

**A CASE STUDY ON TEACHING AND LEARNING WRITING RECOUNT TEXT ON MERDEKA CURRICULUM AT THE TENTH GRADE OF THE STUDENTS OF TKJ 2 SMKN 1 BANTUL IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024****Dian Awaliati<sup>1\*</sup>, Dwi Bambang Putut Setyadi<sup>2</sup>, Hersulastuti<sup>3</sup>**

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Writing is vital in English education, particularly for vocational school students who need practical communication abilities. This study explores the teaching and learning of recount text writing under the Merdeka Curriculum at SMKN 1 Bantul, where recount texts are used to enhance students' narrative and linguistic skills. The research aims to investigate instructional strategies, student engagement, and curriculum implementation challenges in recount writing lessons. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through classroom observations, teacher and student interviews, and document analysis of lesson plans and syllabi. The findings reveal that the teacher employed structured guidance, multimedia resources, and collaborative tasks to facilitate learning. Although students participated actively, many struggled with grammar and vocabulary, which affected their writing proficiency. Instructional media like PowerPoint and videos enhanced understanding, yet individualized feedback and differentiated instruction were limited. Assessment relied primarily on group tasks and observation, lacking personalized evaluation mechanisms. These results suggest that while current strategies align with Merdeka Curriculum principles, improvements are needed in language support, feedback systems, and assessment frameworks. The study implies that integrating interactive, student-centered approaches with targeted grammar instruction and more individualized assessment can enhance the effectiveness of writing instruction in vocational settings. Future research is recommended to compare practices across schools to identify broader trends and best practices in implementing writing pedagogy under the Merdeka Curriculum.

**Keywords:** Writing Instruction; Recount Text; Merdeka Curriculum; Vocational Education

**INTRODUCTION**

Writing is an essential component of English language learning, playing a crucial role in enabling students to express their thoughts, experiences, and ideas effectively (Bean & Melzer, 2021; Swargiary, 2024). Mastery of writing not only enhances overall language proficiency but also supports academic success and future professional communication (Gottlieb, 2016; Kalinowski et al., 2019; Tao & Yu, 2024). As students progress in their English studies, they are expected to engage with various text types, each serving a different communicative purpose (Ørevik, 2019). Among these, recount texts hold particular value as they train learners to narrate past events in an organized and coherent manner (Prasetyanti & Hotimah, 2018).

Recount texts are foundational in English writing instruction, especially for beginners and intermediate learners. These texts help students develop narrative skills by focusing on chronological structure, relevant details, and appropriate past-tense verbs. Through recount

writing, learners are encouraged to reflect on personal or observed experiences, thereby fostering a deeper connection to the language (Fountoulakis, 2023). This genre also allows educators to assess students' grasp of grammar, vocabulary, and text organization in a practical and meaningful context (Dirgeyasa, 2014).

In Indonesia, the recent implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has introduced a transformative approach to education (Darmawan et al., 2024; Mardiaty et al., 2024). Rooted in student-centered learning and flexibility, this curriculum encourages autonomy, creativity, and contextual learning experiences (Amiruddin et al., 2023; Khusniyah & PD, 2023). For vocational high schools like SMKN 1 Bantul, the curriculum presents an opportunity to tailor writing instruction to students' interests and career goals. It emphasizes the importance of functional language skills, making writing instruction, particularly in genres like recount texts, more relevant to students' lives and future professions (Sari et al., 2018).

Despite its promising framework, the Merdeka Curriculum poses certain challenges in practice (Emawati et al., 2024; Sholeh et al., 2024). Teachers often struggle with maintaining student engagement during writing activities, especially when learners lack confidence or interest in English. Additionally, varying levels of writing proficiency among students complicate instruction and assessment. Teachers must adopt differentiated strategies to support all learners, while also finding effective ways to evaluate writing in a manner that is both formative and constructive. These challenges highlight the need for thoughtful pedagogical planning and continuous professional development.

This study investigates the teaching and learning of recount text writing at SMKN 1 Bantul within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum. It aims to analyze the instructional methods used by teachers, identify the obstacles they face, and explore possible solutions to enhance writing outcomes. By examining real classroom practices and gathering insights from both teachers and students, the research seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how writing can be effectively taught in vocational settings. Ultimately, the study aspires to inform future improvements in curriculum implementation and writing pedagogy.

