

Improving Students' Writing To The Eighth Grade Students By Using Clustering Technique

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Abstract. This study aimed to optimize the students writing by implementating the clustering technique that technique help students to generate ideas. The method used the classroom action research as an appropriate method for this research. The subject in this research was done at SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid, Kapuas Hulu. This is a Junior High School which is located on Lintas Mensusai Street No.1 Mensusai, Kapuas Hulu Regency. The researcher conducted the research for 24 students' of VIII class. In qualitative data finding based on the observation checklist and field note, the students very enthusiastic during teaching learning process and their showed positive attitude to the activities that were conducted by the researcher in clustering technique. Besides, there were some students who active and often asked the questions when they found some difficulties in writing. Moreover, in quantitative data finding had conclusion was that clustering technique could be used to improve the students' writing skill. The students' writing ability increased.

Keywords: Students' Writing, Clustering Technique

1. Introduction

In teaching learning process, a teacher needed an appropriate technique to make easier and more enjoyable for students. In this research, the researcher chose clustering as technique that would be implemented in teaching writing text. Using an appropriate technique is urgently needed to enlarge the students in writing text. Clustering technique could be used to help students ability in writing about what do they want to write. This is one of the ways to made the students easy in generating their ideas or feeling. Futher, according to Tomlinson as cited in Mogahed (2013: 65), stated clustering is a prewriting activity in which the writer free associates strings of ideas around a central word or idea[1]. It means, clustering as technique made the students free to develop their ideas on mind.

Besides, using an uninteresting way or strategy in teaching surely makes the students feel bored and lazy. One of strategies which can be used in teaching writing in the classroom is clustering technique. According to Proett and Gill as cited in Richard and Renandya (2002: 316), "clustering is a simple yet

powerful strategy: “its visual character seems to stimulate the flow of association . . . and is particularly good for students who know what they want to say but just can’t say it”[2]. The teachers required to have good strategies and great interest when they teaching writing in front of the students. In this case, the researcher chose clustering as technique in teaching recount text to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid. Sometimes, clustering has connotation as mind mapping or concept mapping which an effective strategy or technique help students to generate ideas. Langan (2009: 22) defined, “clustering also known as diagramming or mapping, is another strategy that can be used to generate material for a paper of any length”[3].

Based on the researcher’s observation at SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid, Kapuas Hulu, the researcher noted that the students were not interested on writing. The problems faced by the students in writing process in the classroom were first, they did not have idea to write. Second, the students were not capable to make a good writing. It caused by poor of vocabulary and grammar. Third, they were still confused to write in a text. Those things made the students were difficult in writing. To help the students solve these problems, it needs another interesting technique in teaching writing. There are a lot of techniques in teaching writing, the researcher would like to propose a technique which is “Clustering Technique”.

There are previous study intended to enrich or increase students’ writing by using clustering technique. The first research was conducted by Abd. Salam[4]. The research problems were “does using clustering technique improve students’ writing of recount text?”. Based on the results of this research, the implementation of clustering technique in teaching recount text has shown an improvement. Then, this study explained that the use of clustering technique could improve the students skills in organization and language use aspect. It helped the students to generate ideas into a chronological order. In addition, the use of clustering technique increased the students’ motivation in teaching and learning process.

1. The next researcher was conducted by Ivana Najmuddiyah, Urai Salam and Sumarni[5]. Based on the data analysis of the students’ pre test and post test, the students’ achievement on writing recount text could be influenced by key word clustering. It can be concluded that teaching recount writing by using key words clustering is effective. The students could write a recount text more easily, because they had already had the ideas in the key word clustering. The students could explore many ideas from mind and collect them into circles. Therefore the idea in the key word clustering can help the students to develop idea in writing a personal recount text.
2. Based on the previous research, the researcher would used clustering technique to the eighth grade students’ of SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid in the academic year of 2015/20116. The researcher chose SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid because she has found the students difficulties in generating their ideas in writing and most of them were lack of motivation in teaching learning process especially in writing.

