

IMPROVING STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING SKILLS IN HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXT THROUGH PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to improve the students' critical thinking and writing skills in writing hortatory exposition text by implementing problem-based learning towards senior high school students of SMA N Kesatrian 2 Semarang for grade XI IPS 2 in the academic year of 2022/2023. Classroom Action Research (CAR) was used as a research design in this study. The data was collected using observation, questionnaire, test, and documentation. This study was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Based on the result of the study, there is an improvement in students' writing skills. The average score of the students' writing skills before the implementation of problem-based learning was 77.5. At the end of the cycle I, it shows an improvement of the average score of students' writing skills to 80.9. The students' writing score also shows a significant increase to the average of 86.1 at the end of cycle II. The improvement was also found in students' critical thinking ability. During the pre-cycle, the students' critical thinking score was at an average of 70. At cycle I, it shows an increase up to an average of 71.3 and gets a higher increase at the end of cycle II up to an average of 73.1. In conclusion, there is an improvement in students' critical thinking and writing skills by applying problem-based learning in writing hortatory exposition text.

Keywords : Critical thinking, Writing skill, Problem-based learning, Hortatory exposition

Introduction

Learning a foreign language is challenging for learners since they have to acquire four language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to communicate effectively in English, students not only learn how to speak but also learn how to write. Writing skills are important to enhance students' skills in learning English. It can help students to communicate, organize their thoughts, express themselves, and develop their idea in English. In addition, having good skill in writing is essential for students because it is not only help students to develop their language skill and academic performance but also develop their skill to communicate in written form. It is also stated by Urquhart and McIver (2005) that writing is beneficial for students to develop their English in expressing their thought and

making their ideas clear and comprehensible. Despite of its importance, the skill of writing is quite hard to acquire. Moreover, in writing, especially when a foreign language is involved, the writer needs to deal with many writing components, such as grammatical structure, vocabulary, and punctuation which makes the level of difficulty is getting harder. (Aminatun, et al., 2019). Besides, generating ideas, explaining systematically and writing coherently are also considered as challenges for students.

Masduqi (2011) stated that Indonesian students tend to be ineffective in sharing ideas in writing because of their limited use of critical thinking skills and meaningful activities. Fahim et al. (2014) also reported in their study that critical thinking is regarded as the most influential factor in argumentative writing. In addition, having essential thinking skills

in higher education is crucial and plays a significant role in understanding the learning process. Therefore, it is important for the students to have the ability in critical thinking, especially in this era of technology where all information can be accessed rapidly.

Critical thinking ability is a factor that can help students to develop their ideas and organize their thought. It is a basic skill that is quite difficult to acquire by the students. According to Simbolon, et.al (2017), critical thinking is the process of searching, analyzing, synthesizing and conceptualizing information to develop the process of thinking, increasing creativity, and taking risk. By thinking critically, someone can organize, adjust, and change the way of thinking in order to make a decision and do more appropriate things. In addition, Khasanah and Ayu (2017), stated that critical thinking ability the ability to observe problems, interpret and analyze the received information, and check the truth based on the knowledge to draw a conclusion with logical reasons where all of these processes are used as a base to create an action in order to solve a problem.

Basically, students' ability in critical thinking can be observed by using some indicators. According to Ennis (2011), there are five indicators that show the aspects of critical thinking that students have :

1. Provide a simple explanation (Elementary clarification); focusing questions, analyzing arguments, asking and answering questions that require explanation or challenge
2. Building basic skills (basic support); giving reasons for a decision, conducting consideration observations
3. Drawing conclusions (inference); draw up decisions and consider the results, consider deduction and induction
4. Provide further explanation (advanced clarification); identify terms and

consider definitions, identify assumptions

5. Supposition and integration; consider and reason logically, premises, reasons, assumptions, positions, and other proposals.

