

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Technology plays a key role in enabling participative and productive learning during the 21st century. Kalyani (2024) suggests that technology is an enabling tool, and its utilization enables students to learn through alternative and new media. Haleem, Javaid, Qadri, Suman (2022) also argue that technology enables teachers to deliver material more actively, making it easier for students to understand. Ulanday (2021) also emphasizes that digital tools increase learners' exposure to diverse learning materials, supporting autonomous and flexible learning in accordance with their own needs.

Some of the digital media tools have widely been utilized in English language learning, such as PowerPoint slides, learning videos, and online quiz software like Quizizz and Kahoot. The tools are largely utilized to make content visible and test students' comprehension. However, as Gunawan and Mahyuddin (2022) observe, although these instruments augment students' concentration, most of them are still unidirectional and biased more towards evaluation than toward the cultivation of productive skills like writing. This creates a void in the use of technology to promote students' critical thinking and expressive ability, particularly writing.

Writing is an elementary language proficiency which demands critical thinking, mastery of vocabulary, and the ability to construct sentences logically and in congruence. Compared to other language ability, 'writing' is considered to be most complex as 'it is always a process of planning, writing, and rewriting' (Rao, 2020). Writing in English learning is not just writing words but discovering and

developing ideas through continuous practice (Yusuf, 2021). Accordingly, the instruction of writing requires more than pure theoretical accounts; it requires experiential, student initiated activities through which students can connect their minds meaningfully.

One of the most important types of texts taught in junior high school English study is recount text. Recount text should retell past experience chronologically. Even though Gerot and Wignell (1994) explained the overall format of this type : orientation, event sequence, and reorientation. The current research by Mulyani (2022) confirms that recount texts are useful in the development of students' writing because they help reflect on personal experience and ordering of events in coherent narratives. The text also helps students master grammatical features such as the employment of the past tense, which is needed when narrating events.

A preliminary study conducted at SMP Negeri 5 Medan revealed that the teaching of writing, especially recount text, is still dominated by conventional methods. Teachers often rely on PowerPoint presentations and digital quizzes that focus more on assessment than writing practice. Classroom observations showed that students were frequently assigned multiple choice questions instead of composing recount texts independently. As a result, students experienced significant difficulties in vocabulary selection, sentence construction, and especially in the correct use of past tense an essential component of recount texts (Putri, 2023).

The lack of meaningful writing activities led to students feeling less confident and less motivated when tasked with writing. They were not given enough opportunities to explore ideas, reflect on personal experiences, or revise their

writing. Wulandari (2023) emphasizes that consistent and creativity based writing practices are crucial for building students' writing skills. Without regular and engaging writing exercises, students struggle to express themselves clearly and logically in written form.

In response to these challenges, the use of scrapbook based learning emerges as a promising alternative. Scrapbooks allow students to express their ideas through a combination of text and visuals, providing a more interactive and enjoyable writing experience. Beattie (2023) suggests that scrapbooks are effective tools for boosting students' creativity and engagement as they offer more freedom for personal expression. Visual elements within scrapbooks help students structure their ideas more clearly and make the writing process more tangible and fun.

Scrapbooks not only encourage students to write based on personal experiences but also help develop critical thinking and self confidence. Smolleck (2021) notes that scrapbooks serve as reflective visual tools that stimulate deeper thinking and meaningful self expression. By adding pictures, layouts, and design elements, students find the writing process to be more relatable and motivating.

With the advancement of educational technology, scrapbooks have evolved into digital formats that offer greater flexibility and relevance to modern classrooms. According to Wahyu (2022), digital scrapbooks allow students to creatively tell their stories using a combination of text and multimedia elements. This format enables easy revisions and continuous improvement, making the writing process more dynamic and effective especially in the context of writing recount texts.

Based on the explanations above, this study will discuss the use of digital scrapbooks as a medium to improve students' writing ability in recount text. The implementation of digital scrapbooks is considered an appropriate and innovative method in addressing students' problems in developing their writing ability. By combining visual and textual elements, online scrapbooks are expected to provide a more interactive, richer, and student focused learning environment that assists students in organizing their thoughts better and expressing themselves more confidently. In recount text writing, when students are required to reflect on past experiences and recreate them in a formal setting, the visual component and flexibility of electronic scrapbooks can foster deeper creativity and interest. Furthermore, as students today have already had their exposure to digital tools in their everyday lives, the implementation of said media in the process of educating them will be capable of bridging the gap between classroom work and their real digital lives. Consequently, digital scrapbooks have the capacity to not only bring excitement to students' writing but also to improve the quality of their work as a whole, particularly in writing personal accounts such as recount texts.

1.2 The Problem of Research

Based on the background described above, the researcher formulates the problem of this study in the form of a research question: How does the development of a digital scrapbook support the teaching of writing skills in recount texts among eighth grade students at SMPN 5 Medan?

1.3 The Objective of Study

This study aims to explore the development of a digital scrapbook as a learning media to support the teaching of writing skills in recount texts for eighth grade students at SMPN 5 Medan.

1.4 The Scope of The Study

This study will cover the use of digital scrapbook as a medium for Eighth grade students' writing skills at SMPN 5 Medan. The application of Scrapbook as a media in teaching and learning process in writing recount text will be followed by the 5 steps of scientific approach in the Kurikulum Merdeka.

1.5 The Significance of The Study

The findings of this study are expected to provide significant contributions both theoretically and practically in the field of education.

1.5.1 Theoretically, the results of this research aim to broaden insights and enrich existing theories about students' writing, especially in the context of using creative methods like scrapbooks to enhance recount text writing skills. Thus, this study can serve as a reference for academics or other researchers who wish to explore the same field.

1.5.2 Practically, the findings of this research are expected to have a positive impact on students by boosting their motivation to write. Using scrapbooks as a learning medium not only improves writing skills but also encourages students' creativity in expressing their ideas visually and structurally. Through the combination of theory and practice, this study has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the development of writing instruction in schools.