3. By applying clustering technique, the researcher had collaborated with the English teacher of SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid to solve the problems which happened in the classroom. Finally, the researcher expected that on taught recount text by using clustering technique would be useful for their to improve writing ability.

In clustering technique, the researcher hoped the students could found the topic, development ideas and pour their thought in a text. The form of clustering technique is very easy to understand because this is the simple way in writing activity especially writing recount text. The researcher can be easily to give an idea about what would be written by students especially helpful for their visual. According to Irigiliati, et al (2007), "clustering is a visual way of generating ideas by showing the connections among your ideas using circles and lines"[6]. To cluster, follow these steps:

- a. Write your topic in the center of a blank page, and draw a circle around it.
- b. Think about your topic and write any ideas that come to mind in circles around the main circle.
- c. Connect these ideas to the center word with a line.
- d. Think about each of your new ideas and write more related ideas in circles around them.
- e. Connect your new circles to their corresponding ideas.
- f. When you are finished, your most promising topic will probably be the one with most circles connected to it.

Clustering technique can help the students found any idea and gave new sytle in writing activity. It is an easy form that can be understood by the students. Clustering technique can be started by stimulus word because it is tentative shape. In short, it is help the students to generate, develop and arrange their ideas into good writing especially in writing recount text.

In addition, clustering technique is known as useful technique to help and guide students in writing to generating their ideas. In this case, Eramona and Hafizh (2014: 79) has advantages of clustering technique in writing such as it is helpful for the students to develop and organize their ides systematically[7]. This technique also encourages them to think written form and easy to be applied by the teacher. The teacher can apply it without using a lof of teaching media.

2. Method

In this research, the researcher chose the classroom action research as an appropriate method for this research. It is usually CAR because this study aims to development certain instructional strategy to solve the problems in the classroom. It supported by Ary, et al (2010: 515) stated, the goal of classroom action research was to improve classroom practice or to improve practices in the school[8]. It means, classroom action research purposed to overcome the problems in teaching learning process. By conducted classroom action research, the researcher hoped could be solve and improve the education quality to be better in teaching learning process classrooms.

The teacher or the researcher could use classroom action research to overcome the problems or difficulties involving in teaching learning process area especially the learning problems and development lesson of teaching material. In implementing classroom action research, it is essential for everyone to know the educational reform. Nugent, et al (2012 : 4) said, “action research is examining one’s own practices through collaborative, inquiry, reflection, and dialogue”[9]. In the case, the researcher tried to solve the students’ problems in writing through clustering technique. The researcher collaborated with an English teacher at SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid. Kemmis and McTaggart in Burn (2010 : 8) could describe the phases of classroom action research that will be explained, as follow[10] :

a. Planning

In this phase, the researcher prepared planning in order to teaching practice could achieve. English teacher at SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid (as collaborator). There were phase in planning as follow:

- 1) The researcher prepared the material about writing recount text by using clustering technique.
- 2) In teaching and learning process, the researcher prepared a lesson plan, the determining an achievement criteria and the instruments to collect the data. Lesson plan would guide the researcher during the teaching learning process. The organized of planning would be formed into lesson plan based on the current of syllabus.
- 3) The researcher prepared observation checklist, field note and written test in collecting the data.

b. Action

In this phase, the researcher carried out acting phase based on the lesson plan prepared in planning phase. The writer acted as the English teacher who taught writing through clustering technique, and collaborator acted as the observer. The researcher used the lesson plan as a guidance and applied clustering technique in teaching writing recount text.

c. Observation

In this phase, the observation was done by the collaborator when the researcher taught in class. Besides, the collaborator filled the observation checklist and field note in collecting the data. Then, the collaborator and the researcher analyzed the students’ achievement in writing recount text by using clustering technique whether the result were satisfied or not. In short, The researcher used field note or unstructured observation checklist as a guideline while observation.

d. Reflection

In this phase, the researcher and the collaborator discussed about the observation checklist and field note result by using clustering technique in teaching learning, such as students’ behaviour in the classroom and the teachers’ ability in teaching recount text. Reflection phase aimed to reflect the data that had been collected to determine whether an action was successful or not. It was necessary for evaluation to the hold next cycle.