Meanwhile, Facione and Facione in Asri (2014) propose four level rubric to measure critical thinking as follows :

1. Score 4
Consistently does all or almost the following:
 - a. Accurately interprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc
 - b. Identifies the relevant arguments (reasons and claim) pro and con
 - c. Thoughtfully analyzes and evaluates major alternative points of view
 - d. Draws warranted, judicious, non-fallacious conclusions
 - e. Justifies key results and procedures, explains assumptions and reasons
 - f. Fair-mindedly follows where evidence and reasons lead
2. Score 3
Does most or many of the following :
 - a. Accurately interprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc
 - b. Identifies the relevant arguments (reasons and claim) pro and con
 - c. Offers analyzes and evaluates major alternative points of view
 - d. Draws warranted, judicious, non-fallacious conclusions
 - e. Justifies some results or procedures, explains reasons
 - f. Fair-mindedly follows where evidence and reasons lead
3. Score 2
Does most or many of the following :
 - a. Misinterprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc

- b. Fails to identify strong, relevant counter-arguments
 - c. Ignore or superficially evaluates obvious alternatives points of view
 - d. Draws unwarranted or fallacious conclusions
 - e. Justifies few results or procedures, seldom explains reasons
 - f. Regardless of the evidence reasons, maintain or defends views based on self-interest or preconceptions
4. Score 1
Consistently does all or almost the following:
- a. Offers based interpretations evidence, statements, graphics, questions, information, or the point of view of others
 - b. Fails to identify strong, relevant counter-arguments
 - c. Ignore or superficially evaluates obvious alternatives points of view
 - d. Argues using fallacious or irrelevant conclusions and unwarranted claims
 - e. Does not justify results or procedures, seldom explains reasons
 - f. Regardless of the evidence reasons, maintain or defends views based on self-interest or preconceptions
 - g. Exhibits close-mindedness or hostility to reason

Based on those rubrics, Asri (2014), in her study, she made some modifications of the rubrics. The modification has a purpose to make it more appropriate with the aims of her research which in this case, she wanted to measure students' critical thinking ability in writing. The rubrics are divided into five main indicators which consists of :

1. Giving related arguments,
2. Providing evidence, statements, or facts,
3. Presenting alternative point of view,
4. Giving assumptions and reasons,
5. Drawing conclusions.

The details of the modified rubrics can be seen on the following table :

Score	Description
4	Giving strong and clear argument
3	Giving good and clear enough arguments
2	Giving unclear/vague arguments
1	No argument identified
4	Accurately and clearly explains evidence, statements, fact, etc
3	Good and clearly enough explain evidence, statements, fact, etc
2	Unclear / vaguely explains evidence, statements, facts, etc
1	No evidence, statements, fact, etc
4	Presenting clear and thoughtful alternative point of view
3	Presenting good and clear enough alternative point of view
2	Presenting unclear vague alternative point of view
1	No alternative point of view presented
4	Clearly and thoroughly explain assumptions and reasons
3	Well explained assumptions and reasons
2	Unclearly vaguely explain assumptions and reasons
1	No assumption and reason explained
4	Draw clear and thoughtful conclusion

3	Draw clear enough conclusion
2	Draw vague/unclear conclusion
1	Draw no conclusion

Table 1 Critical thinking rubrics by Asri (2014)

Developing students' ability in critical thinking can be done by doing some learning activities through many kinds of learning methods. In this study, the author focuses on improving students' ability in critical thinking and writing skills in hortatory exposition text. This type of text has a purpose to explain to the reader which something should or should not be done. The generic structure and the characteristics of the text are suitable to develop and stimulate on how the students think critically and their point of view towards some issues in their environment. This type of text generally requires the students to deliver some arguments, strengthen their opinion about some particular topics, enhance their ideas, and encourage them to develop their arguments. (Pratama, 2018).

Based on those characteristics, teaching hortatory exposition text is quite challenging for a teacher because of its complexity. Teachers should be able to choose appropriate learning methods. As stated by Utami, et.al (2022), to make students able to produce a good piece of writing teacher needs to lead an exciting class among students, which can keep them interested and active in the class learning activities. A systematic yet fun atmosphere in a typical classroom makes students learn in fun ways.

