



THE EFFECT OF PROBLEM BASED LEARNING MODEL ON RECOUNT TEXT WRITING SKILLS AT GRADE XI STUDENTS OF SMA SWASTA MERANTI (2025/2026) ACADEMIC YEAR

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ARTICLE INFO

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Key words:

Problem Based Learning,
Writing Recount Text,
Effect.

Website:

<https://idm.or.id/JSER/index.php/JSER>

Page: 808 - 816

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model on students' ability in writing recount texts of grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti in the 2025/2026 academic year. The method used in this research is a quantitative approach with an experimental design. The population of this study consisted of 51 students, and the sample was divided into two groups: the experimental group (XI-IPA) and the control group (XI-IPS). The experimental group was taught using the Problem Based Learning model, while the control group was taught using the conventional method. The data were collected through writing tests in the form of pre-test and post-test. The results showed that there was a significant improvement in students' writing ability after the treatment. The mean score of the experimental group increased from 63.07 in the pre-test to 82 in the post-test, while the control group increased from 57.8 to 72.4. The data were analyzed using the t-test formula, and the result showed that the t-count value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05. Based on the result of hypothesis testing, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) was rejected. It means that the Problem Based Learning model has a significant effect on students' writing recount text skills.

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INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as a globally indispensable language, playing a pivotal role in various sectors including business, technology, education, and international relations. In the Indonesian educational context, English is a compulsory subject for both junior and senior high school students, aimed at equipping them with the necessary communicative competence. Among the four language skills, writing is considered one of the most critical to master as it allows individuals to communicate complex concepts, information, and personal experiences in a structured and organized manner (Permata Sari & Sundari, 2023).

Writing is fundamentally a productive skill that involves the ability to convey knowledge and ideas in written form. According to (Autila, 2017), writing is an individual act where the writer absorbs ideas and transforms them into a unique personal style. It is not merely a mechanical task but a creative and cognitive process essential for transformative learning, academic literacy, and critical thinking. Furthermore, (Ekarista, 2018) defines writing ability as the capacity to generate original content using one's own language and resources, rather than simply duplicating existing work. Mastering academic writing requires a comprehensive command of various sub-skills, including vocabulary, grammar, coherence, and organizational structure .

In the high school curriculum, one of the most prominent text types taught is the recount text. Recount text serves to narrate historical events or personal experiences in chronological order, which is vital for fostering students' narrative capabilities. A well-constructed recount text must adhere to specific generic structures: orientation (stating who, what, and when), a series of events, and a reorientation. Additionally, it employs specific language features such as the simple past tense, time connectives (e.g., then, after that), action verbs, and individual participants. By mastering recount texts, students can significantly enhance their overall writing performance and academic accomplishments.

However, despite its importance, many students face significant challenges in producing high-quality writing. Difficulties often arise when students encounter misunderstandings or repeated errors in generating new ideas, developing themes, and selecting appropriate vocabulary. Initial observations conducted at SMA Swasta Meranti revealed that numerous Grade XI students continue to struggle with English writing, particularly in creating recount texts. These students exhibited a lack of confidence and frequently faced hurdles in systematically organizing their ideas according to the correct generic structures. Consequently, their writing often appeared disorganized, lacked clarity, and was riddled with grammatical errors, especially regarding the use of the simple past tense.

The persistence of these writing difficulties can be attributed to the traditional teaching approaches still prevalent at SMA Swasta Meranti. Instruction often relies heavily on teacher-centered lectures where students are passive recipients of information and perform solitary writing assignments with limited interaction. Such methods offer few opportunities for collaborative problem-solving or the development of analytical abilities, leading to diminished student motivation. Therefore, an innovative and effective learning model is required to overcome these issues.

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is proposed as a solution to address these pedagogical gaps. The PBL model is designed to guide students through thinking, analyzing, and researching as they work toward solving real-world problems. Its foundation lies in the investigation phase, where students gather information, formulate theories, and propose solutions, thereby enhancing their problem-solving and metacognition skills. During

this process, educators serve as facilitators and motivators, guiding students to utilize various data sources.

