where*, and *when*.					
6.	The paragraphs run cohesively and coherently.					
7.	The text structure/ generic structure meets the nature ofrecount generic structure.					
8.	The structural patterns follow the convention of Englishlanguage and in line with the recount text					
9.	The vocabulary and word choices, including temporalconjunctions, are clear and correctly and properly used.					
10.	It uses correct spelling and it is legible writing.					
11.	The text mechanics are correctly and properly used.					
	Total Score					

Source: Dirgayasa (2014: 42)

Indicator:

5 = excellent
4 = good
3 = fair
2 = poor
1 = very poor
Source: Dirgayasa (2014: 42)

Achievement

Travers (1970: 447) states that achievement is the result of what anindividual has learned from some educational experiences. It is expected afterexperiencing some learning episodes. Additionally, De Cecco& Crawford(1977) state that achievement is the expectancy of finding satisfaction inmastering challenging and difficult performances. In addition to that, Yelon,Weinstein, &Weener (1977: 301) express achievement as the successfulnessof individual. Another source, Smith & Hudgins (1964: 95) says thatachievement is to do one's best, to be successful, to accomplish tasksrequiring skill and effort and to be recognized by authority.

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Research shows that learning is enhanced when teachers use relating,especially at the beginning of instruction with students' prior knowledge andbeliefs as a starting point

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(Crawford, 2001: 4). Crawford (2001) explains thatteachers use relating when they link a new concept to something completelyfamiliar to students, thus connecting what students already know to the newinformation. When the link is successful, students gain almost instant insight.Caine and Caine call this reaction "felt meaning" because of the "aha!"sensation that often accompanies the insight (Crawford, 2001: 3).As an example, consider an Economics lesson on types of market. Thestudents are going to learn about one type of market according to thestructures namely perfect competition- a type of market with a big number ofsellers and buyers and the products sold are homogeneous. A teacher usingrelating could begin the lesson by asking questions that almost every studentcan answer from life experiences outside the classroom about onemarketplace located in an area where they live: "Did you ever go to *Berastagi Supermarket?*What did you buy at the marketplace?" The teacher then reinforcesthe students' prior knowledge by asking them to recall by imagining thesituation at that market when they were visiting it When a teacher relates thisfamiliar experience to the definition of perfectly competitive market, studentscan immediately see the relevance of their prior knowledge. Most studentsfeel that they already know about perfect competition, or that the concept of itis accessible, because they are familiar with the experience of visiting *Berastagi Supermarket.* They are also more likely to remember the definition of perfectcompetition because they can relate it to *Berastagi Supermarket.*

Contextual teaching and learning (CTL) is a learning strategy which uses a relating process in starting the lesson. In CTL, learning happens byteachers relating the subject matter content to real world situations; andmotivate students to make connections between knowledge and its application(Blanchard, 2001: 1) as quoted in (Komalasari, 2010: 6). Thus, CTL wouldenable students to discover meaning of a subject matter on their own. Glasersfeld asserts that knowledge is not an imitation of reality andemphasizes that knowledge is always the result o f a cognitive construction ofreality through one's activities (Komalasari, 2010: 15). When students areable to construct their knowledge themselves, it would bring them to getbetter understanding and long-term memory retention. Carl Sagan (inRoberts, 2004: 21) says that when one makes the finding himself, he willnever forgetDepartment of National Education (Depdiknas, 2003: 10-19) states thatthere are seven main components of contextual teaching and learning (CTL),they are:

1.Constructivism
Knowledge is built by human little by little and the result of it is expandedthrough a limited context and not in a sudden. Knowledge is not a set offacts, concepts, or norms which is ready to take or remember. Human mustconstruct the knowledge and give meaning through a real experience.

2.Inquiry
The key word of inquiry is students seek out the information and skill bythemselves through observation, questioning, hypothesis making, datagathering, and drawing conclusion.

3.Questioning
For students, questioning is an important part in doing inquiry such as todig in information, confirm things that have known, and lead to the aspectthat has not discovered yet.

4.LearningCommunity

The learning outcome is gained from cooperating with other people.Learning community can be started from small group or called as groupwork. In this small group, among students could give input to one another.

5.Modeling

In teaching learning process, modeling in CTL is dedicated to support thelearning process; the model can be imitated or observed by the students.Teacher can be a model, for instance teacher can give an example of howto do or make something. The model is not only from the teacher but alsocan be constructed by involving the students, such as one student is askedto give an example or demonstration to his friends.

6.Reflection

Reflection is the way of thinking what they have just learnt or what theyhave done in the past. In this case, the students review and respond events,activities or knowledge that they have just accepted.