Problem-based learning is a teaching method that can be considered to teach writing. Pratama (2018), in his study reported that problem-based learning is an appropriate method to teach hortatory exposition text. It is a learning process conducted by a group which focused in problem solving scientifically. Problem-based learning is well known as a

student-centred educational method aiming to develop problem-solving skills through self-directed learning as a lifelong habit and teamwork skills. It is not only focuses on problem-solving but also is responsible for the development of other skills and attributes (Utami, et al, 2018). For instance, Sianturi, et, al (2018) reported that the use of problem based learning not only requires the students to understand the concept, but also acquire a learning experience that relates to the skills in real life, applying solving problems and cultivate critical thinking. Boud and Feletti in Rusman (2010) also stated that the activity in problem-based learning encourages students to stimulate thinking activity based on actual problem.

According to Kemdikbud (2014), the steps to organize problem based learning are divided into five phases, as follows :

No	Stages	Teachers' Activity
1	Orienting students to the learning problems	Explaining the purposes of learning, explaining the equipment, and motivate students into problem-solving activity
2	Organizing students to learn	Help students to interpret and organize the task that is related to the problem.
3	Leading the students to solve the problem	Motivate the students to find appropriate information and do an experiment in order to get an explanation and problem-solving
4	Developing and presenting the result of discussion	Help students to plan and prepare the result of the discussion in the form of report
5	Analyzing	Help students to do a

	and evaluating the process of problem solving	reflection and evaluate the materials that have been learned to the integration of learning process and problem solving
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Table 2 The scheme of problem based learning

Learning activity based on problem based learning requires the students to improve and develop their thinking ability. Therefore, problem based learning method is possibly to train students' ability in solving the problems connected to the real life since the activities on this method insist the students to get involved and participated actively in the learning process. Moreover, the students are expected to have an ability in problem solving by utilizing their critical thinking skills in a group or individually.

Based the observation at class XI IPS 2 of SMA Kesatrian 2 Semarang, many students have difficulties of writing in English. Besides of having difficulties in grammatical structure, another reason is that they are confused about how to express their ideas and organize their thought in English. Thus, this study was proposed to improve the students ability in critical thinking and writing skills with the following research questions :

- (1) How is the implementation problem-based learning in teaching writing hortatory exposition text to the grade XI IPS 2 of SMA Kesatrian 2 Semarang?
- (2) Is there any improvement on students critical thinking and writing skill regarding to the implementation of problem-based learning in learning hortatory exposition text?

In this study, there are two kinds of research significances. First, theoretically significance, this study can make a contribution in teaching writing especially for improving the students' achievement in writing skill. Practically significance, the research findings are

expected to make a meaningful contribution for teachers and students. For the teachers, the findings from the research are expected to provide an alternative way or method in teaching writing. For the students, they are expected to have an improvement in critical thinking and writing skills, especially in writing hortatory exposition text.

Methodology

In this study, the researcher used a classroom action research. Classroom action research (CAR) activities begin with real problems faced by teachers in the teaching and learning process, then alternative solutions are sought by reflecting and followed up with planned and structured concrete actions (Sutama, 2011). In addition, Arikunto (2017), stated that classroom action research is a research that explains cause-effect from treatment, explain what happen when treatment is given, and explain all processes since the beginning of treatment until to the impact of treatment. It is expected that a teacher can implement certain treatments in order to provide an improvement to the students. (Amri, 2018). In addition, Fajriani, et.al, (2019) stated that classroom action research required the research should be successful hence it provides more than one cycle if the cycle is not successful yet. In this study, classroom action research was chosen because the researcher intended to solve the problem found the classroom and make an improvement of students ability in critical thinking and writing skills. This study is a collaborative classroom action research in which the researcher assisted by an English teacher of SMA Kesatrian 2 Semarang.

