

## The Implementation of Flashcard in Learning Writing Recount Text: A Case Study at SMPN 3 Blitar

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**Abstract:** This study aims to address students' challenges in writing recount texts, particularly their limited vocabulary, difficulty generating ideas, and lack of mastery of past tense forms. The objective is to describe the implementation of flashcard media in teaching recount text writing and to examine students' responses during the writing process. This research employed a qualitative single-case study design at SMPN 3 Blitar, involving one English teacher and four eighth-grade students. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that flashcards were effectively integrated into Harmer's writing stages planning, drafting, editing, and finalizing. Students demonstrated improvement in idea development, sentence construction, and revision activities. Their responses reflected higher behavioral participation, positive emotional engagement, and cognitive gains in vocabulary recall and sentence structure accuracy. The study concludes that flashcards serve as an effective instructional medium for enhancing students' writing skills and recommends their integration into classroom practice.

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners because it requires grammatical accuracy, vocabulary mastery, and the ability to express ideas coherently. In the context of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, junior high school students are required to master several types of texts. One of them is the recount text, which allows students to narrate past events in sequential order and helps them practice using the past tense in meaningful contexts.

Despite its importance, many students face difficulties in writing recount texts. Common problems include limited vocabulary, poor mastery of the past tense, lack of ideas for storytelling, and low motivation to write. These challenges often result in inaccurate sentences and disorganized compositions, hindering

students' overall writing development. To overcome these obstacles, teachers need to provide structured guidance through an effective approach.

The process writing approach proposed by Harmer (2004), which includes planning, drafting, editing, and finalizing, offers a useful framework for guiding students through the stages of writing. However, within this approach, the choice of instructional media plays a crucial role in helping students generate ideas, use correct grammar, and organize their texts.

Flashcards, as a simple yet powerful visual aid, can enhance vocabulary retention, stimulate ideas, and support students' awareness of text structure. This aligns with Paivio's (1986) Dual Coding Theory, which highlights the role of combining visual and verbal input in improving memory, and Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory, which suggests that visual support reduces mental overload during learning.

Although several studies (e.g., Musyaffa, 2020; Azharra et al., 2022; Kalsum & Ansari, 2023) have shown the effectiveness of flashcards in improving students' writing performance, most of them focused on descriptive or factual genres and employed quantitative methods. Research on the use of flashcards in recount text writing within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum* remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to answer two research questions: (1) How are flashcards implemented in teaching recount text writing at SMPN 3 Blitar? and (2) How do students respond to the use of flashcards in writing recount texts?

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a single-case study design to explore the implementation of flashcards in teaching recount text writing and to examine students' responses. A case study was chosen because it allows an in-depth investigation of a specific phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). The research was conducted at SMPN 3 Blitar during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants consisted of one English teacher with more than twelve years of teaching experience and four eighth-grade students selected purposively to represent different levels of writing ability. The school

was chosen because it had begun implementing the *Merdeka Curriculum*, making it relevant to the focus of this study.

Data were collected through observation, interview, and documentation. Classroom observations were carried out during writing lessons to capture how flashcards were integrated into the stages of the writing process. In-depth interviews with the teacher and students were conducted to gain insights into their perceptions and experiences. Documentation, including students' written texts, flashcards used in the lessons, and classroom photographs, provided additional supporting evidence.

The collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (2014) interactive model, which includes three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. This approach enabled the researcher to identify emerging themes and recurring patterns related to the use of flashcards and students' engagement in recount text writing.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was employed by cross-checking data from different sources and techniques. In addition, the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were applied throughout the research process to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that flashcards were effectively integrated into all stages of the writing process: planning, drafting, editing, and finalizing. In the planning stage, the teacher distributed flashcards containing verbs in both their base and past tense forms. These visual cues activated students' prior knowledge and helped them generate ideas for recount writing. For example, when shown a flashcard with the word "go – went" alongside a picture of a beach, a student immediately recalled a personal holiday experience. This shows that flashcards functioned not only as vocabulary recall tools but also as prompts for idea generation. Such results are consistent with Paivio's Dual Coding Theory,

which emphasizes the combination of visual and verbal input in strengthening memory and comprehension.

