

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, there are six parts that describe the introduction of this thesis. They are the research background, research problem, and research objective, benefits of research and development, research scope and limitation and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Context

English is one of the most widely spoken languages worldwide and serves as an official language in many Commonwealth countries, making it a key medium for global communication (Nasution, 2016). Recognizing this importance, Indonesia has integrated English into its education system from the early levels to prepare students for global engagement (Hartin, 2017). However, since English is rarely used in daily interactions within most Indonesian households, schools often serve as the primary environment for language exposure (Meisani & Musthafa, 2019).

As an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, English learning in Indonesia is not only about mastering grammar but also about developing communicative competence across four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing is considered the most demanding skill as it requires grammatical accuracy, lexical knowledge, and the ability to express ideas coherently and logically (Rohaniyah & Mari, 2022). Writing, therefore, is a

cognitive and creative activity that contributes significantly to both language development and critical thinking (Andika, 2021; Purnamasari et al., 2021).

In line with this, *Kurikulum Merdeka* Indonesia's newly reformed national curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning, differentiated instruction, and the integration of higher-order thinking skills. It promotes the use of varied instructional media that encourage student autonomy and engagement. At the junior high school level, one of the key writing genres introduced is recount text, which enables students to reflect on and describe past experiences in a structured and chronological manner (Olson et al., 2020).

Despite these curricular goals, many students continue to face challenges in writing recount texts. Common difficulties include limited vocabulary, insufficient grammar mastery particularly with the simple past tense, lack of ideas, and low motivation (Husni, 2023; Gayatri et al., 2023; Hani, 2023). These difficulties arise from both internal factors (e.g., cognitive load, low motivation) and external ones (e.g., lack of learning resources and family support).

Considering these challenges, the selection of flashcards as the core medium in this study is based on their distinctive advantages for EFL writing instruction. Flashcards provide immediate visual and verbal stimuli that stimulate memory and facilitate vocabulary retention, which is essential for recount text writing that requires accurate use of past-tense verbs. Drawing on Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1986), combining verbal information with pictorial cues strengthens mental associations and aids long-term recall. In addition, flashcards reduce cognitive load (Sweller, 1988) by breaking complex language input into

manageable chunks, allowing students to focus on generating ideas and organizing events chronologically.

From a practical perspective, flashcards are low-cost, reusable, and technology-independent, making them highly suitable for Indonesian classrooms that may lack digital resources. Their flexibility enables teachers to integrate them across all stages of the writing process—planning, drafting, editing, and producing a final version—while encouraging active participation through games, pair work, and group discussion. Compared to other media that may require more resources or infrastructure, flashcards remain accessible yet pedagogically powerful. These features highlight the importance of flashcards as not only a vocabulary tool but also a scaffold for the entire writing process, supporting both linguistic accuracy and learner engagement.

Preliminary interviews with English teachers at SMPN 3 Blitar revealed three major challenges faced by students in writing recount texts: (1) difficulty generating relevant ideas, (2) poor mastery of vocabulary and past tense usage, and (3) limited understanding of the recount text structure. Students often translated directly from Indonesian and misused tenses, resulting in disorganized and inaccurate writing. To address these issues, teachers began using flashcards—particularly during planning and drafting—to provide visual cues and stimulate idea development.

Although previous studies (e.g., Kalsum & Ansari, 2023; Musyaffa', 2020) have shown the effectiveness of flashcards in enhancing writing performance—mainly in descriptive or factual genres—they were primarily quantitative and lacked in-depth classroom analysis. Additionally, little research has investigated

students' emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement when using flashcards in the context of recount text writing under the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the use of flashcards within the process writing approach and examine how they influence students' engagement—specifically in terms of idea generation, vocabulary retention, and chronological sequencing. The findings are expected to offer practical insights into the application of low-tech visual media in EFL writing instruction and to inform more effective student-centered practices in line with the current national curriculum.

1.2 Research Focus

The problems of the research based on the identification of the problems in the above background are:

- 1) How is the implementation of flashcard in learning writing recount text to eight Secondary School students in SMPN 3 Blitar?
- 2) How are the students' responses in implementing flashcard in learning writing recount text to eight Secondary School students in SMPN 3 Blitar?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research problem there are objective of the research are:

1. To describe the implementation of flashcard in learning writing recount text to eight Secondary School students in SMPN 3 Blitar
2. To narrate the students' responses in implementation of flashcard in learning writing recount text to eight Secondary School students in SMPN 3 Blitar

1.4 Research Significance

In this research the researchers are expected to provide benefit theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the field of English language teaching, particularly in writing instruction. The implementation of flashcards in learning to write recount texts offers an alternative strategy that facilitates students' understanding of text structure and improves their writing skills. The findings of this research enrich the existing literature on media-assisted language learning and can serve as a reference for future studies on the integration of visual aids in writing instruction.

In practically, this research is significant to

1) For school

The study offers actionable input for school administrators in supporting innovative, low-cost teaching media such as flashcards. It also highlights the importance of providing teachers with professional development opportunities to effectively implement such strategies in their instructional practices.

2) For Teacher

This research provides practical strategies for English teachers to enhance student engagement and writing performance through the use of flashcards. It encourages the integration of interactive and visual media in writing instruction, enabling teachers to create more dynamic, student-centered classrooms that support learners with varying levels of proficiency.

1.5 Research Scope and Limitation

In order for the discussion and development in this research to be more focused, the researcher limit the problems and development. The research in this study is focused in the implementation of flashcard in learning writing recount text. Furthermore, the sample size is limited to a select a teachers and students at the SMPN 3 Blitar in eight grade, potentially impacting the generalizability of the findings. The study will be conducted in the second semester of the 2024/2025 school year.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

At this stage, the writer will explain the meaning of Implementation, Learning writing, Recount text, Flashcard as a reference in the research

1) Implementation

In the context of this study, *implementation* refers to the process by which teachers apply or carry out the use of flashcards as an instructional medium in the classroom. It involves practical actions and strategies taken during the teaching and learning of writing recount texts.

2) Learning Writing

Learning writing in this research refers to students' engagement in acquiring and practicing the skills necessary to produce written texts in English, particularly recount texts. It encompasses the stages of the writing process including planning, drafting, editing, and producing a final version.

3) Recount Text

A recount text is defined as a written text type that narrates past events in chronological order. In this study, recount texts are used as learning materials in

junior high school, and typically consist of three main components: orientation (introduction of the event or participants), sequence of events (chronological description of what happened), and reorientation (conclusion or personal comment).

4) Flashcard

Flashcards in this study refer to instructional media in the form of cards that contain words, images, or phrases used to support students' learning of vocabulary and sentence construction related to recount texts. These are primarily paper-based, teacher-made tools designed to visually reinforce language input during writing activities.