This research design is carried out through a well-organized (cycles) process, which involves plan, action, observation, and reflection. The scheme of the research design can be seen on the following diagram :

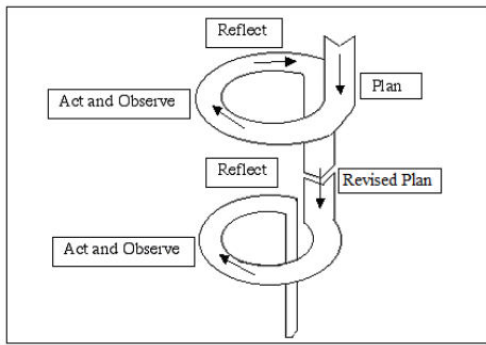


Figure 1 The stages of classroom action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988)

The subject of this study was 27 students of XI IPS 2 of SMA Kesatrian 2 Semarang which consists of 11 females and 16 males. The research was conducted less than three months. In collecting the data, the researcher used writing tests, observation sheets and questionnaires.

This research used qualitative and quantitative data collection. The quantitative data were the students' score from the tests conducted in each cycle, including pre-cycle, cycle 1, and cycle 2. The students' writing results in every meeting were collected to analyze the students' performance in writing and their critical thinking ability. The result of the writing test reflected their writing skills and critical thinking ability during the implementation of problem-based learning in hortatory exposition text. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were in the form of descriptions of teacher and students' conditions gained from observation and open-ended questionnaires. There was an observer who observed the classroom condition, students' activities, and teacher performance during the teaching and learning process. The observation sheets were in the form of a checklist and notes. Then, the collected data were analyzed using the descriptive qualitative method.

Finding and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to find out how is the implementation of problem-based learning to teach hortatory

exposition text and improve the students' ability in critical thinking and writing skills.

Pre-cycle learning activities had been conducted before the implementation of problem-based learning. At the end of the pre-cycle activities, test activities were carried out by giving individual quizzes to students to see students' competencies in writing and critical thinking. The results of the test then become a reference and a comparison to compare students' writing skills and critical thinking ability after cycles I and II activities were conducted, so that conclusions can be drawn from the research actions that have been carried out.

During the pre-cycle activity, 27 students participated in the test. The students were considered to pass the test if they can get a score the same as a passing grade (KKM) or above which in this case, the passing grade is 75. Based on the data, 9 of the 27 students got scores under the passing grade and 18 students were above the passing grade. The percentage of the data can be seen in the following diagram :

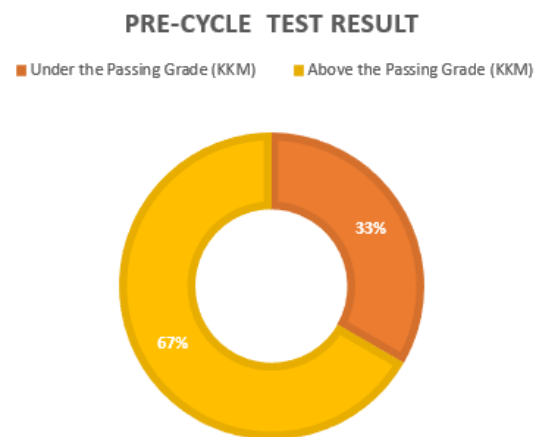


Figure 2. The Result of Pre-cycle Test

The diagram indicated the result of pre-cycle test which showed that 33% of the students could not pass the passing grade and only 67% of the students were able to pass the passing grade. Meanwhile, the average score of the class during the pre-cycle test was 77.5.

In this study, the researcher also observed students' critical thinking ability. There are five indicators of critical thinking that were observed. The indicators to measure the students' critical thinking were adapted from Asri (2014), which consists of giving related arguments, providing evidence, statements, or facts, presenting alternative points of view, giving assumptions and reasons, and drawing conclusions.

