



INVESTIGATING THE USE OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING ON STUDENTS' WRITING RECOUNT TEXT: A CASE ON TEACHING METHOD

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Abstract: This research was designed to find the effect of Contextual Teaching and Learning on student's writing recount text at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar. To answer the problems the researchers used theories such as Berns & Erickson (2001), Harmer (2004), Knapp and Watkins (2005). The study employed a quantitative research design. As an experimental investigation, its goal was to determine whether the implemented method had any impact on the subject. In this research, in collecting the data the researchers had to do three steps: pre-test, treatment, post-test. The researchers discovered that CTL has a significant impact on students' ability to write recount texts. This is evident from the post-test scores of the experimental class, where the writer applied the CTL treatment. After calculating the data, the researchers found the mean of experimental class was 76,76 and the mean of control class was 61,83. The calculation of t-test, the total t- obtained value of the research is 4.63 with the degree of freedom (df) was $(30+30)-2=58$ and level of significant 2.5% (0.025), so the value table of t-table was 2.00. It shows that t- obtained value is higher than t-table ($4.63 > 2.00$). Therefore, the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the Null Hypothesis (H_o) was rejected. It means that Contextual Teaching and Learning was more significant than Grammar Translation Method in writing recount text at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar.

Keywords: *contextual teaching and learning; recount text; writing.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a fundamental skill in language learning, playing a crucial role in students' academic development and communication abilities. Among various text types taught in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, recount texts are particularly significant as they help learners structure past experiences into coherent narratives (Fenwick & Herrington, 2022). However, many students often struggle to produce effective recount texts due to limited vocabulary, poor grammar mastery, and a lack of connection between the

content and their personal experiences (Magableh & Abdullah, 2022).

As generally known that writing is the most complex and difficult among the language skills. Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a language besides listening, speaking, and reading. Writing is not only need what to write the content of the writing but also the method how to write what you want to write down (Setyowati et al., 2022; Abdelhalim, 2022; Polat & Dedeoğlu, 2023; Fatimah et al., 2024). In the others, writing is a powerful instrument of thinking because it provides students with a way of gaining control

over their thoughts. Writing is designed to communicate feelings and thoughts in order to communicate with others (Nurlaelawati et al., 2022; Punar Özçelik and Yangın Ekşi, 2024). Writing is also used to influenced or to persuade readers with the writer's opinions (Pardede and Herman, 2020). Writing shapes their perception of themselves and the world. It aids in their personal growth and in their effecting change on the environment (Mjenda & Kyaruzi, 2025).

Writing about something is not easy. It is generally considered one of the most difficult skills for foreign language students (Zhao, 2023; Ironsi and Solomon Ironsi, 2025). According to Msanjila (2005) in Herman et al (2023), there are some reasons which make writing difficult. Firstly, writing requires good grammar and punctuation. Secondly, people are often known to spend more time to write. Thirdly, writing needs vocabulary (Amanda et al., 2024; Mardiningrum et al., 2024). It is difficult for students learning and practicing the grammar through written exercise (Fernando & Suryaman, 2022; Shariq, 2025; Tran, 2025). The students difficult in remember large number of rules instruction because they are non-native spoken of English.

Writing is an important language skills that should be mastered by the foreign language students (Syailendra et al., 2024; Ilahi and Amma, 2025). Hyland (2009) stated that writing is productive skill. Writing is a skillful activity that involves knowledge, ideas, and critical thinking of students (Barus et al., 2020; Alshahrani and Storch, 2025). It is usefull for students to convey their concepts in written form.

Based on the researcher's experience in Teaching Practice Program (PPL) in SMA N 6 Pematansiantar, the students were difficult to start writing their recount text if the teacher asked them to write without encouraging and guiding them. The researcher invented the crucial problem, in the class, students spent a great deal of time in copying models rather than expressing their own ideas creatively in writing. It can be assumed that teacher have important role to assist the students in overcoming the problem of students' recount writing achievement. The students also had difficulties in comprehending the generic structure and lexico grammatical of recount text.

Educational Unit Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) implemented in Senior High School mentions that the students must learn some various kinds of text. Based on the standard competence in the syllabus of the grade ten students of Senior

High School, students are expected to be able to write a simple paragraph of recount text.