The effectiveness of PBL in improving writing skills is supported by several previous studies. (Sianturi et al., 2024) analyzed student difficulties at SMA Negeri 21 Medan and found that students frequently struggle with content, organization, and language use due to a lack of structure and limited vocabulary. Furthermore, (Titisari, 2023) conducted a Classroom Action Research study at SMP Negeri 1 Secang, which demonstrated that implementing PBL significantly improved students' recount text writing scores and increased their engagement and discipline. Similarly, a study by (Dita et al., 2024) at SMP Methodist 9 Medan showed a substantial gain in student writing performance following the application of the PBL model, with post-test scores rising from 68.73 to 89.03. These studies collectively indicate that PBL not only improves technical writing aspects like vocabulary and grammar but also boosts students' confidence and interest in learning English.

Building upon these considerations, the current research aims to investigate the impact of the Problem Based Learning model on the writing skills of Grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti. The focus is specifically placed on mastering the generic structures and language features of recount texts in the 2025/2026 academic year. This study seeks to determine whether there is a significant effect of the PBL model on student performance, thereby providing both theoretical enrichment and practical benefits for teachers, students, and future researchers in the field of English education.

METHODS

In this research, the method used quantitative research method. Quantitative method is a type of research that involved researcher to collect numerical data and statistical analysis to test hypotheses, identify relationships between variables and answer questions in research so as to draw conclusions. Mohajan (Hamdani et al., 2022) stated that quantitative research methods deal with numbers and anything those are measurable in a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships. The aim of this method was to generalize the results obtained from a larger sample population.

In this research, the method used a quantitative research approach with an experimental strategy. Quantitative method is a type of research aimed at determining the cause and effect relationship between one or more variables and other variables. In this research, an experimental design was used to determine the effects of interventions. The type of design used by the researcher involved two groups, namely the experimental and control groups, to conduct a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the treatment. The experimental group was given treatment using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model, while the control class received conventional teaching.

This research was conducted at SMA Swasta Meranti, located at Jln. Perintis Kemerdekaan no. 182 Desa Meranti, Kec. Meranti, Kab. Asahan, Sumatera Utara Province, starting from February 2026 for the academic year 2025–2026. The population in this research was the eleventh-grade students of SMA Swasta Meranti. The total population consisted of 51 students from two classes, namely class XI-IPA with 26 students and class XI-IPS with 25 students.

To choose the samples, the researcher used a random selection process. Random sampling was utilized by the author to choose the groups for this investigation due to their similar levels of English competence. The experimental group was selected to be

class XI-IPA, which consists of 26 students, and the control group was chosen to be class XI-IPS, which consists of 25 students. Thus, the total sample in this research was 51 students.

In this research, the researcher used a writing test in the form of a topic based essay as the main instrument for collecting data. The test used was divided into two, namely the pre-test and the post-test. The pre-test was administered to measure students' initial ability in writing recount texts before the treatment, while the post-test was used to determine the students' progress after the implementation of the Problem Based Learning model. The writing evaluation was objectively and systematically assessed based on five criteria: orientation, events, reorientation, the use of simple past tense and adjectives, and the application of sequencing markers

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis of the Research

Data analysis of the research is a technique used to process collected data so that the researcher can measure and explain the relationships between variables. In this study, the researcher collected data through pre-tests and post-tests in both experimental and control classes. The researcher calculated measures of central tendency, such as the mean, as well as measures of data dispersion to provide a clear overview of the students' improvement.

Data Description

This section discusses the pre-test and post-test statistical data for both the experimental and control classes. The pre-test and post-test were administered to students specifically to assess their ability to write in English, particularly recount texts. The tests were conducted across two classes to determine the comparative impact of the learning methods employed by the researcher: the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method in the experimental class (XI-IPA) and the conventional method (traditional learning) in the control class (XI-IPS). This study utilized a quasi experimental approach as its foundational design.

