



INVESTIGATING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT

Definition

Recount text

Recount text is a kind of text that retells events or experiences in the past.



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A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Assalamu 'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian bapak/Ibu, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu 'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Pekalongan, 24 Oktober 2025
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Has been established through an examination held on Wednesday,
05th November, 2025 and accepted in partial fulfillments of requirements for
the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.)

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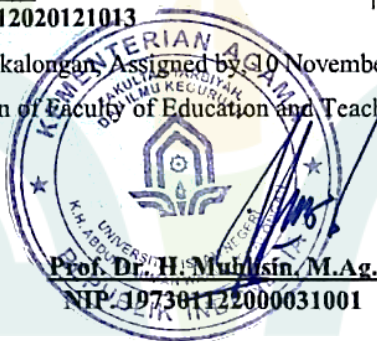
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MOTTO

“Life is not about following script, but about writing your own story.”

Iqbal Haryanto

“Menurut saya mimpi tidak ada yang gagal, yang ada hanyalah mimpi yang tertunda, sekiranya merasa gagal dalam mencapai jangan khawatir, ada mimpi-mimpi lain bisa diciptakan.”

Windah Basudara

“There is no limit to learning, and there is no stopping, no matter our age.”

Cristiano Ronaldo

“Seorang guru harus memberikan muridnya jawaban pasti”

Koro-Sensei

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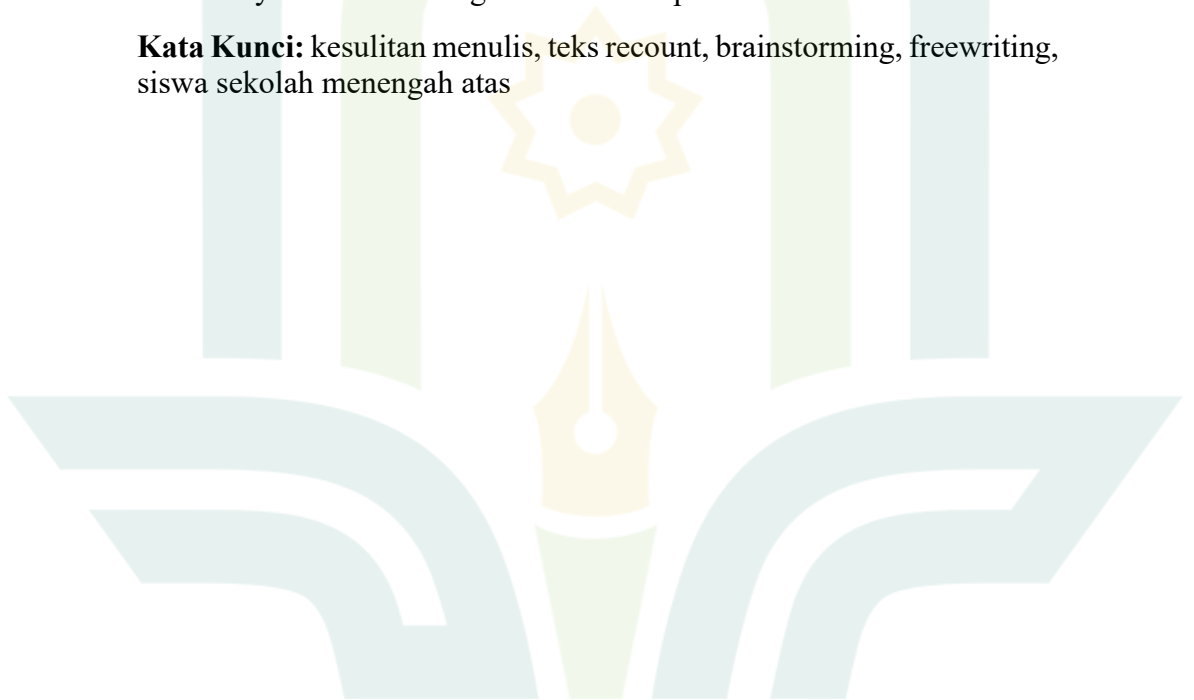
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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini meneliti kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh siswa sekolah menengah atas dalam menulis teks recount. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus yang melibatkan empat siswa dari salah satu sekolah menengah atas di Pekalongan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa menghadapi beberapa kesulitan dalam menulis teks recount, antara lain masalah tata bahasa, keterbatasan kosakata, pengorganisasian ide yang kurang baik, kurangnya motivasi, waktu yang tidak memadai, dan kurangnya latihan. Untuk mengatasi kesulitan tersebut, siswa menerapkan strategi brainstorming dan freewriting yang membantu mereka menghasilkan ide serta mengurangi kecemasan dalam menulis. Penelitian ini menyarankan agar guru memberikan waktu yang cukup untuk latihan menulis, mengintegrasikan strategi kreatif, dan memberikan umpan balik yang lebih banyak untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa.

