

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING REPORT TEXT THROUGH PEER RESPONSE TECHNIQUE

**(A Classroom Action Research on the Eleventh Grade Students of SMAN 2
Ketapang in the Academic Year 2011/2012)**

A JOURNAL

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IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING REPORT TEXT THROUGH PEER RESPONSE TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: *This study was a classroom action research (CAR) to improve students' writing ability on report text in senior high school students. In this study, Peer Response Technique was used as a strategy to help students in writing report text. The process of Peer Response Technique consists of revising activity which helped the students to write the generic structure of report text such as general classification and identification and editing activity that helped the students to write the language features of report text by checking the use of vocabulary and grammar. The techniques of data collecting in this research were observation checklist, field note, and writing test. Data was analyzed by using scoring profile. The students' writing ability in report text improved in three cycles from 55.86 in cycle 1 then improved to 61.89 in cycle 2 and up to 68.73 in cycle 3. The improvements of this study were particularly in students' writing on generic structure and language features of report text.*

Keywords: *writing ability, peer response technique, classroom action research, report text.*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas (CAR) yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan siswa dalam menulis sebuah teks report pada siswa sekolah menengah atas. Dalam penelitian ini, tehnik Peer Response digunakan sebagai strategi untuk membantu siswa dalam menulis teks report. Tehnik Peer Response terdiri dari aktivitas merevisi yang membantu siswa dalam menulis bentuk umum dari sebuah teks report seperti mengklasifikasikan dan mendeskripsikan sebuah topik dan editing untuk membantu siswa dalam menulis ciri kebahasaan dari sebuah teks report dengan memeriksa kembali penggunaan kosa kata dan gaya bahasa di dalam teks. Tehnik pengumpulan data yang digunakan meliputi lembar observasi, catatan lapangan, dan tes menulis. Hasil data penelitian dianalisis berdasarkan rubrik penilaian. Kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks report mengalami peningkatan pada tiga siklus dari 55,86 pada siklus pertama kemudian meningkat menjadi 61,89 pada siklus kedua dan mencapai 68,73 pada siklus ketiga. Peningkatan yang dialami siswa dalam penelitian ini umumnya pada kemampuan menulis bentuk umum dan ciri kebahasaan dari teks report.*

Kata kunci: *kemampuan menulis, tehnik peer response, penelitian tindakan kelas, teks report*

In teaching English as a second and foreign language classroom, writing is one of the four language skill that require students to be able in grammatical pattern, word choice, vocabulary, finding ideas, and ability to write a text based on the generic structure of the text. Every types of text have different ways and generic structures, for example in report text. In this study, report text is a kind of text which has social function to describe the way things are, with the reference to a range of natural, man made, and social phenomena in our environment. Report texts begin with a general classification which introduces the topic. In the identification of facts, for example parts, qualities, habits and behaviors of the subject may be described. The purpose of report text is to provide information about natural and non natural phenomena, to document, to organize and store factual information on a topic, to classify and describe the phenomena about a whole class of things-living and non living, and to describe the way things are. Report text can be written in textbook, encyclopedia, scientific magazines, historical facts, factual reading books, classroom lesson, environment program, and TV documentaries.

In order to encourage students to write report text clearly, students need to be able to write the ideas of a text, vocabulary, word choice, and grammatical pattern. However, many students had difficulties in writing report text, for example in finding ideas. They had difficulties to find and organize their ideas into general classification and identification of report text. In addition, the students thought that writing report text was difficult since they did not know their mistake in their writing.

Cooperative learning approach defined that asking students in pairs or groups is one of the ways to solve their problem in finding ideas and increase their motivation and self-confidence in writing report text. William (2003: 140) argued, "Group provides students with frequent opportunities to interact with one another through writing and talking about their writing, allowing for learning in the richest sense." One of the interactive techniques that allow students to work in group to solve their difficulties in writing report text is Peer Response Technique. Hansen and Liu cited in Al-Jamal (2009: 15) defined peer response as the use of sources of information and interaction between each other. Peer response gives the opportunity for the students to cooperate among them and find the solution to their difficulties in writing report text by analyzing their friends' work.