Treatment Description

Based on research conducted at SMA Swasta Meranti, many Grade XI students continue to struggle with writing in English, particularly in creating recount texts. Students frequently exhibit a lack of confidence and face challenges in systematically organizing their ideas, applying correct generic structures, and utilizing suitable language features like the simple past tense. Therefore, a supportive and innovative learning model is required to enhance their performance. In this research, the population consisted of 51 students of Grade XI at SMA Swasta Meranti for the 2025/2026 Academic Year. The sample was divided into two classes: the experimental group (XI-IPA) and the control group (XI-IPS).

1. Experimental Class

The experimental class (XI-IPA) received treatment using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. Before the treatment began, the researcher administered a pre-test in the form of a writing test to measure the students' initial writing proficiency. Following the pre-test, the researcher conducted learning activities by implementing the PBL model, which is a learner-centered framework where students address authentic issues through inquiry and cooperation. During these sessions, students were encouraged to assess problems related to recount texts and

collaborate to reconstruct their writing. Finally, the researcher administered a post-test to determine the students' progress and the effectiveness of the PBL model.

2. Control Class

In the control class (XI-IPS), the researcher did not provide the PBL treatment but instead conducted learning in a traditional or conventional manner. This conventional method relied heavily on the teacher delivering content while students engaged in solitary writing assignments based on textbooks and lectures. Similar to the experimental group, the researcher first gave a pre-test to the students to obtain initial data. After the learning sessions using conventional methods were completed, the students were given a post-test. The post-test administered was the same as the one given to the experimental class to ensure a fair comparison of the learning outcomes.

The Analysis of the Data

To assess whether the sample used was representative and to ensure that the collected data followed a standard distribution pattern, the researcher conducted a normality test. In this research, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method was applied to verify the normality of the scores obtained from both the experimental and control classes. The fundamental assumption in this normality test is that the data is considered normally distributed if the significance value (p-value) calculated from the data is greater than the significance limit of 0.05.

Independent Sample T-Test

The Independent Sample T-test is a statistical test used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two unrelated groups. In this research, the test was used to compare the writing achievement of the experimental group (XI-IPA) and the control group (XI-IPS) after receiving different treatments.

The results of the hypothesis testing in Independent Sample T-test indicate that the t-count (t-test) value was higher than the t-table value at a significance level of 0.05 with a degree of freedom (df) of 49. Because the t-count exceeded the t-table value, the Null Hypothesis H_0 was rejected, and the Alternative H_a was accepted.

This decision means there is a significant difference in writing skills between students taught using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model and those taught using conventional methods. Consequently, it is concluded that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model significantly improves the recount text writing skills of grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti for the 2025/2026 academic year

Research Findings

Based on the data analysis conducted by the researcher, this study concludes that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model had a significant effect on the recount text writing skills of grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti. The application of the PBL model was found to be effective in improving students' ability to develop ideas, organize their writing, and apply appropriate language features.

The data indicates a clear difference in the improvement of students' writing skills in the experimental class (XI-IPA). The results show that the average score for the pre-test was 62.88, which significantly increased to 81.92 in the post-test. In the pre-test, the majority of students (22 out of 26) failed to meet the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM), with many struggling to express linguistic features and organize the generic structure. However, after receiving treatment with the Problem Based Learning strategy, every

student in the experimental class successfully met the KKM in the post-test, with scores reaching as high as 90.