Subject of Research

The subject in this research was done at SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid, Kapuas Hulu.

This is a Junior High School which is located on Lintas Mensusai Street No.1 Mensusai, Kapuas Hulu Regency. The researcher conducted the research for 24 students' of VIII class. Therefore, the researcher was really interesting to identify the students' problems in writing and the real solution as well by applying clustering technique.

3. Results and Discussion

Research Findings

1. Qualitative Data Findings

a. Finding of First Cycle (1st cycle)

1) Planning

In this phase, the researcher and the collaborator made a planning for the action. The researcher would prepared observation checklist and field notes used to record activity during teaching learning process. In addition, the researcher prepared test item which had been to measure students' achievement in writing recount text. Then, these meetings were implemented to help students' understand about retell their experience in a writing recount text. They would be get clear explanation of what recount is and how to construct it in the correct pattern. After that, these meetings made them understand how to develop their ideas in writing by using clustering technique.

In the first cycle, the researcher gave the topic about My Holiday which the students to made recount text. Also, the researcher prepared a technique that was needed in teaching learning process through clustering technique with aim to improvement the students in writing recount text.

2) Acting

In this phase was done on September 09th, 2015. The researcher implemented teaching process based on the lesson plan had made. In this meeting, the researcher gave apperception and motivation to the students. Then, the teacher began to convey what materials that would like to be learned by students and asked to the students about activity when holiday. Next, the students and the teacher discussed vobulary, related and meaning contained in recount text. But, the students looked still confused when the teacher asked, "what is recount text?".

The teacher explained generic structure and language features in recount text. In this case, several of the students did not paid attention and listen when the teacher explained about recount text. Then, some of them made a note about generic structure and language features in recount text. After that, the students and the teacher made clustering technique based on the text. Some of the students' were enthusiastic and not active who still didn't show they interest toward clustering technique and recount text in learning process. Although, they respected to the teacher explained about clustering technique and recount text, but imfortunetely they were still misunderstand about it.

After that, the teacher asked about clustering technique and recount text to the students. But, they were not active gave question or answered about it. The

teacher asked them to stand in the classroom and directed to identify recount text and made clustering technique based on the draft given by the teacher. In the presentation session, they were active in sharing role with partner. After that, the students made clustering technique with the topic "My Holiday". Then, the students must do their task about writing recount text based on the teacher steps correctly in applying clustering technique. Then, they made recount text in a draft based on generic structure and revised appropriate language features correctly. Also, the students editing recount text to make it based on spelling, punctuation and capitalization correctly. Then, the students invited to learn recount text at home appropriately used vocabulary, language and mechanics.

The teacher gave motivation to the students who were lack active to participation during teaching learning process. Then, they had been an opportunity to asked about clustering technique and recount text. After that, the teacher asked feed back about recount text to the student. Also, the teacher and the students concluded about clustering technique and recount text. The teacher gave conclusion about the material had been taught and done reflection about activity in order to the students could practice clustering technique in writing recount text at home. After that, the teacher conveyed the material for next meeting and gave greeting.

3) Observing

a) Observation Checklist

Observation had done during teaching learning process which the collaborator filled observation checklist and field note. In the phase, the observer observed done the observation during teaching learning process. This meeting, all of the students sit down tidily and ready to following learning process. When the teacher asked about recount text, the students were not active to ask the questions.

Then in implementing clustering technique, some of them were enthusiastic in following all steps in the learning process which was hoped by the researcher that they would to make it good writing recount text. So, several the students misunderstood and still confused when the teacher explained the steps they had to do it their task. As the consequence, the students who could not finish their task by themselves until made the teacher gave steps. Some of the students tried to cheat with themselves about they have to do in writing recount text. In addition, when the students worked task, there were not students who didn't asked role well to present their material in writing recount text.

Based on the statement above, the researcher expected would change to the next cycle which the students more than active and enthusiastic during learning process. Some of aspects observed, the students shown performance enough. In conclusion, the students were not active and some of them were enthusiastic in following learning activity especially implemented clustering technique and writing recount text.

b) Field Note

There were things observed in field note namely students performance, the class situation and teacher performance. It was based on the observation note which the class situation showed very noise because more than half of students busy

themselves when their writing recount text.

