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**THE USE OF CRITICAL REVIEW TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SKILL  
IN WRITING ESSAY TEXT**

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**Abstract:**

Today's students are familiar with technology, this makes their desire to write less. They are not taught to get used to writing something, they are used to typing something improperly without the rules of language use and correct spelling. Whereas, writing is a standard passive skill that students must at least master considering the demands that they must always write, whether it is daily assignments, writing proposals, journals and even theses. To improve students' English writing skills, researchers used critical review as one of the learning methods in the classroom. Critical review requires students to understand the details of the text, including the arguments, evidence, and conclusions presented. By reviewing something critically, students find it easier to express their thoughts in writing. This research is a classroom action research that has 2 cycles, the object of this research is English education students in semester 4 at STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung. The results show that there is an increase in the average score of students' writing skill, and there is also an increase in student learning activities in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Action research, Critical review, Writing Essay

## INTRODUCTION

In this gen Z era, English is no longer a taboo. Everyone can learn it anywhere and anytime. The facilities to learn English are adequate both at school, and outside of school. However, we also cannot deny that English is still a scourge for most people, not only students at school, but also students at campus, workers, and even housewives who need to educate their children to be familiar with English. English has four main skills that must be mastered if we want to be perfect in using it in communication. Those are, writing, reading, listening and speaking. Writing and reading fall into the category of passive English, while listening and speaking fall into the category of active English. However, whether active or passive, students are required to be able to master all four. Writing skills are still considered as something difficult to master, whereas in everyday activities, writing plays a crucial function in giving readers meaning (Andewi & Hastomo, 2023). Additionally, writing makes use of symbols and spaces, which are crucial for communication and aid students in expressing who they are and what they are thinking

(Ida, Wicaksono, & Wahyuningsih, 2021). Nonetheless, it is seen as a challenging ability, particularly for students learning to write in a language other than their native tongue, like English. One of the main issues is writing in English since they need to convey their thoughts and comprehend certain elements in writing (Azriwahyuni, Hastuti, & Febriyanti, 2021).

Today's students are familiar with technology, this makes their desire to write less. They are not taught to get used to writing something, they are used to typing something improperly without the rules of language use and correct spelling, of course this is a challenge for language teachers, especially foreign language teachers who have to work twice as hard. In the world of education, teaching English is still a big homework for English teachers, because the role of English in Indonesia is as a foreign language, not a second language. Learning a foreign language is a necessity that is not a must. What is meant here is that students are required to learn English from elementary school to university, but it is not applied in everyday communication. This is what makes

the position of English important or unimportant. Most people learn English because they have a reason, whether it is a requirement to get a job or a requirement to live abroad, they learn English not to apply it to their daily communication.

For college students, writing must be something they master, because students are required to do many assignments, like writing essays, writing proposals, and even writing final assignments. Many of them have difficulty in generating ideas, organizing their thoughts coherently, and applying correct grammar and vocabulary. This challenge is commonly seen among college students, where writing activities are often individual and lack collaborative elements that can trigger creativity and increase self-confidence. As a result, students tend to view writing as a boring and scary process, rather than as an opportunity to express themselves and develop.

Those problems above are faced by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year English education students in STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung. One potential solution to this problem lies in the implementation of critical review that

actively involve students in the writing process. A critical review is a method of reviewing in depth and critically of a written work, such as an article, book, or research report. The goal is to evaluate the written work comprehensively, not only by summarizing the contents, but also by providing an in-depth analysis of the advantages, disadvantages, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as the implications of the work. Rakhmasari (2021) stated that a critical review can be used to maximize students' and teachers' roles in English writing learning process. It is because before making the review, students need to read an English text first. It can help students wider their knowledge about English vocabularies, language use and grammar imitated from English text that they have to read regularly. In addition, Langan (2011) states that as writing is a skill, it makes sense that the more they practice to write, the better their writing will be. From this critical review, teachers also have chances to give feedback from the students' works. Critical reviews can be used to review books, book chapters, journal articles, research reports, or even works of art. In a

critical review, students are asked to summarize the main ideas, arguments, and findings presented in the reviewed text. In this study, students reviewed educational scientific journals. Besides, students also need to evaluate the quality, validity, and strengths and weaknesses of the text reviewed. This involves a thorough analysis of the author's approach, methodology, and conclusions presented. Critical reviews provide many benefits for students in writing, such as helping to improve understanding of the topic discussed, testing analytical and evaluation skills, and providing deeper insight into the work being reviewed.

