

EXPLORING THE USE OF BRAINSTORMING IN STUDENTS' RECOUNT TEXT WRITING

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Abstract:

This study explored how students utilized brainstorming using journalistic questions in recount text writing. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed with 38 eleventh-grade students from SMK Negeri 2 Palangka Raya. Data were collected through brainstorming sheets, students' written texts, and semi-structured interviews. Only data meeting the criteria of completeness, legibility, topic diversity, and variation in writing ability were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The findings indicate that brainstorming using journalistic questions effectively helped students generate and organize ideas for recount writing. However, it was less effective in supporting idea development. This limitation was associated with students' limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, and selective omission of details. Brainstorming was most beneficial for high and moderate achievers, while low achievers required additional support to develop their ideas into complete texts. These findings provide practical implications for improving EFL writing instruction.

Keywords:

brainstorming;
recount text writing;
journalistic questions



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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the productive skills that play an important role in English language learning. Through writing, students are able to express their ideas, thoughts, and information in written form so that they can be understood by readers. Writing does not only involve arranging words and sentences, but also requires writers to organize ideas clearly in order to convey meaning effectively (Yulianawati, 2018). In this sense, writing can be viewed as a process of transforming ideas into written language so that the intended message can be communicated successfully.

Despite its importance, writing is often considered one of the most difficult language skills for students to master. Writing requires not only linguistic knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary, but also the ability to generate and organize ideas effectively. Brown (2006) explains that writing involves an active interaction with words that allows writers to express what they think and feel. However, many students still experience difficulties when they are

asked to produce written texts because they struggle to develop and organize their ideas. As a result, writing becomes a challenging task for many learners (Scott & Ytreberg, 1994).

Within the Indonesian secondary education context, the English curriculum introduces students to various text types, including narrative, descriptive, and recount texts, each requiring structured idea presentation and appropriate linguistic features. Among these, recount text which aims to retell past events or personal experiences in chronological order holds particular relevance. According to Husna and Multazim (2019), distinguishes recount text from narrative text by emphasizing its factual retelling of past events, whereas narrative text prioritizes imaginative storytelling intended to entertain and convey moral values. This study focuses on recount text because it necessitates students' ability to organize authentic experiences into a clear and logically sequenced narrative.

Writing is widely recognized as a process that involves several stages rather than a single activity. This perspective is supported by the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981), which describes writing as a complex cognitive process consisting of planning, translating, and reviewing. Among these stages, the planning stage plays a crucial role because it allows writers to generate and organize ideas before starting to write. One way to support the planning stage is through pre-writing activities that assist students in generating and organizing ideas before composing a text. Harmer (2007) states that pre-writing activities allow students to think about the content and structure of their writing before producing the final text, while Raimes (1998) argues that such activities can reduce students' anxiety and provide clearer direction in writing. Among various pre-writing strategies, brainstorming is considered an effective technique for generating ideas and helping students develop their writing.

Brainstorming is widely considered an effective strategy in teaching writing. According to Rahmawati (2022), brainstorming allows students to generate ideas freely without worrying about grammar, punctuation, spelling, or complete sentences. At this stage, students simply record any ideas that come to their minds. This process helps students focus on generating ideas before organizing them into a structured piece of writing.

In addition, brainstorming activities can create a supportive and low-pressure learning environment for students. Scane et al. (1991) explain that brainstorming encourages students who often experience difficulties in writing by providing a stress-free atmosphere where they can express their ideas more confidently. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), where students frequently face challenges in completing writing tasks, such an environment can help support the development of their writing skills (Mohammed & Sadoon, 2020).

Furthermore, brainstorming encourages students to think more freely and develop ideas before starting the writing process. Mohammed and Sadoon (2020) stated that brainstorming involves quickly noting down ideas in preparation for the writing process. When students become familiar with this strategy, they can use it independently when they face difficulties, revise their work, or move to the next stage of writing. As a result, brainstorming can promote learner autonomy and improve the quality of students' participation and productivity in the classroom.