Furthermore, the teacher performance during taught process must be encourage the students to said in English. Then, the teacher must clearly about the introduction clustering technique. Teacher must explanation one by one slowly about recount text so that the students understood about this material. After that, teachers explained more than many stand up in front of the class. Then, the teacher did not give guidelines to the students in explaining clustering technique and recount text because enough time. The last, teachers' could not manage the class for well before the learning process began.

4) Reflecting

In this phase, the researcher reflected what had been done in this cycle. The researcher act as the teacher and the collaborator discussed that happened during teaching learning process. From the data obtained observation checklist and field note, it showed some of students' were enthusiastic toward clustering technique during learning process. In addition, all of the students were not active to answer and ask the questions about recount text. Then, there were some students had not finished yet their task. Therefore, the researcher needed to continue the second cycle.

In conclusion, the first cycle did not successfully achieve the teaching learning process. Then, the students score also need to be improved to the next cycle. The last, the researcher act as the teacher would guide well in order to could help them to improve in writing recount text.

b. Finding of Second Cycle (2nd cycle)

1) Planning

In this phase, based on the previous cycle, some students were active in following step gave the teacher. In the second cycle, the researcher gave the topic about Funny Experience which the students asked to make recount text. The researcher gave suggested by collaborator in order to guide the students to more than active in learning process. The researcher prepared observation checklist, field note and form test.

2) Acting

This phase was done on September 18th, 2015. In second meeting beginning of the class the researcher greeting to the students, pray and checking attendance card. Then, the teacher asked to the students about funny experience. After that, the students made groups consist of three students every groups. Next, the teacher gave example about recount text. Then, every groups made clustering technique, determined generic structure and language features based on text. Then, the teacher started to begin the steps of clustering technique in writing recount text with almost similiar steps to the previous meeting.

3) Observing

a) Observation Checklist

In this meeting, all of the student sit down tidily and ready to followed learning process. Then, they were excited when the teacher asked funny experience had done. So, all of the students tried share one by one about funny experience was did. In this case, the teacher only gave opportunity by some of students to sharing clearly and short to told about their funny experience.

While, most of the students active in answering some teachers' questions about recount text. All of the students paid attention the teacher explained clustering technique and recount text. However, every group cooperatively to identify the generic structure and language features based on the recount text. Every groups active identify generic structure and language features in recount text. During teaching learning process, most of the students were enthusiastic and participation even several students (6 to 7 students) looked still not enthusiastic. Next, implemented clustering technique in writing recount text, several of the students still confused should they do to the task. But, most of them understood about the step of clustering technique had gave by the teacher.

Then, several students were not active to ask questions in writing recount text. Then, the students gave up and lazy if they did not find some words they wanted to write. So that, the teacher monitored them with paid attention work sheet. It means that, the students could seem word choice in writing recount text.

Based on the statement above, it could be concluded that the students were improved than the previous cycle. Some of aspect observed, the students shown performance good. They were active and enthusiastic in following steps by teacher than previous cycle about clustering technique and recout text.

b) Field Note

There was good improve of the students performance in doing steps of clustering technique. But, the class situation during learning process showed still noise when the students writing recount text. They tried to share themselves. The students give up when they found unfamiliar word because they could look up in their dictionary as suggested the teacher.

In teaching process, teacher gave intensive guide by answered all of questions the students. Teachers' explained material with voice louder so that the students paid attention and listen about clustering technique and recount text. The teacher should check the students to make sure that they are understood in step of clustering technique. Teacher could manage the class for well before learning process began and ended.

4) Reflecting

In this phase, the researcher and collaborator discussed again about all the activities in the previous phase and planned in the third cycle with different material and interest. Next cycle, the teacher should make the students paid attention to the explanation about recount text. The teacher tried to motivate and clearly in explained recount text so that, the students more active in understanding recount text.