7.Authentic Assessment

A learning progress is assessed by seeing the process, not merely theresult, and in various ways. The assessment can be written assessment(pencil and paper test), performance based assessment, project, product, orportfolio.

Table.2
Research Design

Group	Pre-test		Independent Variable	Post-test
(R)	E	Y1	X	Y 2
(R)	C	Y1	-	Y2

Where:

X : Independent variable
Y : Dependent variable
Y1 : Dependent variable before the manipulation of independent variable X
Y2 : Dependent variable after the manipulation of independent variable X
E : Experimental group
C : Control Group
R : Random assignment

Population and Sample

Population of this study is the students of grade VIII of SMP SwastaBinaBangsa, Batubara Regency consisting of 56 students distributed into 2 classes which are taken as sample. The first class consists of 28students and the second class consists of 28 students too. In this case, researcher decides tochoose 40 students as sample. The number of sample from each class is 20students of grade VIII-1 in control group are taken as sample;and in experimental group, grade VIII-2 which consisted of 28 students, 20students are taken as sample.Then, the sample from each class is taken by using random samplingtechnique. By using lottery, 40 students

were selected randomly from a populationof 56. Every students has an equal chance to be picked because random samplingtechnique allows probability that each unit will be chosen.

The Instrument in Collecting Data

In collecting data, writing text is used as the instrument. Students areassigned to make a recount text. Pre-test is given to both, experimental andcontrol groups, to find out the mean scores of both groups. The pre-test data isused to measure students' basic knowledge before implementing the method.After the treatment given, post-test is given to the experimental group and to thecontrol group to know the effect of contextual teaching and learning on students'achievement in writing recount text.

The Procedure of the Research

The research is done in four meetings: 1 (one) meeting for pre-test; 2(two) meetings for treatment; and 1 (one) meeting for post-test.

1. Pre-Test

Pre-test is given to the experimental group and the control groupbefore the treatment. The pre-test is used to know the mean scores of bothgroups before receiving the treatment. For this pre-test, the students areassigned to make a simple recount text.

2. Treatment

The Procedure of Treatment

The experimental group and the control group discuss the samematerial. In the experimental group, the students are taught by applyingcontextual teaching and learning. In control group, the students aretaught without applying contextual teaching and learning but by usinglecture method.

The teachers teaching in experimental class are different fromcontrol class, but each teachers have the same background like age, genre,education and how long they have been teaching. It would make fair finaldata. Both of class are given the same material but different treatmentThe teaching presentations are held in two meetings (80 minutes for eachmeeting). It takes 4 x 40' treatment for this research and the post test isadministered

b. Reliability of the Test

Reliability means the stability of test scores. A reliable test is consistent and dependable (Brown, 2004: 20). The test can be said reliable if the outcome of the test is stable. In reliability, the scoring must be consistent in scoring two or more tests. If the instrument tools can't deliver the consistent score on the same subject in different time, it means that the instrument tools have low reliability.

Technique for Analyzing Data

The t-test formula is used in analyzing the data. The formula is:

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{dx^2 + dy^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Where:

Mx = Mean score of experimental group
My = Mean score of control group
dx^2 = The standard deviation of experimental group
dy^2 = The standard deviation of control group
Nx = The total number samples of experimental group
Ny = The total number samples of control group

The data are taken from the result of the writing test. The test scores forboth experimental and control group are calculated by using the formula thathave been stated before. The analysis is intended to get the significantdifferences between the group taught with contextual teaching and learning andthe group taught with lecture method to see students' achievement in writingrecount text.

DISCUSSION

There is a significant difference on students' achievement in writingrecount text taught by using contextual teaching and learning of studenttaught by using lecture method. Students' score who are taught by usingcontextual teaching and learning are higher than the students taught by lecturemethod.

Both experimental and control group are given an instructivetest form to write a recount text on the pre-test and post-test. The treatment is given to the experimental group after the pre-test done. After applying the pre-test and post-test to the experimental group and control group, the students' scores are obtained. From the result, it is found that the lowest and the highest pre-test score in the experimental class are 22 and 62 with the mean 40.55; while in the post-test 53 and 91 with the mean 75.9. If control class, the lowest and the highest pre-test score are 20 and 65 with the mean 37.7; while in the post-test are 47 and 80 with the mean 64.05. The result of the students' pre-test and post-test of both groups can be seen in Appendix A and B. From the data, it could be proved that the scores students obtained in the two groups are different. It shows that the average of post-test in experimental group is higher than in control group.