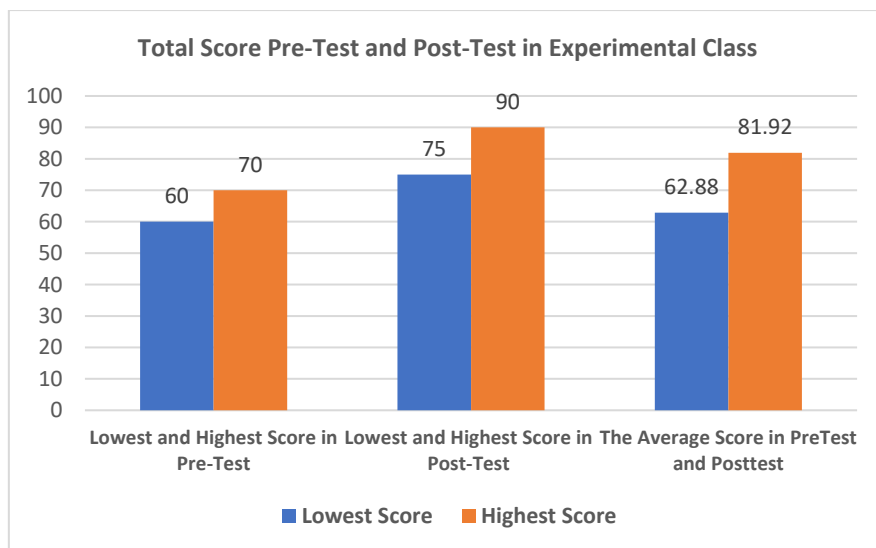


Figure 1. Total Score in Experimental Class

In the control class (XI-IPS), where conventional teaching methods were used, the progress was less significant. The average score increased from 57.8 in the pre-test to 72.4 in the post-test. While there was an increase in scores, only 10 students were able to meet the KKM in the post-test, while 15 students still failed to reach the required standard. The highest score achieved in this group's post-test was 80.

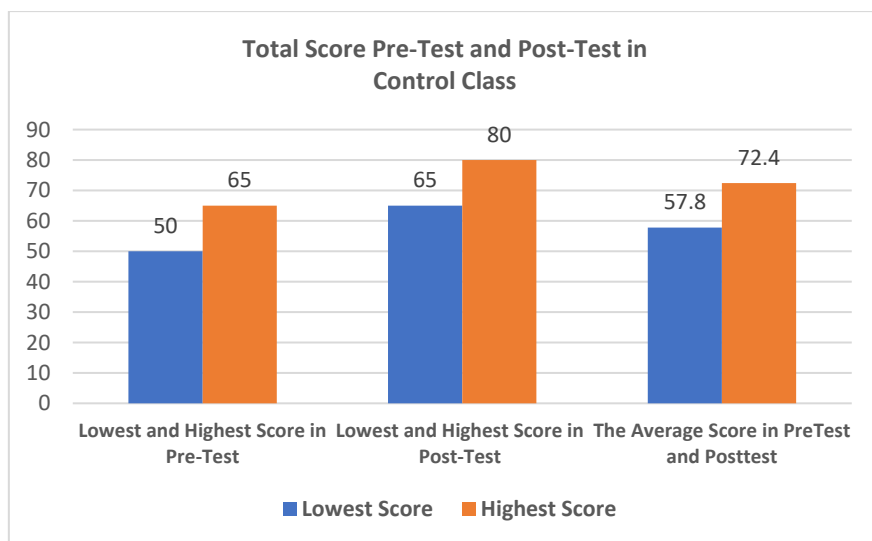


Figure 2. Total Score in Control Class

Comparing the two groups, the analysis proves that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model can improve students' writing skills more effectively than conventional methods. The statistical analysis showed that the t-count value was higher than the t-table value at a significance level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis H_0 and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H_a . Therefore, it is concluded that the PBL model has a very significant effect on improving recount text writing skills for grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti

Discussion

After conducting the research, analyzing data, and performing normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis tests, the main objective of this research was to improve the recount text writing skills of grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. The aims of this research were to determine whether the PBL model significantly affects students' writing skills and how this model helps students develop ideas, organize their writing, and apply appropriate language features.

The sample selected for this research consisted of 51 students, divided into two groups: class XI-IPA with 26 students as the experimental class and class XI-IPS with 25 students as the control class. This sample was chosen because many grade XI students at SMA Swasta Meranti initially struggled with writing in English, particularly with recount texts. Students frequently faced challenges in systematically organizing their ideas and applying correct generic structures and language features, such as the simple past tense. Furthermore, conventional teaching methods previously used at the school offered few opportunities for discussion or collaboration, leading to passive learning and low motivation.