The process of Peer Response Technique consists of revising and editing activity which typically involving interaction between students-students and students teacher. Revising activity helped the students to write and develop their ideas of the composition of writing by checking the generic structure of report text. Editing activity helped the students to check their understanding in using the mechanics of their writing. The use of peer response technique could help students in writing report text particularly in writing generic structure and language feature of report text.

PEER RESPONSE TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING REPORT TEXT

Setting students in pairs is one of the ways to increase students' motivation and self-confidence to write a text rather than relying solely on the teacher. Students could have their peers to their drafts and help them to review and revise their writing report text. As Hinkel (2004: 5) stated the goals of respond students' composition are to make them aware of their errors and improve their noticing skill, which will influence in creating independent writers at the end. Students would tend to work together rather than compete with each other individually. The technique that implemented by group work is peer response technique.

Peer Response Technique is a technique that implemented by cooperative learning method that is used to improve students' ability in writing report text. Peer response technique focuses on teaching students about how to revise and edit their writing by using their peers' eyes in order to get deeper insight and improvements about what they have written. It also gives the opportunity for the students to cooperate among them and find the solution to their difficulties in writing by analyzing their friends' work. Urquhart and McIver (2005: 155) suggested that peer response has the function to improve students' ability in becoming better writers by receiving feedback from others during the process of writing. Peer Response Technique allows students to work in pairs or small groups, read each other compositions, and asking questions or giving comments, criticism, and suggestions.

Peer Response Technique comprises of writing activity such as revising and editing. These activities are taught in implementing the Peer Response Technique to help students in writing report text. In revising activity, the students revise the content of the composition of writing by checking general classification and identification of report text. In checking the general classification and identification, the students can clarify the message, word choice, and organization in the text. Revising encourages students to concern with meaning, content, and composition of their writing. The second activity is editing. Editing is used to check the students' understanding in using the mechanics of their writing. This activity allow students to more concentrate on the use of spelling, word choice, correct grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. William (2003: 119) states editing activity is one of the harder parts, because the writer deals with sentence-level concern such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar usage. In this activity, the students can discuss the sentence structure, for example the use of behavioral verbs, technical terms, and the use of present tense.

Moreover, Meier (2001: 9) explains that peer response technique in a model of "Fish Bowl". In the fishbowl model, one group of four students would sit in a small circle discussing their writing, while another group of four would sit on the outside circle as observers. The job of the group on the outside circle would be to reflect on how well the inside group is accomplishing their task. One group will give their work to be read by the other groups of students. The other groups of students would read their friend work and giving corrections. They

would observe their friend work by giving feedback in term of suggestions and comments by fill in the peer response sheet for improvement. At the end, the group then gets a chance to discuss the feedback. The students would get some revisions or feedback from other groups of students in order to revise their draft based on the discussion during the peer response process.

Peer response is an effective way emerges to solve students' needs of responses in their writing. It allows the students to get feedback which they need during the process of composing in order to improve their writing. Urquhart and McIver (2005:155) suggests that peer response has the function to improve students' ability in becoming better writers by receiving feedback from others during the process of writing.

In short, there are some effective ways to solve obstacles which faced by the students in composing the report text as well as introducing revising and editing stage to students. Peer response is one of many techniques that emerge to answer this demand. By using peer response, students will gain feedback they need to improve their writing skills and get another chance to polish their composition, which will result to better quality of writing performance. In report text, the feedback can be given in terms of organization (general classification and identification), vocabulary (technical terms and behavioral verbs), and grammar used (simple present tense).

In this study, the procedures of peer response technique in teaching writing report text consisted of some steps. The first, the students were divided into some groups. The teacher prepared a picture and guided questions. Second, the students in group discuss the picture given in term of general classification and identification by using guided questions, in order to brainstorm ideas before finally develop it into appropriate generic structure. Third, the students wrote a draft of report text in a group based on the picture and guided questions which already been discussed before. After finishing the draft, the students in group wrote the text individually based on the discussion group before in order to observe by the other group. Fourth, each group gave comments or responses to the other groups' writing in term of generic structure and language features of report text by fill in the peer response sheet. After the students got some feedback from the other group, the students discussed again the feedback in their group in order to make sure that all of member in the group agreed with those feedbacks. The last, after discussed the feedback from the other group, the students re-wrote a report text individually based on the feedback, comment, and suggestion from the other group.