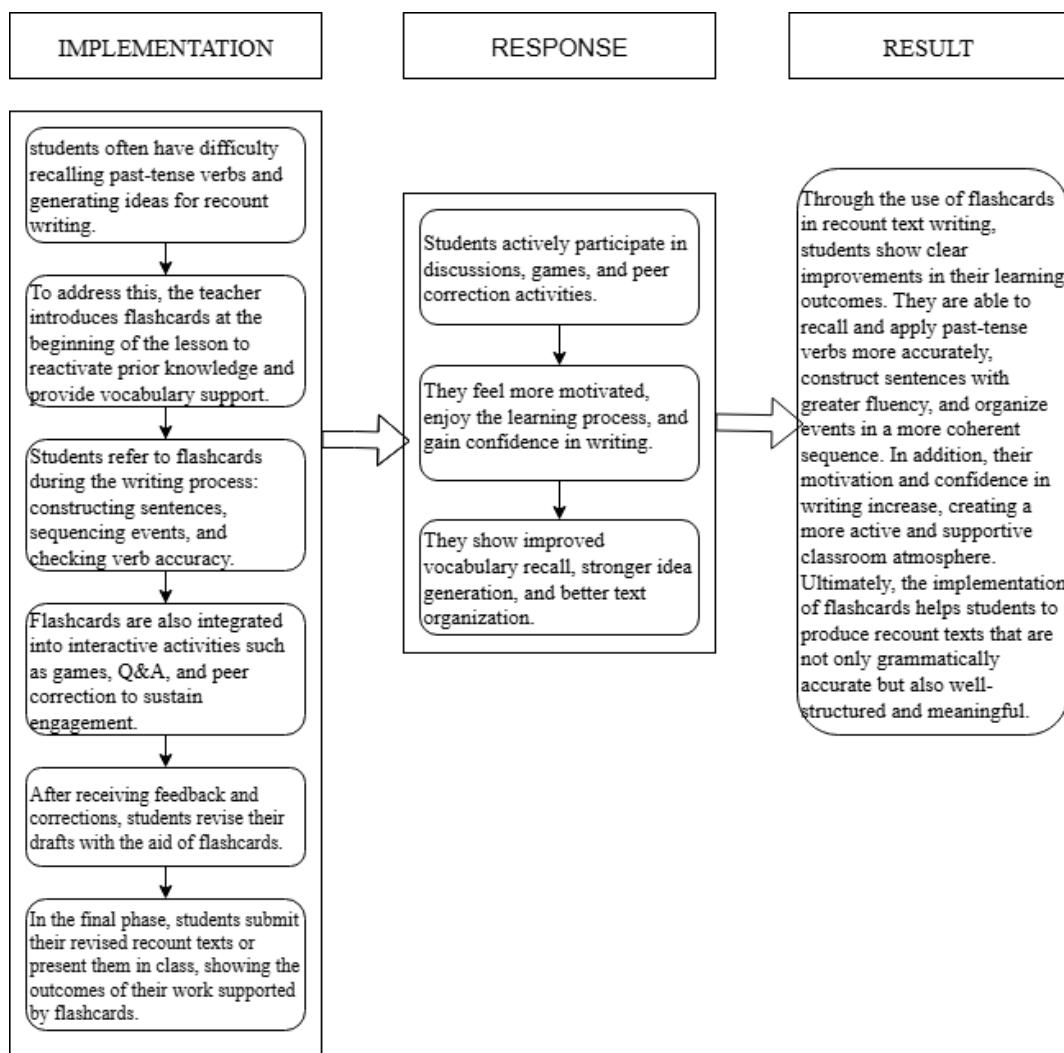
During the drafting stage, students used flashcards to guide them in constructing sentences and sequencing events. The images and verbs helped them connect actions with time markers, which improved the logical flow of their texts. One student initially wrote “I go to beach,” but after being reminded through the flashcard “went,” the sentence was corrected to “I went to the beach last holiday.” This illustrates how flashcards served as scaffolding devices, bridging the gap between limited vocabulary and the grammatical demands of recount writing. In line with Sweller’s Cognitive Load Theory, the cards reduced the mental burden of recalling words and allowed students to focus on organizing their ideas more coherently.

