

# COGNITIVE PROCESSES IN WRITING OF TENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMAS AMIR HAMZAH MEDAN

Doni Setiawan Sinaga<sup>1</sup>, Johannes Jefria Gultom, S.Pd., M. Hum<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Department, Medan State University

<sup>2</sup> English Department, Medan State University

Correspondence E-mail: [pablosergato@gmail.com](mailto:pablosergato@gmail.com) , [johannes@unimed.ac.id](mailto:johannes@unimed.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to explain the reasons behind the way cognitive processes of tenth- grade students occur in writing descriptive text. This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative design. The data were collected by using students' writing and interview. The subjects of this study were the students of tenth grade at SMAS Amir Hamzah Medan. The findings of this study showed the reasons for tenth-grade students' cognitive processes in writing were the students' habits of how they usually think about organizing their writing by

determining the title and the subjects' skills of composing an outline descriptive text, the different abilities to think in constructing sentences into text structures of descriptive text, namely identification, and description, and the students had the awareness to rethink their results by reading and reflecting on the text they had written and they revised errors in their text to ensure the results of writing descriptive text.

## Keywords:

*Cognitive Processes, Tenth Grade Students, Writing, Descriptive Text, Memory*

## INTRODUCTION

Cognition is defined as mental activities such as thinking, understanding, and remembering. Cognition or mental activity refers to the process of acquiring, storing, transforming and applying knowledge (Matlin, 2009). Cognition occurs whenever individuals acquire, store, transform, and use information, and also includes various mental processes. Thus, cognition can be synonymous as cognitive processes.

According to Nunan (2003), writing is a mental process of developing ideas, deciding how to express ideas, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that can be understood by readers. It means that there is a cognitive process tries to process knowledge or ideas through the writing process. This skill is one of the productive skills that students learn. Students must be able to organize their thoughts and construct meaningful and

structured sentences. If a student lacks this ability, they will struggle to produce good writing.

Writing is a cognitive process in when the writer generates ideas, translates them, and reviews his work when creating texts. According to Hayes and Flower (1981), there are three cognitive processes in writing: planning, translating, and reviewing.

This study focuses on descriptive text. According to basic competencies 3.4 and 4.4 are expected for tenth grade students to understand descriptive texts that conform to social functions, generic structure, and language features to ensure that readers can identify the author's information and purpose and can use writing skills.

Based on observation conducted at SMAS Amir Hamzah Medan, it was found that tenth-grade students did not achieve expectations of the social function, generic structure, and language features in writing descriptive text. The tenth-grade students have difficulties in their processes of writing descriptive text. Thus, from the phenomenon written by tenth-grade students in descriptive text which was found by researcher preliminary observation, the researcher conducted research entitled "Cognitive Processes in Writing of Tenth- Grade Students at SMAS Amir Hamzah Medan".

## **METHOD**

This study conducted by using Descriptive Qualitative Research. According to Cresswell (2012), qualitative research investigated a problem and provides a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon. Based on this understanding, the research was described the existing data and describe it to get a certain meaning of the findings.

The data of this study were paragraphs containing cognitive processes in writing descriptive texts and transcript of interview. The sentences were taken from each tenth-grade students who did planning, translating, and reviewing in writing descriptive text. Then, after the students finished their writing, the researcher interviewed them to ask about the students' writing a descriptive text.

In this study, the technique of the data analysis by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) was applied. They elaborate several steps of analyzing data: data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing.

## RESULTS

After analyzing the data cognitive processes in writing descriptive text and the reason cognitive processes in writing descriptive text, the findings of this study can be shown as follows:

### **The Underlying Reason Cognitive Processes of Tenth Grade Students in Writing Descriptive Text.**

The interview was conducted to find out and explain the reason cognitive processes of tenth grade student in writing in the way they do. Based on the transcript interview, the researcher found there were some underlying reason cognitive processes occur in the way they do and the data were analyzed as follows:

#### **1. Planning**

##### **Data 1 (Transcript of Interview Student NR)**

Researcher : Selanjutnya apa yang kamu lakukan setelah memilih judul itu dek?

Subject NR : Menulis isi teks deskripsinya.

Researcher : Ada tidak kamu membuat kerangka karangan dek?

Subject NR : Ada sir.

Researcher : Terus bagaimana kerangka karangan yang kamu buat dek? Subject NR :  
Jadikan saya kerangka berpikir terus dari itu saya merangkai  
kalimat menjadi deskripsi teks.