The novelty of this study lies in its contextual investigation of writing instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum within an Indonesian vocational school, focusing specifically on recount texts. While prior research, such as Hasanah (2022) and Qodriyah (2023), examined genre-based or contextual approaches to teaching recount texts, this study contributes a distinct perspective by analyzing real-time instructional practices, student engagement, and multimedia integration in a vocational education setting—an less explored area. Additionally, unlike studies that focus on general writing issues (Lubis, 2014), this research delves into practical challenges and strategies used by teachers in aligning recount text writing with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, such as flexibility, student-centeredness, and contextual learning (Rahayu, 2022). This localized, practice-based analysis offers valuable insights for improving writing pedagogy tailored to vocational learners.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative case study approach, focusing on the English teacher's instructional methods and student engagement in writing lessons. Data were collected through three main methods: classroom observations to examine teaching practices and student participation; interviews with the English teacher and students to gain insights into their

experiences and challenges; and document analysis of lesson plans and syllabus materials to assess how the curriculum is implemented. The collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework, which involves data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The first significant aspect of the findings focuses on the teacher's role in the writing classroom. The teacher actively facilitated learning by offering structured guidance throughout the lessons. This included breaking down the components of recount texts, providing clear writing models, and using guiding questions to help students organize their ideas. Additionally, the teacher incorporated multimedia resources such as videos and digital presentations to make the lessons more engaging and accessible. Group discussions were also encouraged, allowing students to share their ideas and support each other, thus fostering a collaborative learning environment.

The second aspect highlights student engagement. Overall, students demonstrated a willingness to participate in classroom activities, particularly during group discussions and collaborative writing tasks. However, despite their active involvement, many students faced difficulties with grammar and vocabulary, which significantly impacted the coherence and accuracy of their writing. These language-related challenges often led to frustration and decreased confidence, especially when students were required to write independently. This suggests a need for more targeted support in language development to enhance student performance.

Instructional media played a supportive role in aiding student comprehension, as detailed in the third finding. The teacher used PowerPoint presentations to visually explain the structure of recount texts and their language features. These presentations helped to clarify expectations and provided concrete examples for students to model their writing on. Additionally, videos were employed to introduce topics and stimulate discussion, creating a more dynamic learning atmosphere. While these tools contributed positively to the learning process, their effectiveness depended largely on how actively students engaged with the content presented.

The fourth aspect relates to the execution of the lesson plan. While the teacher followed the planned instructional sequence, specific challenges emerged during implementation. One key issue was the difficulty in sustaining meaningful student interaction beyond group work. Opportunities for individualized attention and feedback were limited due to time constraints and class size. As a result, some students who needed additional support did not receive the necessary guidance to improve their writing skills. This indicates a gap between lesson planning and actual classroom dynamics that may hinder the learning process.

The final aspect concerns the assessment techniques employed in the writing lessons. The teacher primarily used observational methods and group assignments to evaluate student progress. While these approaches aligned with the collaborative nature of the lessons, they provided limited insight into each student's writing abilities. There was a lack of consistent, individualized writing assessments and detailed feedback, which could have helped identify specific areas for improvement and support personalized learning.

The findings suggest that while the teacher's strategies align with the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on flexibility and student-centered learning, areas remain in need of improvement. Enhancing grammar instruction, providing more individualized feedback, and implementing differentiated learning approaches could better support student development in recount text writing. Addressing these aspects would improve student outcomes and strengthen the overall effectiveness of writing instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum.

## CONCLUSION

This research concludes that while the teaching and learning of recount text writing at SMKN 1 Bantul have incorporated diverse methodologies, challenges in students' writing proficiency remain. To address these issues, it is recommended that educators strengthen interactive teaching strategies like project-based learning and peer collaboration, increase writing exercises targeting grammar and vocabulary development, and implement a more comprehensive assessment framework to track individual progress better. Future research may benefit from comparative studies across various vocational schools to identify the most effective approaches to teaching writing within the Merdeka Curriculum framework.

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