There are several techniques that can be used in brainstorming activities, such as listing, mind mapping, clustering, free writing, and questioning. Among these techniques, journalistic questions are particularly useful. According to Mogahed (2013), asking questions is a simple yet effective way to explore ideas related to a topic. Journalists commonly use six basic questions: who, what, when, where, why and how, to investigate a story (Nordquist, 2016). These questions can also be applied in brainstorming to help students explore a topic more deeply. This technique is defined as a stage in which learners generate questions based on a certain topic and answer them at the beginning of writing (Munawwaroh, 2018). This strategy proves especially beneficial when writers encounter a block or find them uncertain about how to proceed with their writing (Oxford, 1994; Zhen & Dai, 2012). Through the process of addressing these questions, students are able to generate relevant details and organize their ideas before they begin drafting their work (The Writing Center, n.d.).

The application of journalist questions holds particular significance in the teaching of recount texts. Research by Kamadi (2016) has demonstrated that students continue to struggle with writing recount texts in English. Under such circumstances, learners tend to become disengaged and passive during classroom activities. This difficulty is further compounded when students face challenges not only in determining what to express but also in figuring out how to articulate it effectively (Kendall & Khuon, 2006). Given these obstacles, the implementation of journalist questions presents a viable solution, as it equips students with an organized framework for generating content and structuring their writing systematically.

Several studies have investigated the use of brainstorming techniques in teaching English writing. Sulistyorini and Wibowo (2018) found that the use of brainstorming significantly improved students' ability to write recount texts compared to students who were taught without the technique. Similarly, Kembaren and Patmala (2022) reported that brainstorming encouraged junior high school students to actively express ideas and improve their vocabulary when writing descriptive texts. In addition, Rosalinah et al. (2020) found that brainstorming helped eighth-grade students generate ideas, organize sentences into coherent paragraphs, and feel more confident when writing recount texts. Furthermore, Imamah and Irawan (2025) showed that pre-writing planning strategies, including brainstorming, helped students organize their ideas and produce more coherent recount texts.

Although previous studies have discussed the benefits of brainstorming in writing activities, most of them mainly emphasize students' writing outcomes rather than exploring how brainstorming is used during the writing process. Consequently, limited attention has been given to exploring students' use of brainstorming during recount text writing activities. Therefore, this study aims to explore the use of brainstorming in students' recount text writing at SMK Negeri 2 Palangka Raya. The research questions guiding this study are: a) how do students utilize brainstorming techniques in Recount Text writing?, b) how do journalistic questions help students generate, organize, and develop their ideas?, and c) why do students with the same brainstorming technique achieve different writing outcomes?

METHOD

A descriptive qualitative approach was employed in this study to explore the use of brainstorming in students' recount text writing. This approach was selected as it enabled the researcher to describe and interpret how students generated, organized, and developed their ideas during the brainstorming and writing processes. As Creswell and Creswell (2023) assert,

qualitative research is appropriate for exploring and understanding a phenomenon within its natural setting, with a particular emphasis on process rather than solely on outcomes. Therefore, a descriptive qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study.

Three instruments were employed to collect the data: brainstorming sheets, students' written texts, and in-depth interviews. The brainstorming sheets and written texts were used to explore how students generated, organized, and developed their ideas into complete recount texts, while interviews were conducted with selected students to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions regarding the use of brainstorming. The data collection procedure began with an explanation of recount text structure and language features, followed by a brainstorming activity using journalistic questions (who, what, when, where, why, and how) to help students generate and organize ideas. Students then developed their ideas into complete recount texts before interviews were conducted.

The participants of this study were 38 eleventh-grade students from Class XI MPK 3 at SMK Negeri 2 Palangka Raya. All students participated in the brainstorming activity and wrote recount texts. However, only students' writing that fulfilled three criteria were taken as the data of this research: (1) completeness and legibility of both brainstorming sheets and written texts, (2) diversity of writing topics, and (3) variation in writing ability. These criteria ensured that the data provided rich, varied, and comprehensive information for analysis (Patton, 2015).