Then, the collected data were calculated. The students were given scores within a range between 1 – 100. After the data were collected, they were analyzed by putting them into some criteria. Based on the study conducted by Wangid (2021), the students' ability in critical thinking can be categorized into five criteria which can be seen on the following table :

Score	Criteria
$80 < \text{score} \leq 100$	Excellent
$60 < \text{score} \leq 80$	Good
$40 < \text{score} \leq 60$	Fair
$20 < \text{score} \leq 40$	Poor
$0 < \text{score} \leq 20$	Very Poor

Table 3 The criteria of students' critical thinking

Based on the collected data during pre-cycle activity, it was found that 9 out of 27 students were categorized as "fair" in critical thinking, 14 students were categorized as "good", and only 4 students were categorized as "excellent". The percentage of the students' data in critical thinking can be seen in the following diagram :

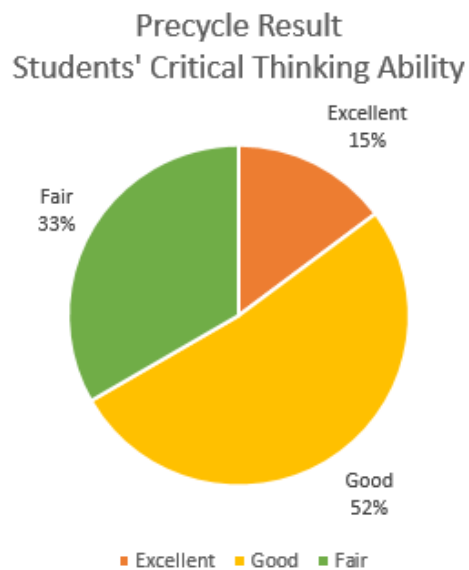


Figure 3 Diagram of students' critical thinking during pre-cycle activity

The diagram shows that 33% of the students have "fair" critical thinking ability, 52% of the students have "good" critical thinking ability, and only 15% of the students have "excellent" critical thinking ability.

According to the data of the pre-cycle activity, more than 30% of the students could not pass the passing grade. Most of the students were still confused about how to deliver and find an idea to write. Thus, many of the students were looking for an answer on the internet. They were copying what was written on the internet without understanding the meaning or the intention of the text. Those behaviors indicated that some student did not use their thinking ability to elaborate their ideas. So that they did know how to deliver or organize an argument with others. Therefore, in the next cycle, the researcher used different methods of learning in order to improve students' writing skills and critical thinking abilities.

Cycle 1

In this classroom action research, the researcher conducted each cycle by implementing a scheme which consists of

planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, a lesson plan was made and prepared for the first cycle. It was planned for 2 meetings in a week. The duration for each meeting was 90 minutes. The teaching method for this cycle was problem-based learning. This method was chosen because the researcher had the intention to improve students' critical thinking as well as their writing skills. Because the class that the researcher taught was using the 2013 curriculum, the researcher used basic competence based on the 2013 curriculum to arrange a lesson plan. Worksheets and tests were also prepared as the research instrument to find out students' progress and development in writing and critical thinking. An observation sheet was also prepared to observe the teaching and learning process and students' activities in the classroom.

The first meeting of the first cycle was started at class XI IPS 2. The students and the researcher had already known each other since the previous month. Thus, the students can cooperate well during the lesson. The lesson started by asking some students about a recent issue. Few students answered the questions slowly. Many of the students did not aware of what happened in their surroundings. Then, the researcher gave some pictures of certain phenomena. There were 3 pictures connected to each other. The first picture was about some people throwing garbage into the river. The second picture was about the flood in Semarang. Then, the last picture was about keeping the environment. In this stage, the researcher asked the students to give an argument based on the picture they saw. There were no questions or guidelines because the researcher wanted to know the students' creativity and how far they can elaborate their ideas to make an argument.

Some of the students could provide an argument and explain their ideas about the problems in the picture. They could also state their point of view, even though they did not explain it in detail. However, the other students did not elaborate the picture in detail. They only told what they saw without giving an argument or providing another point of view. From this activity, the researcher could draw a conclusion that some of the students were still having difficulties delivering an argument.