Researcher : Selanjutnya, ada tidak kamu mengalami kesulitan dalam memikirkan atau kerangka karangan itu dek?

Subject NR : Tidak

Researcher : Mengapa membuat kerangka karangan dek?

Subject NR : Karena sudah terbiasa sir. Kan yang paling penting menguasai judulnya dulu biar gampang menulis textnya.

Based on the data that the reason for tenth-grade students' cognitive processes in the planning stage were the subject's habits of how they usually think about organizing their writing by determining the title and subject skills of composing an outline descriptive text.

#### **2. Translating**

##### **Data 2 (The transcript of Interview Student HQ)**

Researcher : Selanjutnya, apa yang kamu lakukan dalam proses menulis?

Subject HQ : Setelah buat list dan kerangka karangan, setelah itu buat descriptive textnya dan mencari tahu tentang yang mau dideskripsikan.

Researcher : Mengapa kamu melakukan seperti itu?

Subject HQ : Agar lebih tersusun dengan baik.

Researcher : Dalam proses menulis itu ada gak kamu mengalami kesulitan?

Subject HQ : Sedikit mengalami kesulitan karena beberapa kata bahasa inggris yang kurang dipahami.

Researcher : Mengapa seperti itu?

Subject HQ : Karena beberapa kata bahasa inggris yang kurang dipahami sehingga mengalami kendala.

Based on the data that the reasons of tenth grade students cognitive processes in the translating stage were the different abilities to think in constructing sentences into text structures of descriptive text, namely identification, and description. Then, the subjects faced difficulties, namely a lack of vocabulary in the translating stage.

### **3. Reviewing**

#### **Data 3 (The Transcript of Interview Student MRM)**

Researcher : Setelah kamu melakukan menulis, selanjutnya apa yang kamu lakukan dek?

Subject MRM : Untuk merubah kalimat yang salah yang tadi di tulis.

Researcher : Mengapa kamu melakukan seperti itu?

Subject MRM : Karena ada tulisan yang salah sir.

Researcher : Setelah itu apa yang kamu lakukan selanjutnya?

Subject MRM : Itu saja sir.

Researcher : Apakah kamu sudah yakin dengan tulisan kamu?

Subject MRM : Karena saya yakin sudah bagus tulisannya

Researcher : Itu saja yang sir ingin tanyakan. Terima kasih Rahman.

Based on the data showed that the reasons for the cognitive process of grade tenth students in the reviewing stage were that the students had the awareness to rethink their results by reading and reflecting on the text they had written and that they revised errors in the text to ensure the results of their writing.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The purposes of this research are to describe cognitive processes in writing of tenth grade students and to explain the reasons behind the way they do. There are a number of items that are deemed crucial to discuss after data analysis and findings the results.

The researcher found a similarity between the results of this study and the results of relevant studies. The previous study conducted by Tarigan (2020) revealed the findings of the cognitive processes of different genders in writing argumentative text s. The cognitive process of students in writing argumentative text did planning, translating and reviewing. The students generate ideas through brainstorming and then organize their thoughts as a guide for writing. Then, the students visualize their ideas into generic structure and review their writing.

Furthermore, the findings of the study conducted by Gultom (2023) revealed the findings showed that the students tended to compose an outline as a plan and visualize ideas based on their memory and writing abilities. Further, in the process of rewriting they did rewrite by revising the mistakes in their previous writing.

On the other hand, the finding of this study was different from a relevant study conducted by Sianturi (2020). The study revealed the cognitive processes of the students of different genders differed. Male students' writing cognitive processes were divided into two stages: (a) organizing the idea and (b) translating the text. And then, the students did not revise their writing.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, there are some suggestions which might be useful for English teachers, students, and further researchers, namely: For the teachers, the teachers are advised to pay more attention in teaching writing and the teacher can use this study to be reference and insights regarding the cognitive processes of tenth-grade students in writing. This study will also provide teachers with information that it will help to develop English teaching, especially in developing the cognitive processes of tenth-grade students in writing. For students, the tenth-grade students of SMAS Amir Hamzah Medan are suggested to be careful and pay attention more to the writing they write. They should have understood about composed a text appropriate and they should have a good understanding the planning, translating and reviewing before and after wrote a text. To other researcher, the result of

this study can be used as relevant study to conduct research about cognitive processes in writing a text.

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