The data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006) six-phase procedure: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

To ensure trustworthiness, data triangulation was conducted by comparing the brainstorming sheets, written texts, and interview data. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants and their parents, and their anonymity was ensured throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 38 writing results, only 5 fulfilled the three criteria required for this research and were selected for analysis. The remaining 33 students were not selected because their data did not fulfill the criteria. For instance, some students left several journalistic questions unanswered or provided only single-word responses such as "friends," "holiday," or "beach" without further explanation. Some students submitted brainstorming sheets but did not complete the recount text, which made it impossible to trace how their brainstorming ideas were developed into writing. In other cases, the written texts were too brief, consisting of only two or three sentences that lacked chronological order or personal reflection, making it difficult to analyze how the students developed their ideas. Therefore, these students' data could not be analyzed in depth. The five selected students were considered to have represented the range of experiences and abilities found across the entire class.

The analysis was conducted using thematic analysis following the six-phase procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). From the analysis, three main themes emerged: (1) Idea generation through journalistic questions, (2) Idea organization for text structure,

and (3) Challenges in develop ideas into writing. Each theme is described below with supporting evidence from the data.

Theme 1: Idea Generation through Journalistic Questions

The first theme describes how students utilized the journalistic questions (*who, what, when, where, why, and how*) to generate ideas for their recount texts. The brainstorming sheets revealed that all five students were able to identify and record essential information related to their chosen personal experiences by answering these guiding questions. The analysis of the brainstorming sheets showed that students successfully generated ideas by responding to each journalistic question. For example, Participant 1 recorded:

Table 1 Brainstorming Sheet of Participant 1

Question	Answer
Who?	I was with representative from my school and representative from many others school in Central Kalimantan.
What?	Friday-Saturday camping by KKRI (Korps Kadet Republik Indonesia)
When?	October 31, 2025 – November 2, 2025 (Friday to Sunday).
Where?	At the sports hall in Kilometer 5, Palangka Raya.
Why?	To participate in a school camping event and learn new skills (leadership skills, basic military techniques, and make new friends from other schools). We did many activities like getting uniforms, opening ceremony, sleeping in barracks, learning knot-tying, using traditional weapons, first-aid practice, cooking competition, bonfire night with movie, yell competitions, and closing ceremony.
How?	I felt tired but very happy. It was an unforgettable experience and I made many new friends.

In the interview, Participant 1 stated:

"The questions helped me remember the details of the camping activity. I could easily recall who was there, what we did, and when it happened. It made me more confident to start writing."

Similarly, Participant 2 recorded detailed answers:

Table 2 Brainstorming Sheet of Participant 2

Question	Answer
Who?	All the student from four class major MPK and teachers for each class.
What?	Industrial Visit to BKN (Badan Kepegawaian Negara) office, then beach, then Duta Mall.
When?	16-17 okt 2025, two days and one night.
Where?	Banjarbaru and Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan (about 6 hours from Palangka Raya).
Why?	To learn about real office work and government jobs, and also to have fun with classmates.
How?	First we visited BKN office and learned about office work. Then we went to the beach to relax and see the sunset. Then we went to Duta Mall to shop and eat. We were tired but very happy. The trip was educational and fun.

In the interview, Participant 2 explained:

"I was confused at first about what to write. But when I answered the questions one by one, I started to remember many things. The 'what' and 'how' questions helped me arrange the events in order."

Participant 3 also demonstrated the ability to generate ideas through the journalistic questions:

Table 3 Brainstorming Sheet of Participant 3

Question	Answer
Who?	My parents, my two brothers/sisters, and my father's family in Padang.
What?	I visited my Father's family in Padang and went sightseeing to Bukittinggi. I visited jam gadang and took many pictures.
When?	Eight years ago, during school holiday.
Where?	Padang and Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.
Why?	To visit my father's relatives and to have a vacation together.
How?	We stayed with family, talked, ate together, visited Jam Gadang, took pictures, and went to the local market.
	It was a happy and unforgettable experience. I really enjoyed spending time with my family.