The editing stage further highlighted the value of flashcards in enhancing grammatical accuracy. Students were encouraged to exchange drafts with peers and check their work using the flashcards as references. Errors in verb forms, such as writing “buy” instead of “bought,” were corrected with the help of the cards. This peer-assisted process made editing more collaborative and interactive rather than relying solely on teacher correction. Such findings support earlier research by Musyaffa (2020) and Azharra et al. (2022), which showed that flashcards contributed to vocabulary mastery and improved accuracy in writing. However, this study extends those findings by demonstrating how flashcards can support accuracy in recount texts that require tense consistency.

In the finalizing stage, students revised their drafts into final versions with noticeable improvement in both accuracy and organization. Their recounts showed greater use of chronological connectors such as “then,” “after that,” and “finally,” which enhanced the coherence of the narratives. Teachers observed that the flashcards helped students move from fragmented ideas to more complete and polished texts. This suggests that flashcards are not limited to vocabulary enrichment but can also function as scaffolding tools for improving coherence and overall writing quality when systematically applied across the writing process.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Students' responses also reflected positive engagement in three dimensions: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. In terms of behavioral engagement, students became more active, volunteering answers and participating in group activities. The teacher noted that previously passive learners were more



willing to contribute. Emotionally, students described the lessons as enjoyable and different from usual writing practices, which boosted their motivation. Cognitively, they reported better recall of past tense verbs and an improved ability to connect events sequentially, both of which are essential in recount writing. This multidimensional engagement indicates that flashcards not only support learning outcomes but also influence classroom participation and motivation.

These findings align with previous studies confirming the benefits of flashcards in EFL learning (Chen & Chan, 2019; Kalsum & Ansari, 2023). However, unlike prior research that focused on descriptive or factual texts, this study highlights the effectiveness of flashcards in recount text writing, which requires both linguistic accuracy and chronological sequencing. This represents a novel contribution, as it demonstrates that flashcards can serve as comprehensive scaffolding devices within the process writing framework.

Finally, this study developed a conceptual model that illustrates how flashcards support recount text writing. The model shows that common challenges such as difficulty generating ideas, limited vocabulary, and poor mastery of the past tense can be addressed through systematic integration of flashcards in each stage of the writing process. Visual and verbal cues stimulate ideas in planning, support sentence construction in drafting, facilitate grammar checking in editing, and improve coherence in finalizing. This holistic use of flashcards ultimately enhances writing performance and fosters student engagement, making them effective instructional media in EFL classrooms and consistent with the student-centered principles of the *Merdeka Curriculum*.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that flashcards are effective instructional media for teaching recount text writing within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Their integration into the stages of the writing process planning, drafting, editing, and finalizing enabled students to generate ideas more easily, construct sentences with greater accuracy, and revise their texts systematically. The use of flashcards enhanced linguistic aspects such as vocabulary recall and past tense usage while also improving the coherence and organization of students' recounts. Moreover, students responded positively to their use, showing increased behavioral participation, emotional enthusiasm, and cognitive engagement. These results highlight the pedagogical value of flashcards as cost-effective scaffolding tools that can support writing instruction in EFL classrooms.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, English teachers are encouraged to integrate flashcards regularly into writing lessons, particularly for text genres that require chronological sequencing such as recounts. Flashcards can be combined with collaborative strategies, including peer editing and group discussions, to maximize student engagement. Second, curriculum developers and schools should consider including low-tech visual media like flashcards in instructional guidelines, especially in contexts where digital resources are limited. Finally, future studies may expand the scope of research by applying flashcards to other text genres such as narrative or expository writing, or by investigating the effectiveness of digital flashcards as complementary tools. These efforts would contribute to a broader and more sustainable understanding of flashcards as instructional media in EFL writing..

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