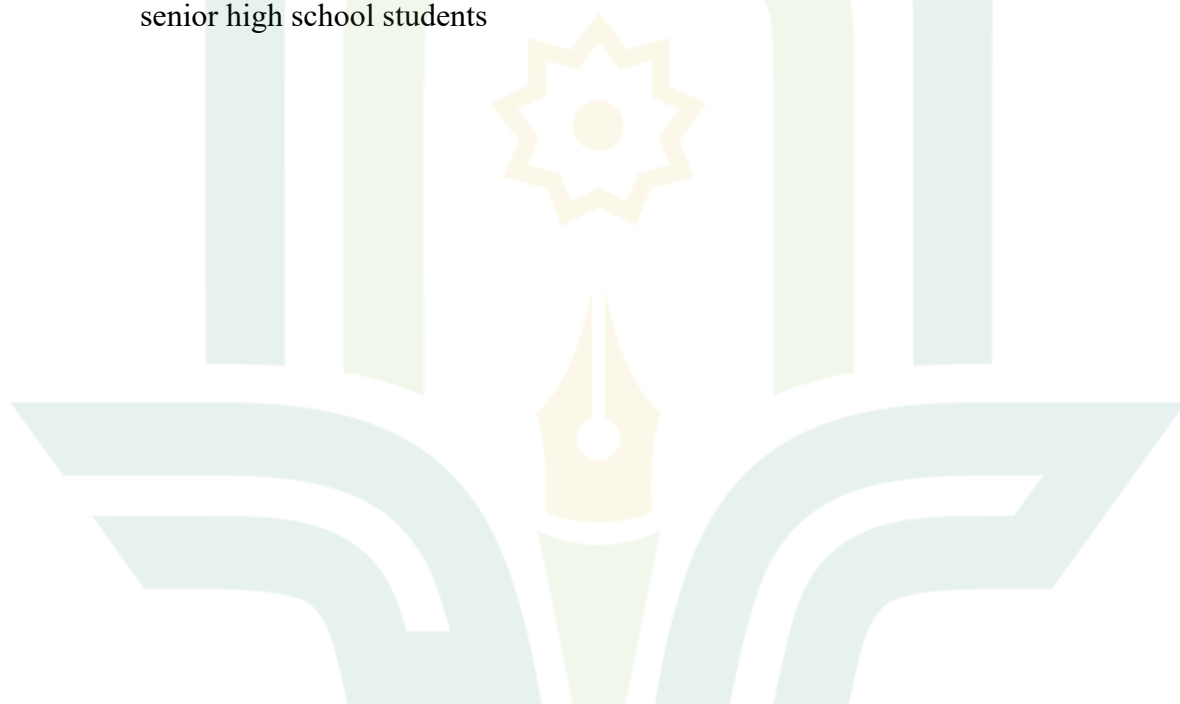
Kata Kunci: kesulitan menulis, teks recount, brainstorming, freewriting, siswa sekolah menengah atas



ABSTRACT

This study investigates the difficulties faced by senior high school students in writing recount texts. The research employed a qualitative case study approach involving four students from a senior high school in Pekalongan. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings revealed that students encountered several challenges in writing recount texts, including grammatical problems, limited vocabulary, poor organization, lack of motivation, inadequate time, and lack of practice. To overcome these difficulties, students applied brainstorming and freewriting strategies, which helped them generate ideas and reduce anxiety in writing. The study suggests that teachers should provide sufficient time for writing practice, integrate creative strategies, and give more feedback to enhance students' writing ability.