In the interview, Participant 3 shared:

"The questions made me think about my experience in Padang. I almost forgot some details, but when I answered 'who' and 'where,' I started to remember everything. It was like the questions opened my memory."

Participant 4 also completed their brainstorming sheets with full answers to all six questions.

Table 4 Brainstorming Sheet of Participant 4

Question	Answer
Who?	My classmates.
What?	Celebrate my birthday.
When?	January 15, 2025.
Where?	At my classroom.
Why?	To celebrate my birthday.
How?	Celebrate together and I am very happy.

In the interview, Participant 4 stated:

"I didn't know what to write at first. But after answering the questions, especially 'what' and 'how,' I could imagine the event clearly. It helped me write step by step."

Participant 5 also completed all the questions.

Table 5 Brainstorming Sheet of Participant 5

Question	Answer
Who?	My parents and two younger siblings.
What?	Family wedding party.
When?	Last year.
Where?	My family house in Kereng Bangkirai.
Why?	Attend my family wedding.
How?	I use traditional clothes, join the ceremony, eat together, and take many family photo.
	Happy, enjoy party

In the interview, Participant 5 shared:

"The questions were easy to answer because they guided me to think about my experience. I just had to answer one by one, and then I had all the ideas I needed to write."

Table 6 Completeness of tBrainstorming Sheet

Participant	Topic	Completeness
1	Camping Activity	All question answered
2	Industrial Visit and Trip	All question answered
3	Visiting Padang	All question answered
4	Birthday Celebration	All question answered
5	Family wedding party	All question answered

Theme 2: Idea Organization for Text Structure

The second theme describes how students organized the ideas generated during brainstorming into a logical sequence that followed the generic structure of recount texts: orientation, events, and reorientation. The analysis revealed that the *when* and *where* questions typically provided the setting for the orientation section, while the *who*, *what*, and *why* questions contributed to the event section. The *how* question often appeared in the reorientation section, where students expressed their personal responses and feelings about the experience.

The students' written texts are presented below in their original form, including any grammatical inaccuracies, to reflect authentic student writing.

Participant 1:

"Last month, I joined a Friday-Saturday camp called KKRI at the sports hall in Kilometer 5, Palangka Raya. Many students from different schools in Central Kalimantan also joined this camp. I went there with my friend Agnes.

When we arrived, we looked for our teachers and friends first. Then we brought our camping equipment into the building. We put our things in a shared room where we would sleep together. After that, we went outside to join the uniform distribution and battalion grouping. We were placed in Battalion 3, Company B. We were happy because we could meet new friends from other schools.

On the first day, we received our uniforms and introduced ourselves to each other. We also learned about our group leaders. We had our meals together and then rested for the night.

The next morning, we woke up very early and attended the opening ceremony. After that, we went to Battalion 63. There, we learned how to tie different knots. We also practiced using traditional weapons and learned basic first-aid skills. We learned how to help someone who is hurt.

In the evening, we cooked our own food. We had a competition to see which group could make the best meal. Then we joined the bonfire night. We sang songs, told stories, and watched a movie about the military. It was very fun.

On the last day, we cooked again and joined more activities. We had cheering competitions with other groups. Then we attended the closing ceremony and prepared to return home. Before leaving, we took photos with the TNI members and our school group. It became a memorable ending to the camp.

For me, this camp was very unforgettable. I felt tired but happy. I learned many things like discipline, teamwork, and friendship. I hope I can join this activity again next year."

Participant 2:

"On October 16th and 17th, 2025, all students from four classes of major MPK went on an Industrial Visit to Banjarbaru and Banjarmasin. We went there with our teachers who accompanied us.