Based on the result of this study, Peer Response Technique could help students to get more understanding in writing generic structure and language features of report text. It is line with the purpose of this research which is to improve students' ability in writing report text, particularly in writing generic structure of report text and language features of report text.

METHOD

This study used classroom action research (CAR) as a method of research. This research consists of four steps; they are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. This research conducted to overcome the problems that found in the classroom and make improvement on any plausible settings. This research is done by teachers in the classroom to find some problems in the classroom and try to solve the problems that faced by the teachers and the students.

Classroom action research focuses on the immediate application, not on the development on theory. This research is carried out within the context of the teacher's environment that is with the students at the school in which the teacher works. In classroom action research, the researcher and teacher work as a team in conducting the preliminary study, planning action, implementing the action, analyzing the data, and making the reflection for the next action if needed. The action research typically involves four phases in a cycle of a research.

The subject of this research was class XI IPA 1 of the first semester of eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Ketapang. There were thirty one students, which nineteen students were female and twelve students were male. To collect the data, the researcher used observation checklist, field note, and written assessment.

Observation is a technique to collect the data by observing both the teacher and the students' action on applying Peer Response Technique. Observation was the action applied by the researcher carefully in order to notice things that is related with problems. Observation checklist was used to observe the students and teacher act in conducting Peer Response Technique in the teaching learning process. The writer focused on the process of peer response technique. The writer observed the teaching learning process and making conclusions of whatever happens in teaching learning process using peer response technique. Observation checklist is one tool to gather data using a coding system or checklist that record some aspects in teaching learning process. Observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather live data from live situation. The observer did apply this technique by observing students activity during the implementation the treatment.

Field note is a note that made by the researcher to record important events in every meeting. Field note was applied to reflect the students' improvement in their writing in every cycle as a supporting data in order to get more information directly from the students. Field note was used to take notes of everything in teaching learning process. It included students' interaction and activity during composing the teaching and learning process. The researcher kept the process of the teaching learning activity in the form of note that recorded anything happen in the classroom when the peer response technique applied in the classroom.

Written test is used in order to know how the students' understanding of report text by using peer response technique. Students were asked to write a report text through peer response technique in each cycle. The students' score from the test was used to find the mean score. In assessing the students' writing

performance, the researcher provided the scoring table so that the scoring table would more objective.

RESULT

This study was conducted to improve students' ability in writing report text by using Peer Response Technique. This study was conducted in three cycles. One cycle consisted of two meetings. To get data about how strong the students are improved in their writing report text, the writer recorded the activities and situation during the implementation Peer Response Technique in teaching writing report text. The teacher started the teaching and learning process by brainstorming the students in order to attract students' attention. The teacher showed a picture and asked students some questions related to the material and students responded the teacher's questions. The teacher divided students into some groups consisted of four students in one group. In the first meeting, the teacher modeled the use of Peer Response Technique by giving an example how to revise and edit a text.

In the revising activity, the students wrote their writing composition based on the revising from their friends. Revising consisted of checking the ideas and the contents in general classification and identification of report text. This activity helped the students to know their mistakes of the ideas in general classification and identification. By revising, the students could revise the text by giving some feedbacks, comments, suggestions, and revisions. Those feedbacks helped students to revise their writing general classification and identification of report text.

In revising the general classification, the students gave their comments and suggestions by answering some questions in peer response sheet. Those responses helped the students to revise their writing in general classification if there were mistake in their writing. Revising allows the students to more concentrate about the content of their composition of writing after checked by their friends. The students could re-write the text based on the response that was given by their friends. After getting response, students can write the text based on the response that was given by their friends. The students could revise and rewrite their writing generic structure of report text.

The students' ability in writing the general classification improved from cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3. To support the statement, the data from writing test showed that the students' mean score in writing general classification of report text improved in each cycle. It was 58.60 in cycle 1 and it improved up to 65.50 in cycle 2 and became 71.43 in cycle 3. It can be concluded that the peer response by revising the content of text could improve students' writing general classification.