Table.3
Score in Experimental Group

No	Student's Initial	Pre-Test	Post Test	Gain (d)	Deviation (dx)	Square Of Deviation (dx^2)
1	ASS	22	53	31	-4.35	18.92
2	AKB	22	55	33	-2.35	5.52
3	BT	34	71	37	1.65	2.72
4	DS	44	85	41	5.65	31.92
5	DTT	51	60	9	-26.35	694.32
6	EK	36	85	49	13.65	186.32
7	FLL	44	60	16	-19.35	374.42
8	GRR	49	80	31	-4.35	18.92
9	JAS	25	60	35	-0.35	0.12
10	MIZ	36	80	44	8.65	74.82

11	MS	54	85	31	-4.35	18.92
12	MUK	36	83	47	11.65	135.72
13	MK	33	84	51	15.65	244.92
14	PP	36	87	51	15.65	244.92
15	RAA	29	87	58	22.65	513.02
16	RC	62	89	27	-8.35	69.72
17	RH	47	69	22	-13.35	178.22
18	SUT	42	85	43	7.65	58.52
19	SKK	62	91	29	-6.35	40.32
20	ZN	47	69	22	-13.35	178.22
Total		**811**	**1518**	**707**		**3090.55**
Mean		**40.55**	**75.9**	**35.35**		
Max		**62**	**91**	**58**		
Min		**22**	**53**	**9**		

$$\text{Mean of the test(Mx)} = \frac{\text{Total gain of test}}{\text{Total of students}}$$

$$= \frac{707}{20}$$

$$= 35.35$$

So, the mean of experimental group is 35.35

Table.4
Score in Control Group

No.	Student's Initial	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain (d)	Deviation (dy)	Square of Deviation (dy^2)
1.	AGG	53	58	5	-11.35	128.82
2.	AMM	44	64	20	3.65	13.32
3.	ACL	53	73	20	3.65	13.32
4.	DK	20	51	31	14.65	214.62
5.	HI	44	47	3	-13.35	178.22
6.	LO	47	64	17	0.65	0.42
7.	MA	51	56	5	-11.35	128.82
8.	MRK	42	47	5	-11.35	128.82
9.	NTT	65	76	11	-5.35	28.62
10.	NHH	64	80	16	-0.35	0.12
11.	NHU	20	51	31	14.65	214.62
12.	NE	58	71	13	-3.35	11.22
13.	NH	44	67	23	6.65	44.22
14.	PQR	65	80	15	-1.35	1.82
15.	RO	44	62	18	1.65	2.72
16.	RPR	45	65	20	3.65	13.32

17.	ZAA	49	64	15	-1.35	1.82
18.	NIH	65	80	15	-1.35	1.82
19.	RUU	45	69	24	7.65	58.52
20.	FZ	36	56	20	3.65	13.31
	Total	954	1281	327		1198.55
	Mean	47.7	64.05	16.35		
	Max	65	80	31		
	Min	20	47	3		

$$\text{Mean of the test (My)} = \frac{total\ gain\ of\ the\ test}{total\ of\ students}$$

$$= \frac{327}{20}$$

$$= 16.35$$

So, the mean of control group is 16.35

The Calculation of the t-observed:

Mx =35.35   dy2 =1198.55
My =16.35   Nx =20
dx2 =3090.55   Ny = 20

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{dx^2 + dy^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{35.35 - 16.35}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{3090.55 + 11.98}{20 + 20 - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{20} + \frac{1}{20y}\right)}}$$

$$t = 5.65$$

t-observed=5.65

Contextual teaching and learning gives students a chance to be active in theteaching-learning process. It allows students to experience a more meaningful andreal learning. By engaging students in some group works helps students toimprove their soft skill in cooperating and socializing with other people. Theyalso can learn how to solve a problem. The activities engaged in contextualteaching and learning make learning more productive. As stated by some of thestudents of the experimental group who are taught by using contextual teachingand learning, working together in one group- creating something, is really fun andenjoyable. As expected, during the teaching-learning process, the students taughtby using contextual teaching and learning paid more attention to the lesson,actively participate in the class, and understand material completely.Meanwhile, the students who are taught by using lecture method in controlgroup are passive in the class. They paid less attention to the lesson

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and looked bored. Their understanding of the material are lower compared to that in theexperimental class. It can be seen by the mean scores obtained by them in the post-test.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, the conclusions were drawn as followed:
a. Students' achievement in writing recount text taught by using contextual teaching and learning are higher than that taught by using lecture method.contextual teaching and learning is better used to improve the students'writing achievement in recount text than lecture method.
b. The ability of the studentsof this school inwriting recount text has increased.
c. The students are more active and enthusiastic in writing recount text

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