Our first stop was the BKN office in Banjarbaru. BKN stands for Badan Kepegawaian Negara. This is where government workers are managed. When we arrived, the staff welcomed us nicely. They showed us around the office. We learned about different office jobs like filing documents, managing employee data, and writing letters. We also learned about how to become a civil servant. The staff gave us useful information about the world of work. We listened carefully and took notes because the information was very useful for our future.

After that, we went to a beautiful beach in Banjarmasin. The beach was very nice. We played in the water and took many pictures. We felt very relaxed and happy.

Our last stop was Duta Mall. We had free time to walk around and buy things. Some of us bought souvenirs and snacks. We also had dinner together at a restaurant in the mall.

We went back to Palangka Raya late at night. We were tired but very happy. This trip was fun and also taught us many new things.

Participant 3:

"Eight years ago, I went to Padang with my family. We went there to visit my father's relatives. We also wanted to have a vacation together. The trip was very long because we went by car.

When we arrived in Padang, our family welcomed us warmly. We were happy to see them because we had not met for a long time. We spent time together. We talked about many things and ate traditional food. The food was delicious.

After a few days, we went to Bukittinggi. We wanted to see the sights there. We visited Jam Gadang, which is a famous clock tower. We took many pictures there because the place was beautiful. The weather in Bukittinggi was cool and nice. We also went to the local market. We looked at traditional things and tried some local snacks.

For me, this trip was a happy experience. I really enjoyed spending time with my family. I also liked getting to know my father's relatives better. I hope I can visit Padang again one day."

Participant 4:

"On January 15 2025 I celebrate my birthday at school, my classmates was there.

I dont think any special happen. I think just normal class. But after break I come back and my friends surprise me, they say happy birthday. They bring cake.

My friends decorate room with balloons. They bring snacks and drinks. My teacher come too. We take pictures. I feel happy.

After party we clean. Then lesson continue. That day is my best birthday. My friends make me special."

Participant 5:

"Last year I go to my cousin wedding. My parents and my siblings go there too.

We wear traditional clothes. We joined the ceremony. We eat together. We take many photos.

We meet our relatives. We talk with them. We stayed until night.

I feel happy. It was a good day. I like the party."

Table 7 Completeness of Recount Text Writing

Participant	Orientation	Events	Reorientation	Complete
P1	✓	✓	✓	✓
P2	✓	✓	✓	✓
P3	✓	✓	✓	✓
P4	✓	✓	✓	✓
P5	✓	✓	✓	✓

In the interviews, students confirmed that the journalistic questions helped them organize their writing. Each participant shared how the questions guided them in structuring their recount texts.

Participant 1 explained:

"After I answered all the questions, I knew how to start my writing. I used 'when' and 'where' for the opening, then 'what' and 'why' for the middle part (the events and the reasons), and 'how' for the ending to show my feelings. It made my story organized."

Participant 2 stated:

"I followed the questions. 'When' and 'where' for orientation, 'what' and 'why' for events, and 'how' for reorientation to tell my feelings. It helped me write a complete story."

Participant 3 shared:

"The questions helped me organize my ideas. I knew where to put each detail. I used 'where' and 'when' for the beginning, 'what' and 'why' for the middle, and 'how' for the ending with my feelings. It made my writing easier."

This response highlights that the questions reduced the difficulty of deciding where to place information. The students no longer had to guess how to structure their writing; the questions provided a ready-made organizational framework.

Theme 3: Challenges in Develop Ideas into Writing

This theme explains difficulties students face when turning brainstorming ideas into complete recount texts. Although all five students could generate and organize ideas, the quality of their final texts varied significantly. To analyze this variation, I referred to the framework developed by Maftoon and Akef (2009), who designed rating scales for assessing the stages of the writing process. They identified five key components for evaluating brainstorming quality: (1) number of ideas, (2) development of ideas, (3) aspects addressed, (4) diversity of ideas, and (5) usefulness for creating an outline. Based on these components, participants' brainstorming quality was categorized into three levels: high, moderate, and low.