Then, the researcher introduced the hortatory exposition text to the students by giving an example of the hortatory exposition text. In this stage, the researcher also explained the generic structure of the text. For the next activity, the students were required to work in a pair and arrange the jumbled paragraph about a hortatory exposition text. This activity had the purpose to acquire one of the learning goals as well as provide an opportunity for the students to learn on how to arrange the text systematically based on the generic structure. Then, the teacher discussed the text with the students.

At the end of the lesson, the researcher gave some pictures that showed some of the social phenomena related to the students' issue on their daily life, such as bullying, cheating, getting fined by the police, coming late to school, waking up late in the morning, and etc. Then, the students were required to write their arguments based on the picture that they chose. Then, the researcher assessed the students' writing and critical thinking based on their writing. As stated by Asri (2014), Critical thinking deals with how well the students give an argument and support their argument with evidence, statement, facts, and reasons for their assumptions. Thus, the aspects of critical

thinking can be seen from the content and the organization of a text.

Based on the students' results in writing during the first cycle, it was found that there was a slight improvement on the students' writing skills as well as their critical thinking ability.

There were five aspects used a rubric to assess students writing skills, which consists of purpose (content), grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and organization. Compared to the previous cycle, most of the students could provide better arguments in this cycle. At least, the students could explain the problems in the picture. They also explained the situation in the picture. In addition, the students also provided an argument by stating their stance and reasons to support their opinions.

Based on the results of the students' scores in writing, it was found some students' scores were getting increased, and the rest of the students were getting decreased. However, the average results of the students' writing indicated that there was an improvement compared to the pre-cycle which can be seen in the following diagram :

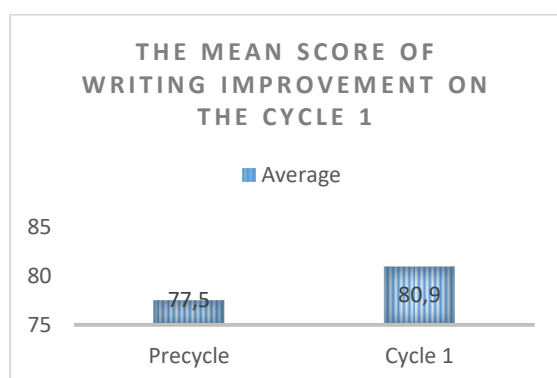


Figure 4 The comparison of students' writing skills on the precycle and cycle 1

Based on the data, it was stated that the students' writing scores were getting improved with an average of 80.9.

Compared to the precycle, it can be concluded that there was a slight improvement in the amount of 3.4%. Meanwhile, the number of students who could pass the passing grade also increased. In this cycle, there were only two students who could not pass the passing grade.

The students ability in critical thinking was also showed improvement in this cycle. The following diagram indicated the comparison of students' critical thinking ability from the previous cycle :

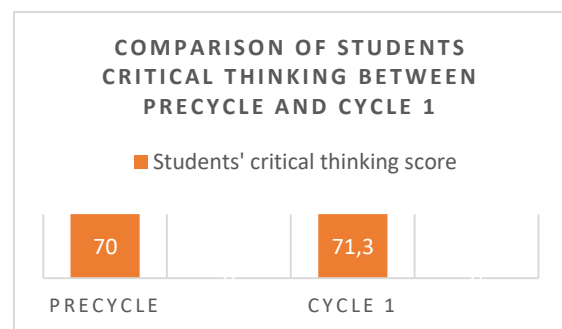


Figure 5 The comparison of students critical thinking ability between precycle and cycle 1

According to the analyzed data, the students' ability in critical thinking showed an improvement. However, the improvement was not significant enough. Based on the calculation, the average of students' critical thinking score in this cycle was 71.3. So, the improvement was only 1.3%.