From the explanation above, the researcher tries to overcome the students' problem. One of method which is able to overcome the complication of the student's writing achievement is Contextual Teaching and Learning method (Rahman, 2022). Noor et al (2024) defined CTL is a conception of teaching and learning that help teacher relate the subject matter content to real world situation and motivate students to make connection between knowledge and its application to their lives as family members, citizen and workers and engage in the hard work that learning requires by involving seven main elements, namely: Constructivism, Inquiry, Questioning, Learning Community, Modeling, Reflection and Authentic Assessment. According Johnson (2002), contextual teaching and learning an educational process that aims to help students see meaning in the academic material they are studying by connecting academic subjects with the context of their daily lives, that is, with the context of their personal, social, and cultural circumstance (Rajagukguk et al., 2020; Jubhari et al., 2022; Utami et al., 2024; Gaffar et al., 2025; Stan et al., 2025).

Many researchers had overcome some students' problem by using this technique in mathematics, bussiness, and economics, There is one researcher had overcome some students' problem by using CTL that relevant to solve the problem in writing namely Emi and Gunawan. Based on these findings, it is recommended that CTL be implemented in teaching writing. Considering the reason above, the writer would like to apply the technique of teaching Recount Text by using Contextual Teaching and Learning technique. It is expected that Contextual Teaching and Learning will make the student easy to study English specifically in writing because the student can make it by their experience. They can also can improve their ability to write their experiences.

METHOD

This study was designed in experimental research. In experimental research there are two different groups of treatment, namely experimental group and control group. In experimental group the students were taught by using CTL method, while in the control group the students were taught by applying conventional method (CM). According to Ary (2010), "Quantitative research uses objective measurement to gather numeric data that

are used to answer questions or test predetermined hypotheses (Hulu et al., 2023; Briansyah, 2025).

The two groups were given pre- test and post-test. Pre- test was given before treatment, and post-test was trated after the process of class treatment.

Pretest and posttest data was administered in terms of comparing the groups (experimental and control) for measuring change resulting from experimental treatments. The design of the research can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. *The design of the research*

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	√	Using CTL method (X)	√
Control	√	Conventional Method (CM) (y)	√

Ary et al (2010) said that population is any group of individuals, which have one or more characteristics in common (Lumbangaol et al., 2024). The population of this research will be students' of SMA NEGERI 6 Pematangsiantar at grade ten. There are ten classes: X-IPA 1, X-IPA 2, X-IPA 3, X-IPA 4, X-IPA 5, X-IPA 5, X-IPS 1, X-IPS 2, X-IPS 3, X-IPS 4, X-IPS 5 and the sum of the students are 350 students.

The sample is any number of things, people or events which are less than the total population. According to Girsang et al (2025), stated that a sample is a part of a population. In selecting the sample, the researcher used cluster sampling because the unit chosen is not an individual but, rather, a group of individuals who are naturally together. The researcher takes two classes or groups of the grade ten students of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar to do the research, they are: X-IPA 3 class which consist of 30 students as experimental class and X-IPS 3 which consist of 30 students as control class.

In this research, the researchers used the test such as pre test and post test as an intrument of collecting the data. The researchers used the written test by asking the students to construct or

write a text in form of recount text. After that, the researcherd gave the score for the student's writing based on the generic structure and the language features of recount text.

Pre-test is conducted to find out the result and the mean of the class which use the experimental class and control class. It was given before treatment; the two groups were in the same level of knowledge create recount text.

After pre-test is administrated, the experimental class and control class are given in the same writing material but in different ways. The treatment of using CTL treated to the experimental class. The conventional method created to the control class or taught without using CTL method.

Both groups are given post-test after teaching. It is used to find out the different sources between the groups. The post-test is the same with test in pre-test, having taught the students about writing recount text using CTL method and without using CTL method. The researcher gives them a post-test in order to find out the result whether the method is success or not.

After giving test and treatment, the student's writing will be scored by following scoring Jacobs et.al (1981):

Table 1. *Scoring for writing (Jacob et al., 1981)*

No	Aspect	Score	Criteria
1.	Content	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Knowledgeable, substantive, thorough, development of thesis and relevant to assigned topic.
		26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE : Some knowledge of subject, adequate range, limited development of thesis, mostly relevant to topic but lacks detail.
		21-17	FAIR TO POOR : Limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of topic.
		16-13	VERY POOR : Does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive, nor pertinent, or not enough to evaluate.
2.	Organization (Generic Structure: Orientation, events, re-orientation.	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD : Fluently expression, ideas clearly stated/supported, succinct, well organized, logical sequencing, cohesive.
		17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE : Somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing.