Keywords: writing difficulties, recount text, brainstorming, freewriting, senior high school students



PREFACE

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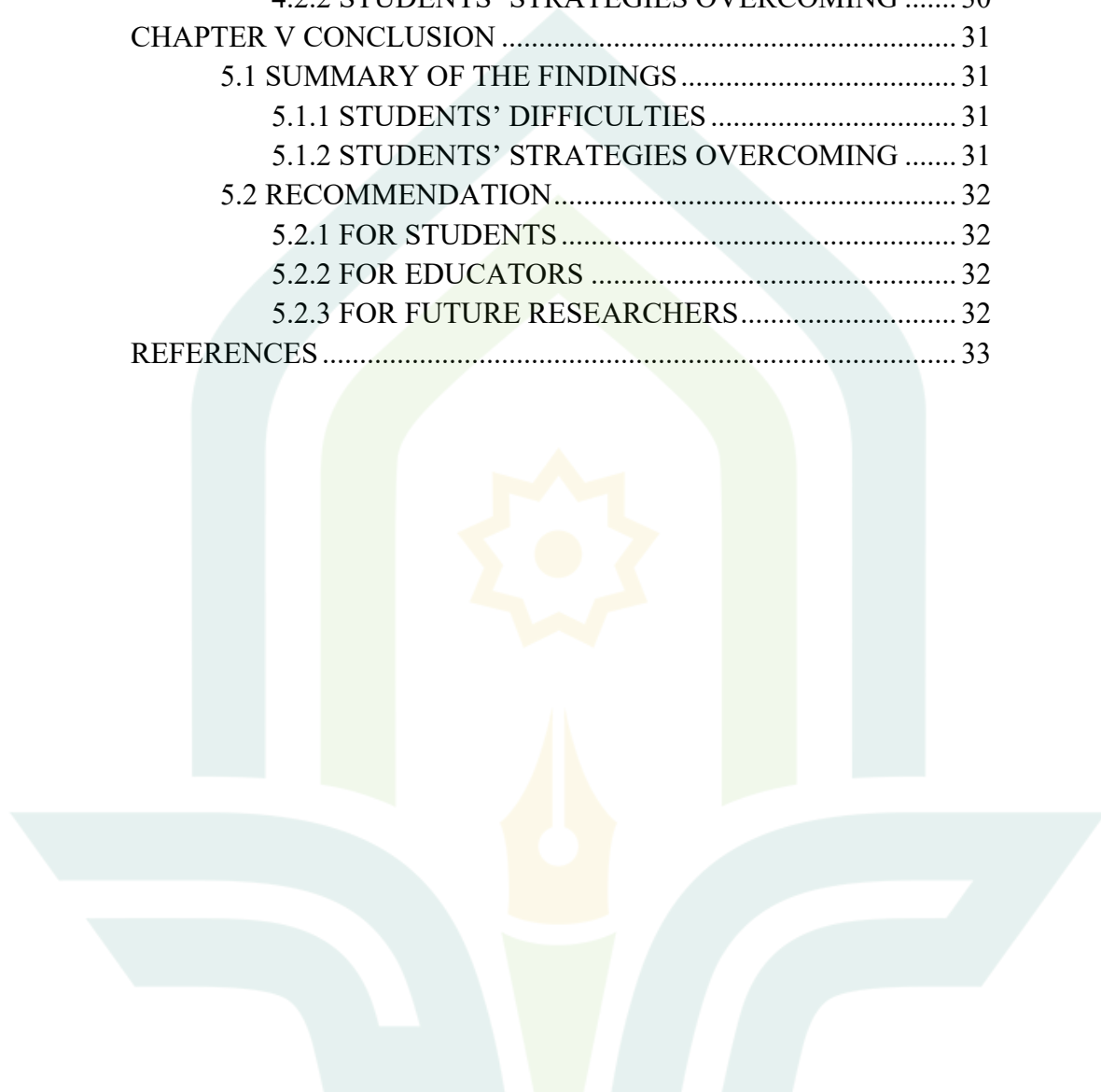
Pekalongan, 24 Oktober 2025