The implementation of the problem-based learning in this cycle was quite helpful. The use of problem-based learning taught the students to be aware of the problems in their surroundings. Nevertheless, there are some reflections from the activities in this cycle. First, in this activity, the students were required to work individually. It was good since it made easier for the teacher to assess the students' competence individually, but it would be better if the researcher gave extra time for the students to discuss with their

friends in order to find the other point of view. Second, related to the students' writing ability, there were some students who got difficulties arranging a sentence. Most of the students' writing also indicated a lot of grammatical errors. There were also some students who used google translate to generate the sentence in English. Regarding critical thinking, the use of many different pictures for each student could give many insights for the students about the issues that occur in their surroundings. It also helped the students to generate ideas. In this case, the researcher also gave guidance to the students by giving some questions as a warm-up for the students to deliver an argument.

Cycle 2

The results of the students' writing skills in cycle 1 showed an improvement. However, the improvement was not quite significant. Therefore, the researcher conducted the second cycle to do more improvement.

The purpose of this cycle was still the same as the previous cycle in which to improve students' ability in writing hortatory exposition text and critical thinking. Based on the previous evaluation, there were some problems related to the writing skill, especially the students' grammatical. The vocabulary that the students used was also limited. Related to critical thinking, there were some problems, including the difficulties to provide thesis on the text, the arguments were delivered without providing the strong reasons, and lack of evidence. The classroom activity was quite good, but the students need to do something different from the previous cycle.

The first meeting on cycle 2 was started by giving a video about hortatory exposition text. The use of video had the function to give a warm-up for the students. After watching the video together, the students were asked to find out the important points that they get from the video and the difficult vocabulary.

After that, the teacher and students discussed the video together. Since the previous meeting the students were facing difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, in this cycle the researcher gave an opportunity for the students to learn about that and also learn about the figurative language on the hortatory exposition text.

In this lesson, the researcher used educational games about grammar to make the lesson more attractive. Based on the observation during the lesson in this cycle, the students participated actively and showed interest in the lesson. The problems and the questions that they found in the game gave them the challenge to solve and finish the game perfectly. After that, the researcher gave a reading passage about hortatory exposition text and the students were required to answer the questions and find out the figurative language in the text.

For the next meeting, the researcher gave a warm-up activity by showing some pictures about the social phenomena from the previous meetings to recall the students' memory about the topics that were usually found in the context of hortatory exposition.

In this meeting, the students were required to write a hortatory exposition text in a group.

The researcher divided the class into 5 groups. Each group consisted of members from different level, including advance, intermediate, and elementary. The purpose of making this group was that the students on the elementary level could learn from the higher level. As stated by Felder and Brent (2001), if a teacher wants to teach a course effectively, it is recommended to make heterogeneity in the primary criterion. In the heterogeneity group, the students are likely to engage in informal tutoring discussions that lead to the benefits of cooperative learning. Before writing the hortatory exposition text, the students were asked to make a mind map to help them generate ideas and make the

writing more systematic. After that, the students started to write a hortatory exposition text in a group.

In this cycle, the result of the students' writing was better than the previous cycle. The comparison can be seen on the following chart:

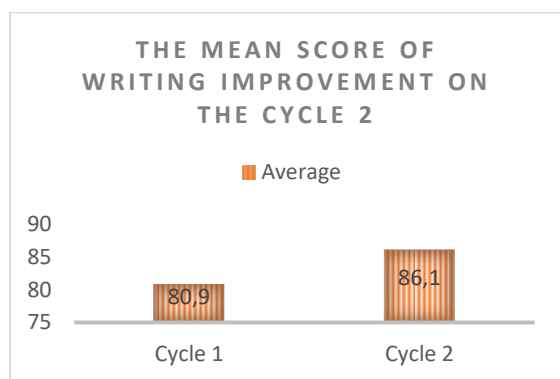


Figure 6 The comparison of students' writing result between cycle 1 and cycle 2

The figure showed that there was an improvement from the average of 80.9 to 86.1. The results of students' writing skill is getting increase at the point of 5.2%. In this cycle, all of the students could pass the passing grade. It means that all of the students got scores more than 75.