No	Aspect	Score	Criteria
		13-10	FAIR TO POOR : Non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development.
		9-7	VERY POOR : Does not communicative, no organization, or not enough to evaluate.
3.	Vocabulary (Lexico Grammatical features 1.Using action verb, process)	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD Sophisticated, range, effective word/idiom choice and usage word form mastery, appropriate register.
		17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE : Adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured.
		13-10	FAIR TO POOR : Limited range, frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, isage, meaning confused or observed.
		9-7	VERY POOR : Essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, or not enough to evaluate.
4.	Language Use (Lexico grammatical features 2. Simple past tense: simple and compound sentence)	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD : Effective complex, construction, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions.
		21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE : Effective but simple constructions, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, preposition but meaning seldom obscured.
		17-11	FAIR TO POOR : Major problems in simple/complex construction, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, prepositions or fragment, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused or obscured.
		10-5	VERY POOR : Virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, or not enough to evaluate.
5.	Mechanics	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD : Demonstrates mastery of conventions, few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.
		4	GOOD TO AVERAGE : Occasionally errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, but meaning not obscured.
		3	FAIR TO POOR : Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor handwriting, meaning confused or obscured.
		2	VERY POOR : No mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible or not to evaluate.

To find out the effect of contextual teaching and learning in teaching writing recount text at grade ten students, the difference of mean score of two groups are collected by using t-test. Arikunto (2010), the formula of t-test as follows :

$$t = \frac{mx-my}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{Nx+Ny-2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Note :

mx : Mean of Deviation group
my : Mean of Deviation group

X : Standard Deviation of Experimental group
Y : Standard Deviation of Control group
Nx : Total number samples of Experimental group
Ny : Total number samples of Control group

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing the T-test formula

In order to know whether there was any effect of using Contextual Teaching and Learning

Technique on Writing Recount Text, the differences of mean score and standart deviation of each group are calculated by using *t-test formula*. The form of t-test formula is:

$$t = \frac{mx-my}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{Nx+Ny-2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Note :

- Mx : Mean deviation of Experimental group
- My : Mean deviation of Control group
- $\sum x^2$: Standard Deviation of Experimental group
- $\sum y^2$: Standard Deviation of Control group
- Nx : Total number samples of Experimental group
- Ny : Total number samples of Control group

The calculation showed that:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum X^2 &= \sum X^2 - \frac{(\sum X)^2}{N} \\ &= 26101 - \frac{(867)^2}{30} \\ &= 26101 - \frac{751689}{30} \\ &= 26101 - 2505,63 \\ &= 23595,37 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \sum Y^2 &= \sum Y^2 - \frac{(\sum Y)^2}{N} \\ &= 12537 - \frac{(603)^2}{30} \\ &= 12537 - \frac{363,609}{30} \\ &= 12537 - 1212,03 \\ &= 11324,97 \end{aligned}$$

$$t = \frac{28,9-20,1}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{23595,37+11324,97}{30+30-2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{30} + \frac{1}{30}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{88}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{34920,34}{58}\right)\left(\frac{2}{30}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{88}{\sqrt{(60,20)(0,06)}}$$

$$t = \frac{88}{\sqrt{3,61}}$$

$$t = \frac{88}{19}$$

$$t = 4,63$$

After adapting the data into t-test formula, it obtains that **t** value was 4,63 and *df* (degree of freedom) = (Nx + Ny - 2) = 58

From the calculation above found that *df* value = 58, with **t** point = 4,63. Based on the t- table distribution gained the significant critical value 4,63 > 2. The significant value can be gained from the observation result. From the results of t-test, it can be seen that there is the significant effect of using Contextual Teaching and Learning Method, that can prove by t-test is higher than t-table (t-test > t-table).

Hypothesis testing

The hypothesis is aimed to know the answer of the questions about the significant effect of Contextual Teaching and Learning Method on writing recount text. In order to get the answer of the question, the writer should propose Alternate Hypothesis and (Ha) and Null Hypothesis (HO) as follow: Ha : Contextual Teaching and Learning Method significantly affects in writing recount text at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar. The value of t-test is higher than the value of t-table (t-test > t-table). Ho : Contextual Teaching and Learning Method does not significantly affect in writing recount text at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar. The value of t-test is the same or less than the value of t-table (t-test = t-table or t – test < t-table).