In conclusion, as the note to the second cycle showed the students who were not active to ask when they were not understand about writing recount. So that, the teacher should be able to reduce learning process or learning material.

c. Finding of Third Cycle (3rd cycle)

1) Planning

This phase was done based on some informations for reflecting second cycle. In this phase, the researcher and collaborator discussed and revised the lesson plan with aim to improve writing recount text through clustering technique. In the third cycle, the researcher gave the topic about My Experience. The researcher

prepared observation checklist and field note that would be filled by the collaborator. Hence, written test to measure score achievement the students.

2) Acting

This phase was done on September 30th, 2015. In this meeting, the researcher gave apperception such as; greeting, pray and check attendance card. Then, the researcher gave motivation by asking to the students about their unforgettable experience. After that, the researcher explained again about clustering technique in writing recount text. The students listened teacher explanation by using clustering technique in writing recount text. Furthermore, the researcher as the teacher explained to the students slowly, more detailed and did not speak fast. In this case, all of the students paid attention with teachers' explained. Next, the teacher asked back the about material delivered and gave example of recount text. Then, the students tried made clustering technique. Almost of the students understood to make it.

Next, they identify the generic structure and language features based on recount text had gave by the teacher. Then, the students followed steps of clustering technique in writing recount text by the teacher. Then, they made recount text in a draft based on generic structure and revised written appropriate language features correctly. Also, the students editing recount text had made based on spelling, punctuation and capitalization correctly. Then, the teacher gave confirmation about result achievement to the students. Next, the students invited to learn recount text at home appropriately uses spelling, punctuation and capitalization correctly. The students gave opportunity to asked about clustering technique in writing recount text. Also, the teacher asked the difficulties faced by the students. Lastly, the teacher was done reflection and close learning process with greeting.

3) Observing

a) Observation Checklist

The result observation checklist in third cycle showed some good changes in teaching learning process. It could concluded that the class condition in learning process was better than the previous cycle. The students were more active during teaching learning process and more enthusiaties in following steps of clustering technique and recount text.

b) Field Note

In students' performance based on the field note result, the first activity which all of student ready to following learning in classroom. Then, the students were excited when the teacher asked their unforgettable experience.

The students were able to focus and paid attention on the teacher explanation about recount text. They enjoyed in doing the exercises. Then, all of them were enthusiastic made clustering technique based on the topic given by the teacher. The class situation showed the students kept silent when the teacher explained the clustering technique and recount text. In this case, the students to focus listen the teacher explanation. Some of the students were active to ask to the teacher.

Based on the aim that the researcher wanted to achieve, that is an improving students' writing skills of recount text. The researcher found that the result of the actions was satisfying. It could be seen from several aspects when the researcher

conducted the second cycle.

In result field note for the teacher performance, it showed clear explained the step of clustering technique and easy to be understood by the students. The teacher could manage the class well because the students seriously following during learning process. The last, the students gave concluded clustering technique and recount text very good.

4) Reflecting

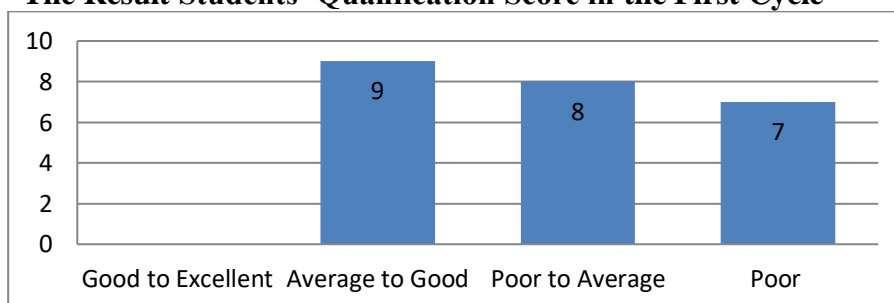
Based on the discussion between the researcher and the collaborator, the students had shown understanding in how to make recount and could explorer their idea easily through clustering technique. In this case, the student showed progress of their achievement in writing recount text by using clustering technique. Moreover, the students showed more positive attitudes towards the teaching learning process. They seem very enthusiastic because some students took a part in the discussion and asked some questions when they found difficulties. Therefore, the researcher decided to stop the cycle.