In revising the identification, the students were asked to read the text to sharing their comments and responses in order to help them in understanding what they read. This response helped the students to check their containing of message, word choice, and organization of the text, whether their meaning is

complete or not. In this case, the students should give their critical thinking in checking their friends work in order to get better writing for their friend's writing. The students revised the identification by answering some question in peer response sheet.

Based on the students' worksheet in the first cycle, many students had difficulty in writing identification of report text. The students still had difficulties in writing the knowledge about the topic in identification of report text such as generalizing the idea of habitat, shape/form, part, way of survival, and behavior. That problem could be reduced in the second cycle and third cycle. The teacher explained again how to write identification by asking the students to make a mind mapping. As the result, the students' ability in writing identification of report text improved.

Based on the data from students' worksheet, the students' ability in writing identification improved from cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3. It was because the students could write and develop their idea in the identification of report text based on the mind mapping. The students' mean score in writing identification was improved from first cycle, second cycle, and third cycle. It was 55.16 in cycle 1, 62.63 in cycle 2, and improved to 67.76 in cycle 3. It can be concluded that the students' ability in writing identification improved in each cycle. It means that, the students' ability in writing identification of report text improved in each cycle.

In editing activity, the teacher asked the students to concentrate on the use of mechanics in their writing. The teacher also asked the students to check on the use of English, word choice, and the use of correct grammar in composition of writing. Moreover, the teacher asked students to identify language features of report text which included the use of behavioral verbs, technical terms, and the use of present tense. The ability in understanding the linguistic features were needed to help the students writing the text better.

The data from writing test showed that the students' ability in writing linguistic feature improved from cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3. The improvement of the students' mean score in writing simple present tense was from 53.60 in cycle 1 improved up to 56.00 in cycle 2 and became 66.50 in cycle 3. The students could write the use of behavioral verb and technical term in the text after the teacher explained the examples usually used in report text. The students' ability in writing behavioral verb and technical term improved. It was 56.07 in the first cycle became 60.12 in the second cycle and improved until 68.35 in the third cycle. In conclusion, the students' ability in writing language feature of report text improved in each cycle.

From the result of observation checklist in the first cycle, the researcher found that some students gave positive response during the activity. In the pre activity, the students showed their interest when they showed an animal picture. Students answered questions from the teacher enthusiastically. But, there were some of them still kept silent and did not follow the activities well. Some of them could not identify the generic structure and language features of report text, because they were still unfamiliar with the structure of the text when the picture was given to them. They sometimes could identify the component from the

picture, for example how to determine general classification and identification from the picture.

The students could write the general classification and identification clearly. But, some students were difficult to write the technical terms and behavioral verbs in their text. They also were still confused and difficult to use simple present tense in their text. During the responding session, not all students responded based on the guidance given. Most students were unenthusiastic in letting their peers read and responded to their writing. Although they felt uncomfortable to share their draft, there were many of them read and responded their peers' writing. It was noted that even though they were working with their pairs, the students did not discuss. Most students did not understand to give response on their friends' work. The students could not give responses on the organization and the use of simple present tense. Most of them wrote all their responses by giving checklist (√) for yes without giving comments or suggestions. It means that the students were still passive. They were still difficult to use present tense correctly. They needed to be guided by the teacher. From that situation, the writer concluded that the students were not enthusiastic to follow the lesson.

In cycle 2, the data from observation checklist showed that the students were active in discussing the topic and responding their friend's work. The students got involved in that activity. They studied to identify the components from the picture. Some students could mention and identify the general classification and identification from the topic. Some students were still confused in grammar, especially in using the simple present tense. In the discussion, everyone in the group actively participated in writing the draft. Some of them could response by giving comments and suggestions based on the guidance given. They tried to give comments to the result of others group, claimed that they have different answer. The students gave responses of the general classification and identification and the use of simple present tense. It seems that they could use simple present tense correctly. In the last activity, the students were asked to write the text individually. The process showed that the students were enthusiastic in writing and tried to finish their work. Every student submitted their works to the teacher when the time was over. The teacher ended the class by concluding the material together with the students.