## **METHOD**

This research used classroom action research to improve students' writing skill through critical review. The subject of the research was the English education students of 4th semester at STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung in 2023/2024. It consists of 20 students. Classroom action research is used to improve the learning process in the classroom. The ultimate goal of implementing classroom action research is to produce an improvement in the learning process. According to

Tomal (2010) action research is systematic process in solving educational problems and making improvements. Purrohman (2011) stated that Classroom Action Research is an alternative research application that easily conducted during teaching and learning processes. The research was done by two cycles, in cycle I there are four meetings, as well as cycle II. The procedures are planning, action, observation and reflection

(Taggart, 2013). In planning, the researchers arranged for doing something, like identified students' problem in writing, then arranged steps of teaching plan and prepared for it. In action, it was a process when the plan was being done. In this step, researchers did the teaching and learning process by using critical review. Observation was aimed to get the information of action. The researchers observed the development of students in learning activity in writing skill through observation sheet and field note. Reflection was the feedback process of all the activities. The method used to analyze the qualitative data was the descriptive qualitative method. The procedures in collecting the data are observation and test. In observation, the researchers

make observation sheet to collect the data by looking the activities performed by students during the learning process. The second is test. The researchers conduct the test to sharpen the students' writing skill. To find mean score of students' learning activities and to find the mean score of students' writing skill, the researchers used following formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

(Sudjana, 2005)

$\bar{x}$  = mean score of students learning activities

$\sum x$  = sum of mean score of all students

$n$  = total number of students

To find of students' minimum mastery criterion, the researchers used the formula (Sudjana, 2005) below to analyze the data:

$$X\% = \frac{\sum fixi}{\sum fi} \times 100\%$$

$X\%$  = the percentage of the students who have passed

$\sum fixi$  = the total students who have passed

$\sum fi$  = the total of the entire students

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the quantitative data show that the use of the critical review can improve English writing skill of students majoring in English education at STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung. This can be seen from the average results achieved by students at

the time of given a test. Based on the result, in cycle I, the students' learning activities showed mean score was 69 with the criteria was less active. The mean score of students' learning activities in cycle II was 77.75 with the criteria were quite active. The improvement of the students' learning activities from the 1st cycle to the 2nd cycle was 8.75 point. The improvement of students' writing skill showed mean score in pre-cycle was 68.00, there was only one student or 19% who achieved the target score. The improvement in cycle I was 70.00. There were 6 students who achieved score above minimum mastery criteria or 30% and the mean score of cycle II was 76.25, there were 11 students who achieved score above minimum mastery criteria or 60%.

Table 1: The Result of Students' Learning Activity:

Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
69.00	77.75	8.75

Table 2: The Result of Students' Score in Writing Skill

Pre-cycle	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
68.00	69.00	76.25

Based on the result and analysing the data, it showed that there

is an increasing of the students' learning activities. The result in cycle I was 30%, and in cycle II was 60%.the researchers strongly believe that the use of critical review is not only to improve students' writing skills, but it can also help students develop analytical thinking skills, test evaluation skills, motivate students to become more confident, and also provide deeper insights not only as a writer but also as a reader.

## CONCLUSION

The task of producing a critical review involves summarizing and assessing a work. A book, chapter, or journal article can all be the subject of a critical review. Because they force the students to read carefully, consider, and assess the ideas and supporting details in a work, critical evaluations aid in the development of writing abilities. Critical thinking abilities, knowledge synthesis, and methodical idea presentation are all developed through this process. Critical review requires students to understand the details of the text, including the arguments, evidence, and conclusions presented.

Providing activities like this is very useful for the college students to have a deeper approach to something they read. By reviewing and rewriting a topic, they are indirectly forced to give their opinions on a work. This raises their awareness of the process of absorbing information. Critical review also helps them to have a different way of learning, it seems forced but in the middle of the process the college students find something useful for their ownself. However, although critical review is a great way to improve students' writing skills, it still has its drawbacks. Teachers or lecturers must really pay attention to every detail of the process, ask questions, help students understand the text and sometimes even provide an overview of what is being reviewed. Teachers also need more time to read and to correct the students' writing. However, this method is very suitable to be applied in adult classes such as high school and college.

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