

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

For students at all grades, writing is a challenging and complex skill to master. Writing requires more than just putting words on paper, but it also needs the ability to organize thoughts coherently and convey them effectively through clear and structured sentences. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language and foreign language students because in this skill, the students must express their ideas, opinions, feelings, and emotions in writing. For making a good and interesting writing, they have to transfer their ideas correctly and naturally.

There are two aspects in measuring writing ability, they are: the process aspect and the product aspect. The process aspect is influenced by various factors that facilitate the text production process, such as writing and revising speed and fluency. On the other hand, the product aspect concerns the final written product. After completing the writing and revision process, writer gains the knowledge to create high-quality written content that is well-structured, concise, and free from spelling errors. This enables them to effectively convey the intended story or message (Andriani, et al., 2023). This study is aimed to focus on the process aspect.

Students should follow three major processes during the writing: planning, translating, and reviewing (Hayes & Flower, 1980). These processes activate the

cognitive process of students in producing a writing. To produce a good writing, students need to develop their cognitive process in their mind.

It has been discovered that there is a relationship between writing style and gender. Everyone has their own unique perceptions that can affect the way they convey their ideas through writing. Specifically, males and females tend to communicate their ideas differently based on their individual experiences and perspectives. This difference is evident in various aspects, such as thinking, acting, and speaking. Narrative writing is one type of writing that can activate the cognitive process and help individuals express their ideas logically.

Narrative writing is a kind of text that tells a story a sequence of events. It usually includes descriptive language, characters, a plot, and a setting to create a clear and engaging story. In the eleventh-grade specialization English syllabus, narrative text is studied in Basic Competencies 3.5 and 4.5 (Appendix 3).

The learning material taught or studied by eleventh grade students at the high school level is short narrative texts that provide examples and can promote the behaviors included in Core Competency. This indicates that the topic is part of learning that focuses on providing examples or role models through short stories.

Based on the researcher's experience during Introduction to School Field II (PLP II) observation conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Medan, the researcher found that students in class XI thought that writing narrative text was easy, but sometimes they also found it difficult, such as deciding the topic to be told and the vocabulary to complete the content of the story.

The researcher has also observed two narrative texts written by DS and CP.

The following was the narrative text written by DS:

Data (TAP/M-DS)

¹*(Hmm... tadi arahannya menulis teks naratif tentang dongeng. Apa ya kira-kira judul yang pasnya... Oh aku tau, cerita Sangkuriang aja deh. Itu kan pernah ku dengar ceritanya, aku juga tau nya alur cerita itu. Tapi apa ya ku tulis di awal ini, kekmana ya yang bagusnya memulai ceritanya..Oke, aku ceritain dulu pertamanya ku perkenalkan dulu tokoh dalam ceritanya... terus paragraf selanjutnya mulai ku perkenalkan konfliknya)* A long time ago in West Java, there lived a strong young man named Sangkuriang. ²*(Hmm, menurutku ini kurang detail untuk memperkenalkan karakter cerita ini. Kan ada juga karakter ibunya dan anjing peliharaan si Sangkuriang ini. Kalau terlalu singkat, nanti pembaca jadi bingung)* In early times, there was a story of King's daughter in West Java named Dayang Sumbi ... (Appendix 1)

The above text was written by DS, a male student. It was found that the cognitive process took place during the male students' writing process were (1) planning. In the planning, male student did the processes of generating and organizing. It can be seen in the think aloud protocol number 1, that DS used a technique called brainstormed to come up many ideas about the story of Sangkuriang. First, he brainstormed by recalling the story of Sangkuriang that she had heard before from his long-term memory and thinking creatively. Then, DS continued to think about organizing his ideas into a logical sequence; 2) In the translating process, DS translated his writing plan, such as characters and storyline into a written paragraph systematically that can be seen in the first paragraph (orientation), second paragraph (complication), and third paragraph (resolution). When he was translating, he read the previous sentence and changed it by adding

information to detail the character that can be seen in the think aloud protocol number 2. In addition, it was seen that DS had difficulty finding the right words and phrases in English in think aloud protocol number 7 and the use of grammar and sentence structure in think aloud protocol number 9; 3) In the reviewing process, he read through the whole text to make sure everything was written well. So, in summary, the male student's cognitive processes occurred in the planning, translating, and reviewing stages.

This writing below was a female's narrative writing:

Data (TAP/F-CP)

¹(Baik, jadi aku mau tulis cerita tentang Sampuraga. Jadi, ceritanya ini berasal dari Padang Bolak. Sebenarnya alurnya sama sih dengan cerita Malin Kundang yang mana sama-sama menceritakan kisah anak yang durhaka terhadap ibunya. Tapi, letak perbedaannya itu ada di akhirnya, yaitu Malin Kundang dikutuk menjadi batu sedangkan Sampuraga tenggelam dikarenakan badai dan gempa yang datang secara tiba-tiba, dan kemudian istananya menjadi sumur air panas... di awal paragraf, ku jelasin dulu tokoh ceritanya, terus ... hal-hal yang akan terjadi dan dialami oleh Sampuraga dan selanjutnya mulai hadir konfliknya) Once upon a time in Padang Bolak, North Sumatera, lived a man named Sampuraga. He lived with his mother, and they were poor. *²(Gimana ya aku mendeskripsikan awal mula konfliknya?)* One day while he was working, his neighbor told him about a place called Mandailing, and he really wanted to go there and become a rich man ... (Appendix 2)

The above text was written by CP as a female student. It was found that the cognitive process took place during the female students' writing process were (1) planning. In the planning, CP recalled her long-term memory about the folktale of Sampuraga. She brainstormed about ideas related to the storyline or what events happened in the story. Then, she organized those ideas into several paragraphs,

namely introducing the characters in the opening paragraph and the conflict that will occur in the next paragraph. The process of generating and organizing can be seen in think aloud protocol number 1; 2) translating. In the translating, she wrote her planned ideas into a form of writing in the form of paragraphs. Think aloud protocol number 2 showed that she faced difficulties to transform her ideas into part complication. In this translating process, she did not face challenges such as vocabulary and grammar.