In cycle 3, the data from observation checklist described that the students were enthusiast during the teaching and learning process. Most of students paid attention and gave good response while teaching learning process. The students could mention and identify the generic structure and language features clearly. Some of students could write their knowledge about the topic in general classification and identification of report text. They also could write the text with appropriate word choice (behavioral verbs and technical terms) and correct grammatically (simple present tense). When the students were giving response to their friend's work, most of the students were active to give comments and suggestions by filling in the peer response sheet. Most of the students were able to re-write their report clearly. It influenced their ability in writing report text. In

conclusion, almost all of students involved in revising and editing their friends' work.

From the field note the writer found that the teacher gave brainstorming in order to enhance students' interest in learning. The teacher guided the students in doing Peer Response Technique and the students gave response by asking how to fill peer response sheet. On the other side, there were some students could not active in discussing topic. Some of students did not understand how to give response; they were active chatting with their friend. Some of students still kept silent and did not follow the activities well. The students still had difficulties in writing their knowledge about the topic in general classification and develop it into identification from the picture given by the teacher. The students still made error concerning the behavioral verbs and technical terms of report text. Some of students were still difficult in using the appropriate simple present tense. From the situation, the researcher assumed that the teacher did not arrange well the classroom during the teaching learning process. The teacher has to manage the students in group. The teacher has to divide the students in different criteria. For example, one group consisted of smart students and poor students.

The data from the field note showed that the students' weaknesses decrease from the cycle 1. The teacher guided the students the ways how to give response by revising and editing the text. Based on the score that the students had achieved, it could be concluded that there were some students still got low scores in writing the behavioral verbs and technical terms and the use of correct simple present tense. The teacher gave the students explanation about the use of technical terms and behavioral verbs of report text and the use of simple present tense. The teacher explained about simple present tense based on the pictures given. The teacher gave the students some structures drill to help the students understand the use of simple present tense. The teacher taught the students how to make the sentences which related to the description by using the correct simple present tense. The teacher should ask the students to bring and open the dictionary in order to help them to find the difficult word and new word which related to the topic. The teacher also could use the time and class management during teaching learning process. It is helped in monitoring the students and keeping the attention of the students.

The data from the field note showed that the students' weaknesses decrease from cycle 2. The students had understood to compose the text. The teacher guided students in giving their response, comments, and suggestions to their friends. The students could compose and write the report text clearly. The teacher moved around to check the students' work while responding to others work. The students were active to discuss the text in group and giving response by applying the Peer Response Technique. In conclusion, the students showed improvement in their ability to write report text.

DISCUSSION

This research was started on December 7th, 2011 up to January 14th, 2012 at the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Ketapang. The meeting lasted about three weeks. In the first meeting, the teacher modeled how to do peer response technique. Firstly, the teacher started the lesson by greeting the students and giving brainstorming to the students by showing a picture. The students had good response when they answer the questions from the teacher. Secondly, the teacher showed an example of report text and asked students to discuss and response the text. The teacher gave some questions to help students find the information in the text, such as generic structure and language feature of report text. The teacher explained report text in slide show by introducing the generic structure of report text, namely general classification and identification. Thirdly, the teacher explained how to do peer response. The students were divided into some group that consists of four students. The teacher asked them to discuss and find the generic structure of report text based on the text given. During the discussion, the teacher guided students who had difficulties in finding generic structure of report text. The teacher moved from group to group to offer assistance in giving correct feedback, suggestion, and comment based on the criteria in peer response sheet.

Lastly, the students were asked to write a report text based on the information that they have been discuss before. After made the report, the students were asked to do peer response technique. The students were exchanged their text to the friend in group in order to read and response by the other member of group. Each member of group read the text and gave some feedback, suggestion, and comment by fill in the peer response technique. The students re-wrote their text after getting some feedback from their friends.

Based on the observation while the technique was being applied, the writer showed that the main challenge that the students faced during teaching learning process was in giving response to their friend's work. The result of first cycle showed that most of students could not write a report by using peer response technique. It seemed that they could not really understand the text and how to do peer response in their group. They confused to write which one was the general classification and which one was the identification. They needed to learn how to write a report by using peer response technique again. The teacher found students' problem in writing report by using peer response technique. The students had problem in composing their ideas in writing the identification of report text because they lacked of vocabulary and grammar mastery. They were still confused in giving comments, revisions, or suggestions to their friend's work. Therefore, they could not sharing ideas with their friends. However, as a whole the teaching learning process in the first meeting ran well.