This motivated the researcher to implement the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model for the eleventh-grade students. This model encourages students to engage in active exploration, group collaboration, and critical thinking by using real-world situations as a framework. By implementing PBL, students were better able to enhance their involvement and creativity, specifically in mastering content development and accuracy in generic structures.

The average pre-test scores showed that the two classes had similar initial abilities, with the experimental class (XI-IPA) scoring 62.88 and the control class (XI-IPS) scoring 57.8. In the experimental pre-test, 22 out of 26 students failed to meet the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). After giving treatment with the PBL model in the experimental class and conventional learning in the control class, the post-test results showed a significant difference. The experimental class's average score rose to 81.92, while the control class only reached 72.4. This increase shows that the class taught with the PBL model experienced much greater improvement compared to the class using conventional methods.

In improving the writing skills at SMA Swasta Meranti, the researcher used the PBL model to focus on five essential elements: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Through this model, students were able to think more critically and achieve scores as high as 90 in the post-test, with every student in the experimental group successfully meeting the KKM.

Therefore, based on the results of this research, it was proven that implementing the Problem Based Learning model is an effective strategy for improving students' writing skills. With this model, the teacher acts as a facilitator while students work in small groups to solve problems and collaborate on creating texts. Statistical analysis confirmed this success, as the t-count value was higher than the t-table value at a 0.05 significance level, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H_a .

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and research findings in the previous chapter, it was concluded that the implementation of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model had a significant effect on students' recount text writing skills and increased their motivation

to write. The statistical results in the experimental class (XI-IPA), with an average post-test score of 82, showed a more significant improvement compared to the control class (XI-IPS) using conventional learning, which had an average post-test score of 72.4.

In the experimental class, the average pre-test score was 62.88, where 22 out of 26 students initially failed to meet the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). After receiving treatment through the Problem Based Learning model, every student in this class successfully met the KKM in the post-test, with the average score rising to 81.92 and the highest scores reaching as high as 90. This represents a very significant increase of 19.04 points. In contrast, the control class started with an average pre-test score of 57.8 and reached an average post-test score of 72.4. While both classes showed improvement, the experimental class which received the PBL treatment demonstrated a much more substantial and consistent increase in writing performance.

These results show that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model was highly appropriate for improving students' writing skills. The hypothesis testing confirmed this, as the t_{count} value was higher than the t_{table} value at a 0.05 significance level $t_{count} > t_{table}$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis H_0 and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H_a . This proves there is a significant difference between the writing results of students taught using the PBL model and those taught using conventional methods.

This success was supported by the students' enthusiasm and active participation during the learning process. The PBL model trained students to think critically, collaborate in groups, and use real-world situations as a framework for their writing. Consequently, this model was highly engaging and had a significant impact on students' writing skills, making them more active, interactive, and creative, while also helping them effectively develop ideas and organize the generic structure of recount texts.

Suggestion

Based on the researcher's experience and the results obtained during the study at SMA Swasta Meranti for the 2025/2026 academic year, several suggestions are offered to improve students' writing skills, particularly in recount texts. The suggestions are specifically aimed at addressing the difficulties students face in organizing ideas and mastering linguistic features.

1. Utilizing Effective Learning Models for Writing Instruction. English teachers are strongly advised to implement the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model as an alternative strategy in the classroom. This model has proven effective in attracting students' interest and helping them overcome challenges in recount text writing, such as structuring orientation, events, and re-orientation, as well as applying the correct simple past tense.
2. Fostering an Active and Collaborative Learning Environment. Teachers should encourage students to become more active by working collaboratively in small groups. By using the PBL model, students are given the opportunity to solve problems and develop their ideas through discussion. This collaborative approach not only improves their technical writing skills but also boosts their motivation and creativity, moving away from monotonous conventional methods.
3. Recommendations for Future Research. Other researchers are encouraged to explore and examine the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model further. Future studies could apply this model to different types of texts, such as narrative or analytical exposition, or conduct research at different grade levels. Additionally, using larger sample sizes or focusing on different language skills (listening, speaking, or reading)

would provide a broader understanding of the impact of the PBL model on English language acquisition.

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