This female student did two major processes, namely planning and translating. In the planning, she did the processes of generating and organizing ideas, while in the translating process, she transformed the planned ideas into written sentences. This female student did not do the reviewing process.

Based on the preliminary data, male and female students had different way of the cognitive processes in writing narrative text. The cognitive process way of male student that occurred in writing narrative text are: (1) Planning. In the planning process, male student tended to generate ideas and organizing the story about Sangkuriang. Then is (2) Translating. His cognitive process was active when he was turning ideas into written language. He also had difficulty finding the right words and phrases in English and the use of grammar and sentence structure. When he had just written the first sentence in the orientation part, he deleted it, and rewrote it with a better sentence structure. And the last is (3) Reviewing. In this process, male student tended to active cognitive process by reading to ensure for grammar, clarity, and coherence all the sentences he wrote.

Meanwhile, the cognitive process way of female student in writing narrative text that occurred were in the two stages: (1) Planning. In the planning, the female student engaged in cognitive processes such as generating and organizing. First, she generated ideas about the topic and then organized the key points. This demonstrated the subprocesses of generating ideas and organizing during planning. After that, (2) Translating. The female student began to describe setting the scene “*Once upon a time in Padang Bolak, North Sumatera, lived a man named Sampuraga.*” to the conclusion. This showed that the cognitive process of transforming planned ideas into written text occurred in the translation stage. However, this female student did not conduct a reviewing process when writing the narrative text above. She felt confident with the narrative text and chose not to do reviewing process. It concluded that female student was not involved in cognitive processes such as reading and editing.

Male and female students have different cognitive processes when writing narrative texts. Cognitive process is something that happens in the student's mind. However, the researcher's preliminary data contradicts some of the theories presented by experts. Virginia (2012) argues that females achieve better scores in verbal test and are superior in both fluent speech production and writing. Hamilton (2008) points girls significantly outperformed boys in English reading and writing ability. This is because girls tend to have a quicker understanding compared to boys. L'Abate (2011) says that males talk more about sports, money, and business while females are frequently talking about home and family.

Virginia (2012), Hamilton (2008), and L'Abate (2011) say that female students have better quality in writing compared to male students. However, from the preliminary data that researchers have done, it can be seen that male students' narrative text writing skill is better than female student. This is due to the difference in their cognitive process in processing something. The way they express their ideas is not the same and depends on their characteristics. This can be seen from the results of their writing.

There were some researchers who conducted similar research on cognitive processes but with different objectives, data collection techniques, and findings, such as Ramahdani (2018) and Sapitri (2017). Ramahdani (2018) found differences cognitive processes between genders when writing narrative text in planning, translating, and reviewing. While, Sapitri (2017) investigated cognitive processes of students majoring in social science and natural science in writing argumentative text. A detailed explanation of other previous studies is provided in Chapter II.

Since narrative writing requires unique cognitive functions, such as conveying characters and storylines, it is important to study how cognitive processes may differ for male and female students when writing narrative text. This research aims to fill gaps in the literature by examining cognitive processes in narrative writing. The findings can inform effective teaching practices and curriculum development tailored to different student profiles.

The theory proposed by Hayes and Flower (1980) involves mental processes in the writing process. From the writer's point of view and looking at the mental

processes that occur in the writer's individual mind during the writing process, the researcher is interested in conducting this scientific research. Then the theory proposed by Kellogg (1987) explains how cognitive processes occur in the writing process. The researcher was interested to verify whether these theories can be applied to the male students and female students of SMA Negeri 1 Medan in writing narrative text. This study is interested to analyze the cognitive process of male and female students in writing narrative text by using Think-Aloud Protocol (TAP) and retrospective interview. Narrative text was chosen because it stimulates students' cognitive processes in conveying events, characters, and storylines, and require various cognitive functions to create and understand it.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the explanation above, the problems of this study are formulated as the following:

1. What cognitive processes of male and female students occur in writing narrative text at the eleventh-grade level?
2. How does the cognitive process of male and female students occur in writing narrative text at the eleventh-grade level?

C. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the cognitive processes of male and female students occur in writing narrative text

2. To describe the manners of cognitive process of male and female students occur in writing narrative text

D. The Scope of the Study

This study only focuses to see the cognitive process that occurred in writing narrative text about folklores or tales of male and female students for the eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Medan. Specifically, it focused on analyzing the three major cognitive process in writing proposed by Hayes and Flower (1980) and the manners of the cognitive process as described by Kellogg (1987).

E. The Significances of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be relevant and significant theoretically and practically. The results can contribute ideas for readers who pay attention to this field. The following presents the theoretical and practical significance of the research.

a. Theoretically

Theoretically, the results of this study are useful:

- 1) Enriching the knowledge of Psycholinguistics, especially in the cognitive process between male students and female students in writing narrative text.
- 2) Expanding insights in psycholinguistic theory, especially in the cognitive process between male students and female students in writing narrative text.

b. Practically

Practically, the findings of this study are useful:

- 1) Other researchers who are interested in conducting further research or studies in the field of psycholinguistics to apply the cognitive process between male students and female students in writing narrative text.
- 2) For teachers in knowing the mental process of students in writing male students and female students in writing narrative texts so that teachers can guide and organize strategies to teach them in building ideas and creating good texts especially in narrative text.
- 3) For students in writing narrative texts with good processes such as planning, translating, and reviewing so that they can create good writing.