The result of the students' writing was quite good and the improvement was quite significant. In this cycle, the students could write a better text. It was seen from some aspects, such as content, grammar, and organization. The students were able to create a hortatory exposition text based on the generic structure. The content that the students delivered was also essential. The message or the recommendation that they provide in the text could be understood by the readers. However, there were some groups that still had difficulties to make a text coherently. The bridging from one paragraph to another was not written smoothly. Overall, the average score of the students' writing in this cycle was 86.1. The result indicated that in this

cycle, the students' ability in writing got an improvement.

The results of students' critical thinking also showed an improvement even though the improvement was not as significant as the writing skills. The comparison of the students' critical thinking can be seen in the following diagram :

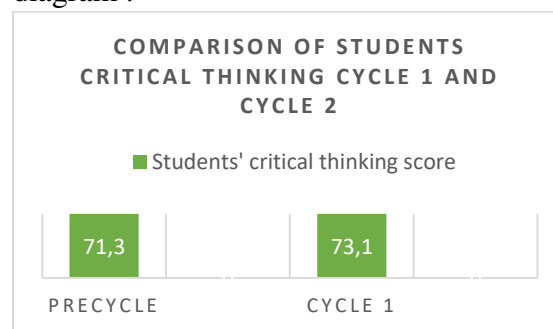


Figure 7 The comparison of the students' critical thinking of cycle 1 and cycle 2

The diagram indicates that in this cycle, the students' ability in critical thinking got an improvement at the point of 73.1. Compared to the previous cycle, the students' critical thinking has increased by 1.8% from the previous cycle.

In this cycle, the students were asked to work in a group. However, one of the problems that usually found during group work was some students did not want to contribute and be dependent on their friends. In order to avoid this problem, the researcher convinced the students that their individual contribution also matters. There was also a peer assessment activity at the end of the lesson to assess each other. To make sure that each student give a contribution to the group, the researcher guided them to do some steps. First, when the groups were asked to decide the topics, each member of the group should share their ideas by writing them on a paper. After that, the researcher gave few minutes for them to discuss and considered which topic to choose. This activity was repeated

for writing a mind map and hortatory exposition text.

The use of mind maps helped the students to be more organized in writing. Then, the researcher assisted the students by asking some stimulating questions based on the topics that they chose. Mostly, the questions were started with "Why". This kinds of question made the students think deeper and look for the reasons or evidence to support their arguments. Even though there were some grammatical mistakes and the vocabulary that they used was limited, the results of their writing were better than before, especially for the content of the text The students were able to explain more in detail and provide supporting information by giving opinions, reasons, or assumptions. Some students also provided an alternative point of view. They could also write longer and draw a conclusion clearly.

Based on the result on the cycle 2, the implementation of problem-based learning in this study brings benefits to improve the students' writing skills and critical thinking. In this cycle, the researcher modified the learning activities from the previous cycle. In the previous cycle, the students were required to work individually while in this cycle, the students were asked to work in a group.

The group work were beneficial for both teacher and students. For the teacher, it was easier to do an assessment and guide the students when the students were working in a group. When the students were working individually, it took a lot of time for the teacher to guide and supervise the students. The teachers' role to assist the students during the writing activities are very important. This statement is also supported by the research conducted by Amri (2018), in his study, it was found that teacher's role was another factor that

influenced the students' writing skill improvement. If the teacher had a good approach to the students, the students are not afraid to ask the teacher while getting problems with their writing. It made the atmosphere more comfortable for the students In addition, working in a group makes it possible for students to have a discussion with those who are at a higher level. It also brings positivity to students since they can share their ideas with each other and see a problem from many points of view.

Conclusion

The implementation of problem based learning in teaching hortatory exposition text was successful to improve students' ability in critical thinking and writing skills to the students of XI IPS 2 SMA Kesatrian 2 Semarang. The use of problem based-learning brings benefits for students to get a deeper understanding and develop their way of thinking to write an argument. Moreover, it also made possible for the teacher to give feedback and assist the students' writing so that they were able to develop their content of writing. The improvement can be seen from the result of the students' writing skills which showed a significant increase at the point of 5.2% from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Meanwhile, the result of students' critical thinking also showed an improvement at the pont of 1.8% from the cycle 1 to cycle 2.

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