2. Quantitative Data Findings

Based on the written test result of recount text had done in three cycles, it could be seen that there were some increase. In details, students' individual score range in first cycle could be seen on figure below:

Figure 4.1

The Result Students' Qualification Score in the First Cycle



From the figure above in first cycle, it can be seen that only 37% gained for 9 students who were able to achieve categorized as average to good. Then, 33% gained for 8 students who were able to achieve categorized as poor to good. After that, 29% gained for 7 students who were able to achieve categorized as poor. The computation of students' mean score in the first cycle could be seen as follows:

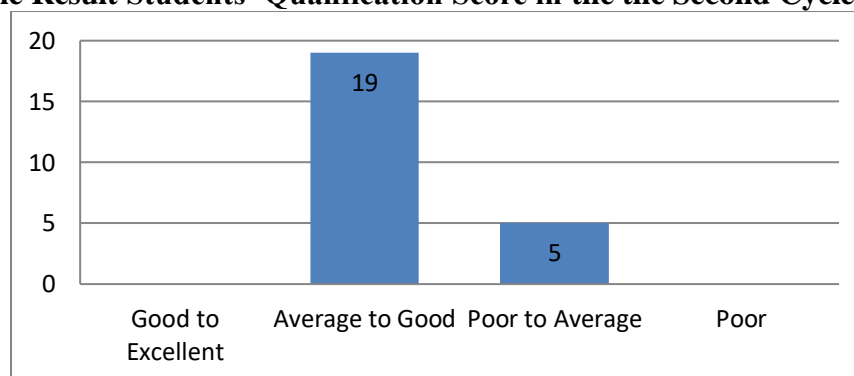
$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1329}{24}$$

$$= 55.37$$

From this result, the students still confused in recount text especially organization (e.g. orientation, events and reorientation) and language use. Also, the researcher found that some of the students had difficulties in developing ideas in writing a text. They still made mistakes in their work. Therefore, the researcher needed to continue to the second cycle.

Figure 4.2
The Result Students' Qualification Score in the the Second Cycle



From the figure above in second cycle, it can be seen that only 79 gained for 19 students who were able to achieve categorized as average to good. Then, 21% gained for 5 students who were able to achieve categorized as poor to good. The computation of students' mean score in the second cycle could be seen as follows:

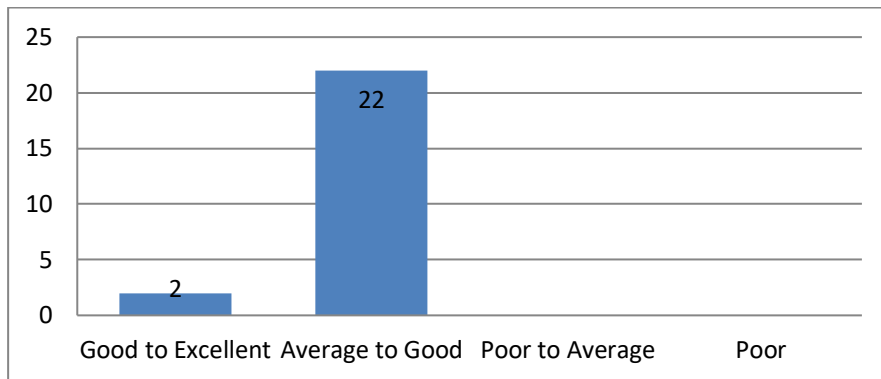
$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1557}{24}$$

$$= 64.87$$

In result, almost of the students could improve students' writing skills of a recount text in terms by using clustering technique. Although, several of the students (6-7 students) seem still confused especially to determined language use (e.g. uses past tense, time conjunction, verb and mainly first person pronouns) and vocabularies. As the result, the researcher would continue the research to the third cycle.