Iqbal Haryanto

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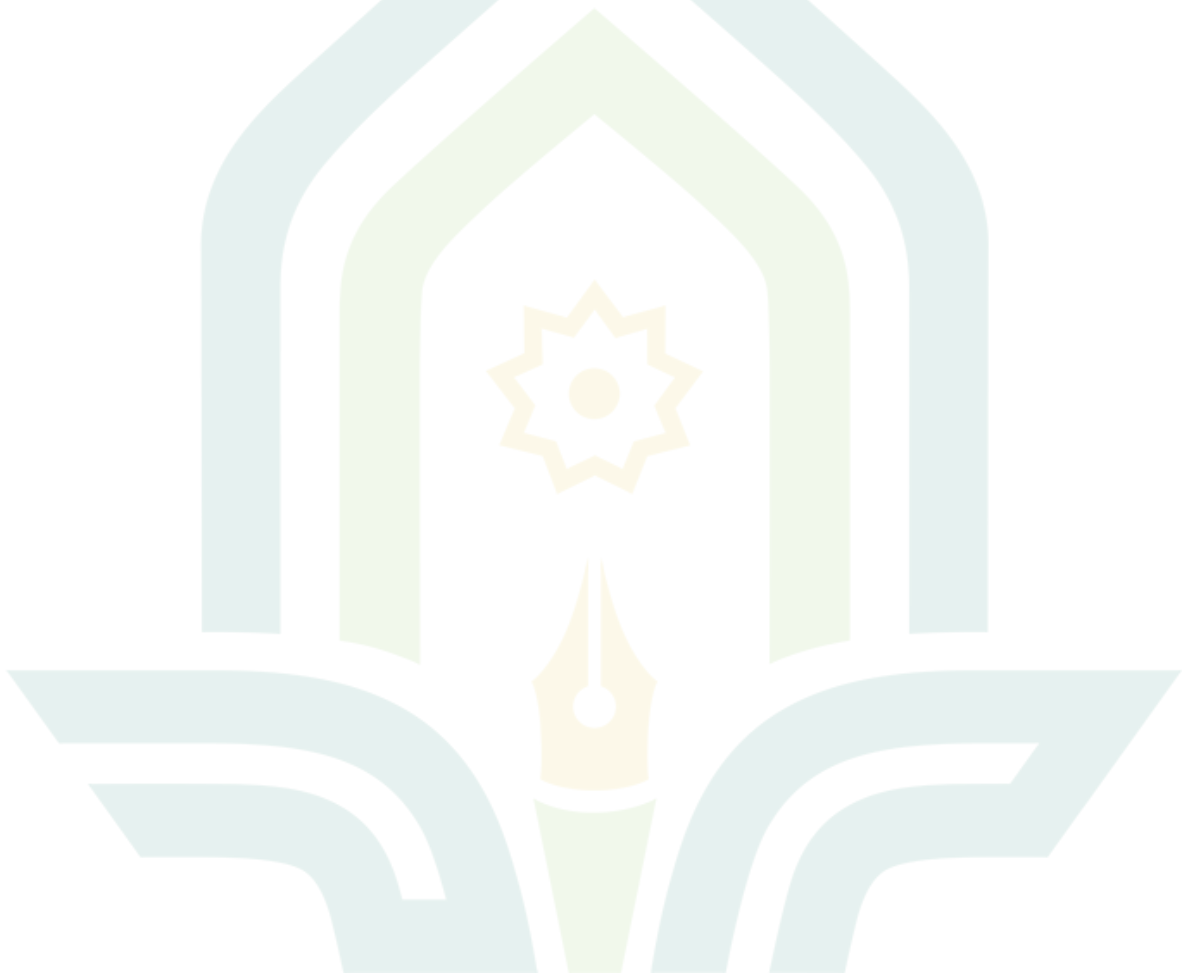
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Writing is one of the most fundamental language skills that students must master in English learning. Among various types of writing, recount text plays a crucial role in developing students' ability to narrate past experiences in a structured and coherent manner. Recount text is commonly introduced in senior high school curricula, as it helps students enhance their narrative skills by organizing events chronologically and using appropriate language features, such as past tense and time connectors (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). However, despite its importance, many senior high school students encounter significant difficulties in writing effective recount texts. These difficulties arise due to various linguistic and psychological factors, which hinder students from producing well-organized and grammatically accurate texts.

From a linguistic perspective, students often struggle with fundamental aspects of writing, such as grammar, vocabulary, and textual cohesion. One of the most common linguistic challenges is the incorrect use of the past tense, which is essential for recount texts (Brown, 2001). Many students tend to mix past and present tenses, leading to inconsistencies in their narratives. Furthermore, their limited vocabulary hinders their ability to express ideas clearly, resulting in repetition and redundancy in their writing. Additionally, students often face challenges in maintaining coherence and cohesion, which results in disorganized narratives that lack logical flow (Hyland, 2003).

From a psychological perspective, factors such as low self-confidence, anxiety, and lack of motivation contribute to students' struggles in writing (Harmer, 2004). Many students feel anxious about making mistakes, which prevents them from expressing their ideas freely. Writing anxiety often leads to avoidance behavior, where students hesitate to participate in writing activities or submit incomplete assignments. Moreover, the lack of motivation, whether

due to uninteresting teaching methods or personal disinterest in writing, further exacerbates their writing difficulties (Nation, 2009).