In the second cycle, the students began to understand about how to write a text clearly by receiving the comments from their peer. They began to be able to write the generic structures, the use of technical terms and behavioral verbs of report text, and the use of simple present tense as well. The students used mind mapping to help students in developing the identification of report text. The

students' scores increased higher than the previous cycle. The students were able to write and share the ideas by giving comments, revisions, and suggestions. But there were some students still had mistakes and confuse in composing their ideas into some sentences or paragraph. Some students were still confused in giving comments.

In the third cycle, the students showed significant progress in their writing achievement. During the teaching learning process, the students were busy by their own group to share ideas and giving comments, revisions, and suggestions. All of students discussed together and helped each other to give response to other friends' work. The students in this cycle were able to write report text clearly and they also received the comments from their peer or group when they doing task. They trusted each other by sharing ideas together with their friend in their group. The process of peer response was done well by the students and at the end the lesson they wrote the report text well.

The students' improvement above showed that teaching writing through Peer Response Technique could improve students' ability in writing report text. In implementing Peer Response Technique, the observation checklist and field note showed that there were some weaknesses. The first was group management. Group management is one of the weaknesses, because there were many students in the classroom. The teacher had a bit difficult to manage and divide them into some group. Some students were busy to choose their own group. The teacher should combine the students in different criteria to make them active in sharing the ideas.

The second was time management. In implementing Peer Response Technique, the teacher needed two meetings in one cycle. It was ineffective because the learning material should be stopped before it has been finished. The teacher should reminded the students about the learning material which discussed in previous meeting. Some students got difficulty in remembering the material in previous meeting.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the result of observation, the researcher found out that the use of Peer Response Technique could improve students' ability in writing report text. By peer revising, students could improve their writing ability in composing the content and the idea of generic structure in report text. Revising helped the students to check their composition of writing test before submitted to the teacher. In revising the text, the students checked their containing of message, word choice, and organization of text. Editing helped students to write the use of simple present tense, behavioral verb, and technical term of report text. Through editing, students could improve their writing ability in understanding the language features of report text.

The data showed that the students' ability in writing report text was improved by using peer response technique. This was proved by the result of mean score and the result of the observation. The mean score in the first cycle was 55.86 improve to 61.89 in second cycle, and up to 68.73 in the third cycle. Almost all students showed progress, but there were few of them showed little progress. Even though in the beginning of the treatment, they were still confused and difficult to write the general classification and identification of report text by using appropriate word choice and grammar. But finally they were motivated and active to write a report text clearly through peer response technique. In cycle 1, almost all the students (60 %) whose scores under the minimum level of 60 got difficulties in writing report text. In cycle 2 showed a little progress, from 29 students about 79 % whose scores were 60-79, and almost 97 % students whose scores were 60-79 in cycle 3. It is proved that peer response technique improve students' writing ability in report text.

In conclusion, Peer Response Technique could improve students' ability in writing a text. It also encouraged students to be more enthusiasts in teaching learning process. It can be seen during teaching learning process, the students actively involved in the lesson and they seemed interested and motivated. The students worked cooperatively with the others.

Suggestion

The writer would give some suggestions that are expected to be useful for the next researchers. These suggestions are (1) the teacher who applies Peer Response Technique in the classroom should combine the students with different criteria. It can make them more interactive to sharing their ideas, (2) teacher should give more control and guidance to the students while they are working in group. While implementing Peer Response Technique, the teacher can act as facilitator by guiding the students and giving them chance to solve their problem and share their understanding, (3) teacher should give more models and show how to give response. It is needed to do to minimize students' confusing in giving comments, suggestions, and revision when the teacher gives an opportunity to them, (4) in implementing the Peer response Technique in teaching writing report text, the teacher should be able to encourage and motivate students to participate in peer response activity. Teacher should give very clear instructions to avoid them from confusion when they do the exercise, (5) the teacher should give more explanation about generic structure and language features of report text, in order to make students easy to give comments and suggestions on their friends' work.

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