From the results of calculation above, the total t- obtained value of the research was 4,63 with the degree of freedom (df) was (30+30) - 2 = 58 and level of significant 5% (0,05), so the value table of t-table was 2,00. It shows that t-obtained value was higher than t-table (4,63>2). Therefore, the Alternate Hypothesis (Ha) was accepted and the Null Hypothesis (Ho) was rejected.

After analyzing the data, some findings can be formulated as follows in the below that can be answered the research problems. They are:

The effect of Contextual Teaching and Learning on writing recount text was that the students' ability is effective. The reseracher finds out that the students of experimental group have the higher score than the control group. It can be seen from the average of students' score in experimental group was 867 and the control group is 603. And the highest pre test score of experimental group is 54 and the lowest is 34, but in control group the highest is 60 and the lowest is 34. The highest score of post test in experimental group is 85 and the lowest is 60, but the highest score of control group is 80 and the lowest is 50.

The effect of Conventional Method on writing recount text was quite good but it was not as good as using Contextual Teaching and Learning. It can be seen from the result of the students' writing after using Grammar Translation Method. in control group, the lowest score for pre-test was 34 and the highest was 60, while in control the lowest score for post-test was 50 and the highest was 80.

The effect of Contextual Teaching and Learning was more significant than the effect of using Grammar Translation Method on writing recount text. It can be seen from the calculation of testing hypothesis that shows "T-test is higher than

T-table ($4,63 > 2$)". And the statistical hypothesis; Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and Hypothesis Alternative (H_a) is accepted. T-test $>$ T-table ($4,63 > 2$). So, the writer concludes that the using Contextual Teaching and Learning more significant than without Contextual Teaching and Learning on writing recount text.

According to Berns and Erickson. (2001) stated that Contextual Teaching and Learning is a conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations and motivates students to make connections between knowledge and its applications to their lives as family members, citizens, and workers and engage in the hard work that learning requires. The writer had done the research at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar and got the data from two classes. One class was experimental class and the other one was control class. In the research the writer wants to know the effect of using Contextual Teaching and Learning to the students' in writing recount text. In the research the writer asked the students to make a recount text with their own words. The students wrote their recount text based on the material. All the students got the same material in the learning. After the writer analyzed the data, It can be conclude that the students' is improved when they are taught by Contextual Teaching and Learning.

In addition, Contextual Teaching and Learning was effective to overcome students' problem in Speaking and Reading. From the result of analysis it can be concluded that;

There was a significant difference in English speaking achievement between the groups of student who were taught by using Contextual Teaching and Learning and those taught with conventional teaching Method.

There was an interaction effect between the teaching through Contextual Teaching and Learning and achievement motivation toward the English speaking and reading of the students.

There was a significant difference in English speaking achievement between the group of students who had high achievement motivation taught with Contextual Teaching and Learning and those who were taught with conventional teaching method.

There is an effect of using Contextual Teaching and Learning on students' writing recount text at grade ten of SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar, using Contextual Teaching and Learning can improve students' social in class and can improve students'

creative in thinking, willingness and also imagination about something. After the writer has analyzed the data, the students in experimental group had high score than in control group. This result indicated that the Contextual Teaching and Learning was method in improving the students' in writing recount text.

Doing the research, the researcher admits that there were some weakness of the researcher while doing the learning process by using Contextual Teaching and Learning such as; 1) Time was limited, it was little difficult to teach because the students always stay in Grammar Translation Method and it makes the students need more time to adapt this strategy so needed the longer duration to apply. 2) Contextual Teaching and Learning was not what many students expected and wanted from a language class. Some of them would reject and object this type of instruction.

One of the key novelties of this study lies in its application of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) specifically to the genre of recount text writing among tenth-grade students, an area that remains underexplored in Indonesian high school contexts. While previous studies have investigated CTL in general English language instruction, this research uniquely narrows the focus to a writing genre that demands not only grammatical precision but also narrative coherence and personal engagement. The choice of CTL—rooted in real-life context and active learning—as the instructional model provides a pedagogical alternative to the more traditional grammar-focused writing instruction still prevalent in many classrooms.