Figure 4.3
The Result Students' Qualification Score in the Third Cycle



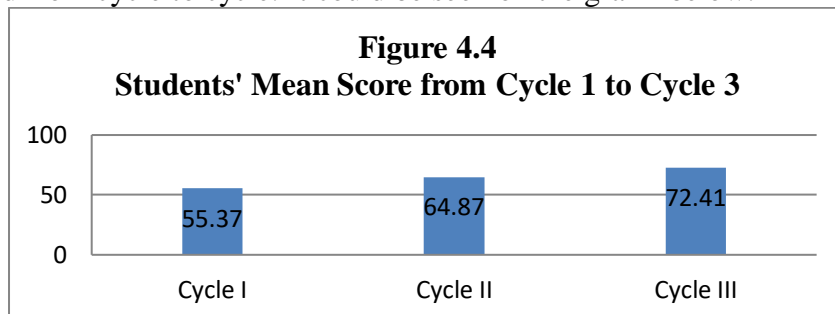
From the figure above in third cycle, it can be seen that only 92% gained for 2 students who were able to achieve categorized as good to excellent. Then, 8% gained for 22 students who were able to achieve categorized as average to good. In the third cycle, students' score were improved. The computation of students' mean score in the third cycle could be seen as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1738}{24}$$

$$= 72.41$$

Hence, it could be concluded that by using clustering technique in writing recount text could increase and successful. From the analysis result, the researcher found that some of indicators had not been achieved the students' problem in writing such as; language features. However, the students' development of ideas in writing is improved. They seemed as if they did not have any difficulty in developing ideas when the teacher used clustering technique to create a recount text. The researcher found that the students' writing still had inappropriate word choice and language use error. The improvement indicated that the action hypothesis had already accepted. In conclusion, the research finding of individual score and mean score showed that clustering technique could improve students' achievement in writing recount. From the result of every cycle, it was found the mean score of students had improved from cycle to cycle. It could be seen on the grafik below:



Discussion

As can be seen, after giving clustering technique in learning writing recount text,

the students are able to improve their writing. They could write generic structure and language features correctly in writing recount text. The implementation of clustering technique in teaching recount text could help the teacher to create an enjoyable classroom condition that gave positive outcomes for the students. The application of clustering technique easier for the students because their ideas or think through visual way. This is supported by Langan (2009: 22) which stated that clustering technique helpful for people who like to think in a visual way[11]. Based on the research conducted by researcher during three cycles are described by qualitative and quantitative findings. The result qualitative data findings to the observation checklist and field note to the first cycle until the last cycle, clustering technique could attract students' attention to learned. They seemed very enthusiastic to writing recount text and very active in the class. The use of clustering technique in teaching writing of recount texts is an effective way and successful to improve the students' writing skill. This is supported Pierce as cited in Olson (1987: 34) which stated that individual clustering is also very successful for first graders, especially if you can talk personally with each child. In this case, clustering technique succesful and improve students' writing recount text to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid in the academic year 2015/2016[12]. One of the positive points of using clustering technique is the students can develop the idea to write a text in chronological order. Whereas, the result quantitative data findings to written test were the researcher found that the students had a problem in writing recount text. In this case, they made mistakes in language use. However, the students' improvement in content, vocabulary, and language use were not satisfying. Clustering technique helped the students to generate ideas in writing a recount text. Besides, the students' improvement in content, vocabulary and language use was satisfying. They made few mistakes in terms of vocabularies and mechnics. They asked to the the researcher when they found some difficulties such as; unfamiliar words in writing a recount text. From the explanation above, it could be concluded that the use of clustering technique is helped students to generate ideas visually way. It succesful and can be improved students' ability in writing a recount text.

4. Conclusion

There are some conclusions found on the discussion in the previous chapter. In qualitative data finding based on the observation checklist and field note, the students very enthusiastic during teaching learning process and their showed positive attitude to the activities that were conducted by the researcher in clustering technique. Besides, there were some students who active and often asked the questions when they found some difficulties in writing.

Moreover, in quantitative data finding had conclusion was that clustering technique could be used to improve the students' writing skill. The students' writing ability increased. The improvement could be seen through some points. First, the students could generate, develop and arrange their ideas through clustering technique. Then, students' were able to made recount text appropriate organization, vocabulary, language use and mechnics. In other words, it was

improve to taught writing recount text through clustering technique to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Suhaid in academic year 2015/2016

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