Furthermore, the way writing is taught in many classrooms can also be a contributing factor to students' difficulties. In some cases, teachers focus more on theoretical aspects of writing rather than providing students with hands-on practice and constructive feedback (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The absence of explicit grammar instruction, process-based writing approaches, and peer collaboration makes it harder for students to grasp the key elements of recount text writing. Additionally, the lack of individualized feedback often leaves students uncertain about their writing progress and how to improve their weaknesses.

During my teaching internship program at one of the senior high schools in Pekalongan, I found that many students faced noticeable difficulties in writing recount texts. These problems were consistently observed throughout the internship period, which motivated me to investigate this issue further through academic research. Therefore, this study was inspired by real classroom challenges I encountered during my internship experience.

Given these challenges, this study aims to investigate the difficulties faced by senior high school students in writing recount texts by examining their linguistic, psychological, and instructional challenges. By understanding the root causes of these difficulties, this research seeks to provide practical recommendations for teachers to develop more effective teaching strategies that enhance students' writing skills. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the existing body of research on writing difficulties in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, particularly in Indonesian senior high schools.

1.2 Formulating of the problem

From the background that has been described, the formulation of the problem identified is as follows:

1. What are the difficulties faced by senior high school students in writing a recount text?

2. How do the senior high school students overcome the difficulties?

1.3 Operational definition

The researcher provides the following definitions for the terms used in this study to clarify any misunderstandings:

- 1) Writing : According to Harmer (2004), writing is not just copying words but is a complex thinking process that involves planning, organizing, and revising to produce clear and effective texts.
- 2) Recount Text : According to Anderson and Anderson (1997), recount text is a type of text that aims to retell experiences or events that have occurred chronologically with the aim of providing information or entertaining readers.
- 3) Difficulties : Based on Alfaki (2015), writing difficulties among EFL students generally include grammatical problems, problems of word choice, and problems of organization. Byrne (1992), further explain that psychological aspects such as lack of motivation, inadequate time, and lack of practice also contribute to students' writing problems.

1.4 Aims of the study

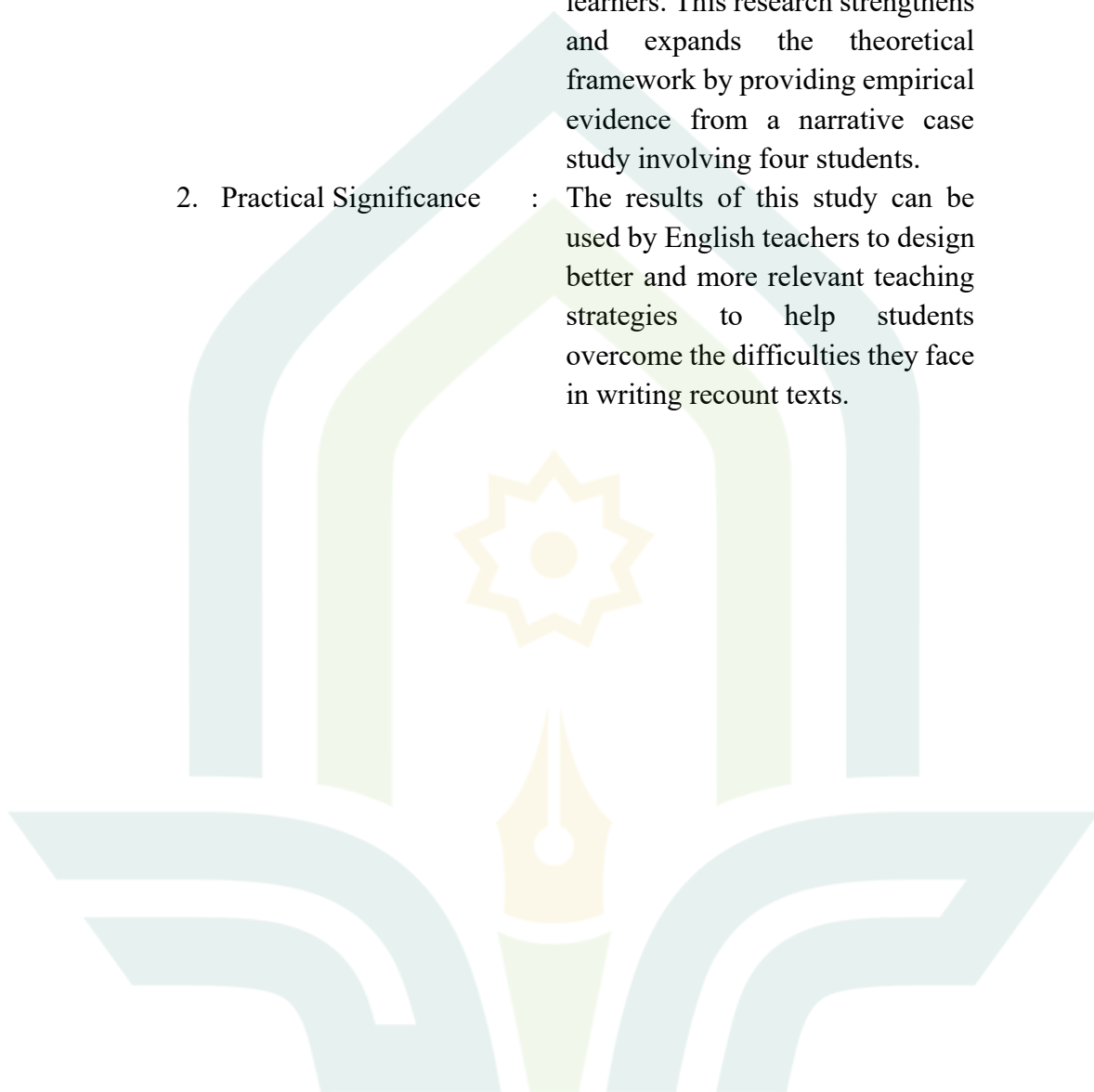
From the formulation of the problem that has been presented, the aims of this study are to:

1. To explore the difficulties faced by senior high school students in writing a recount text.
2. To describe how the senior high school students overcome the difficulties.

1.5 Significance of the study

The result of this research is predicted to have significant implications for teaching and learning writing recount text as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance : This study develops the theory of Zemel (1982) presenting about writing difficulties faced by EFL learners. This research strengthens and expands the theoretical framework by providing empirical evidence from a narrative case study involving four students.
2. Practical Significance : The results of this study can be used by English teachers to design better and more relevant teaching strategies to help students overcome the difficulties they face in writing recount texts.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the findings

5.1.1 Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text

Based on the results of research on students' difficulties in writing recount texts, the researcher found that participants experienced various obstacles in the process of writing in English. These obstacles included grammatical problems, such as difficulties in using tenses and verb forms; problems of word choice due to limited vocabulary; and problems of organization, such as difficulties in determining the main idea and supporting ideas.

In addition, lack of motivation is also a factor contributing to students' low interest in writing, especially if the topic is uninteresting or difficult to understand. Inadequate time is also an obstacle in the writing process in class, particularly in the planning and revision stages. Another obstacle is a lack of practice, which prevents students from becoming accustomed to writing independently and regularly.

5.1.2 Students' Strategies Overcoming in Writing Recount Text

All participants used brainstorming to generate ideas before writing. They wrote down all ideas related to the topic randomly and then selected the most relevant ones. Some students used mind mapping to make the structure of their writing clearer and more organized. This strategy helped them avoid writer's block and improve idea flow. The freewriting technique allowed students to write freely without worrying about grammar or spelling in the initial stage. This method helped reduce writing anxiety and increased their confidence. However, some students found it challenging to maintain focus and direction during the process.

In addition to brainstorming and freewriting, students also applied other supporting strategies such as outlining,

drafting quickly before revising, discussing ideas with peers, and consulting online dictionaries to expand their vocabulary.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher provided several recommendations for relevant parties, including:

5.2.1 For Students

Students are encouraged to practice writing regularly to improve grammar, vocabulary, and idea organization. They should use brainstorming and freewriting to generate ideas and reduce anxiety, and enrich their vocabulary by reading English texts and applying new words in their writing.

5.2.2 For Educators

Teachers should provide enough time for all stages of writing planning, drafting, and revising and integrate strategies like brainstorming and freewriting to help students write more fluently and confidently. They are also encouraged to use interesting and relevant topics to boost students' motivation.

5.2.3 For Future Researchers

Future researchers can develop this study with a larger number of participants to obtain more diverse and representative data. Further research can also involve a mixed methods approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence students' writing abilities.