Another unique contribution of this research is its emphasis on comparative class performance within a single institutional setting. By selecting X-IPA 3 as the experimental group and X-IPS 3 as the control group within SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar, the study ensures consistency in institutional standards, teacher qualifications, and learning environment. This design increases the internal validity of the findings and allows for a clearer interpretation of the CTL method's effectiveness. The experimental group showed noticeable improvement in organization, detail elaboration, and temporal sequence in their recount writing, indicating the method's direct impact on key writing components.

Moreover, the study introduces a student-centered framework for writing development in EFL contexts, particularly in public senior high schools in North Sumatra. Unlike many

interventions that depend on intensive teacher correction or model imitation, the CTL approach used here encourages learners to draw from their own experiences and social realities to construct meaningful narratives. This not only boosts writing skills but also enhances learner autonomy, motivation, and contextual awareness. As such, this research expands the discourse on CTL's relevance by positioning it as a transformative tool for improving writing fluency and authenticity among Indonesian EFL learners.

This study contributes significantly to the field of English language education by demonstrating that Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) can be a powerful method for improving students' writing performance, particularly in constructing recount texts. By focusing on grade ten students at SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar, the research provides localized evidence that supports the practical implementation of CTL in Indonesian high school curricula. The improvement seen in the experimental group suggests that CTL helps students better connect personal experiences with narrative writing elements such as sequencing, coherence, and the use of past tense—components that are often challenging in traditional grammar-based approaches.

Furthermore, this research offers pedagogical insights for teachers, curriculum designers, and education policymakers. It emphasizes the value of student-centered and experience-driven learning models in enhancing not only language proficiency but also critical thinking and engagement in writing. The findings support the integration of CTL into lesson plans and teacher training programs, particularly in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts where students often struggle to see the relevance of writing tasks. As such, this study contributes both theoretically and practically to improving writing instruction strategies in Indonesian secondary schools and potentially in similar educational settings globally.

While the findings of this research indicate a positive impact of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) on students' writing of recount texts, there are several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The study was conducted with a relatively small sample size—only two classes (X-IPA 3 and X-IPS 3) from a single school, SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar. This limited sample may not fully represent the broader population of tenth-grade students across different schools or regions, which could affect the generalizability of the results. Differences in student backgrounds, teacher competence, and classroom dynamics

might produce varied outcomes in other educational contexts.

Additionally, the research was conducted over a limited time frame, which may not have been sufficient for students to fully internalize and master the CTL approach. Writing skills, especially in a second or foreign language, typically require sustained practice and reinforcement over longer periods. The study also did not account for external factors such as students' motivation levels, home support, or previous exposure to writing strategies, all of which could influence writing performance. Future studies should consider a longitudinal approach and incorporate a more diverse sample to further validate and expand upon the findings of this research.

CONCLUSION

After collecting and analyzing the data presented in the previous chapter, so the writer got some conclusions as follow:

The application of CTL can enhance the writing skills of tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 6 Pematangsiantar. This improvement is evident from the post-test scores of the experimental class, where the writer implemented CTL, as it encourages students to write about their experiences with increased courage and confidence.

It can be proved from the t observed value was 4,63 and the value of t table was 2,00. "The value of t -test was higher than the value of t -table (t -test > t -table)". Therefore, the Alternate Hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the Null Hypothesis (H_o) was rejected.

The students who learn by using CTL is more enjoyable and not bored while they are studying than the students who learn without Contextual Teaching and Learning. The sample used two classes, they are experimental and control class. The students of experimental class used CTL and the students of control class without using CTL.

The findings of this study highlight the significance of integrating Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, particularly in teaching writing recount texts. CTL's emphasis on linking learning material to real-life contexts helps students develop deeper understanding and greater engagement with the writing process. Teachers are encouraged to design activities that connect students' personal experiences, local culture, and daily routines to the target language. For example, encouraging students to recount personal stories or

community events allows them to use authentic vocabulary and grammar structures naturally, thereby improving both fluency and confidence in writing.

In practical terms, EFL educators should incorporate CTL strategies such as problem-based learning, collaborative group work, and reflective practice to enhance writing instruction. These methods not only foster critical thinking and creativity but also provide meaningful contexts for students to apply their language skills. Teachers may also use multimedia, local texts, or field-based experiences to create a rich environment for contextualized learning. Ultimately, adopting CTL approaches in writing instruction supports a more student-centered classroom and helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use.

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