High-Quality Brainstorming

Participant 1 showed the highest quality. Their brainstorming sheet contained detailed, elaborated answers for each journalistic question, demonstrating strong development of ideas and usefulness for creating an outline, as described by Maftoon and Akef (2009). In the written text, this student produced the longest and most detailed recount with rich details, chronological order, and personal reflections. In the interview, Participant 1 explained: "I answered all questions carefully. I wrote as much as I could remember because I wanted my story to be clear."

Moderate-Quality Brainstorming

Participants 2 and 3 demonstrated moderate quality. Their sheets had complete answers but less detail, showing moderate development of ideas but lower diversity of ideas compared

to Participant 1. Both produced complete recount texts with clear structure, but they were shorter and had fewer details. Participant 2 admitted: "I didn't have enough English words to describe everything." Participant 3 reflected: "I felt some details weren't important, so I didn't include them."

Low-Quality Brainstorming

Participants 4 and 5 showed lower quality. Their sheets had brief answers without elaboration, indicating low development of ideas and limited number of ideas (Maftoon & Akef, 2009). Their written texts were shorter with simple sentences. Participant 4 shared: "I didn't have enough vocabulary to write detailed sentences." Participant 5 explained: "I was afraid of mistakes, so I wrote what I was sure about."

Comparison of Brainstorming Quality and Writing Achievement

From the analysis, a clear pattern emerged: the quality of brainstorming directly influenced the quality of the final written texts. This finding aligns with Maftoon and Akef's (2009) conclusion that brainstorming quality directly contributes to subsequent writing stages, students with more developed ideas produce better outlines and drafts. Students who produced more detailed and elaborated brainstorming sheets also produced longer and more detailed written texts. Conversely, students with briefer brainstorming answers tended to produce shorter and less developed texts.

Table 8 Comparison of Brainstorming Quality and Writing Achievement

Level	Participant	Brainstorming Quality	Written Text Quality
High	P1	Detailed, elaborated answers	Longest text, rich details
Moderate	P2 & P3	Complete but brief answers	Complete structure, moderate details
Low	P4 & P5	Brief answers, minimal elaboration	Short text, simple sentences

This section discusses the findings in relation to the research objective of exploring how students utilize brainstorming in recount text writing. The discussion focuses on three main themes: (1) Idea generation through Journalistic Questions, (2) Idea organization for text structure, and (3) Why students with the same brainstorming technique produced different writing achievement.

1. How Brainstorming Helps Students Generate Ideas in Recount Text Writing

The first theme revealed that brainstorming using journalistic questions (*who, what, when, where, why, and how*) helped all five students generate ideas for their recount texts. The brainstorming sheets showed that students could answer all six questions, and interview data confirmed that the questions helped students recall details about their experiences and feel more confident to start writing. This finding confirms that brainstorming is an effective pre-writing strategy for helping students generate ideas in recount text writing.

The effectiveness of brainstorming in generating ideas can be explained through Flower and Hayes (1981) in Cognitive Process Theory of Writing. According to this theory, the planning stage is crucial for generating and organizing ideas before writing. Brainstorming, specifically through journalistic questions, served as a concrete strategy during this planning

stage. The questions helped students retrieve relevant information from their memory and organize it into a coherent structure before they began writing.

In recount text writing, brainstorming helps students because recount texts require students to retell past experiences in chronological order. The journalistic questions naturally guide students to think about the key elements of their experiences: who was involved (*who*), what happened (*what*), when it happened (*when*), where it happened (*where*), why it was important or the purpose (*why*), and how they felt or the conclusion (*how*). By answering these questions, students could generate all the necessary content for their recount texts before they started writing.

This finding aligns with previous research which found that brainstorming techniques help students generate and organize ideas, making them feel more confident and less hesitant when starting to write (Ummah et al., 2025). The use of journalistic questions as a brainstorming strategy provides students with a systematic way to collect and organize information, which stimulates the production of authentic writing.

2. How Brainstorming Helps Students Organize Ideas in Recount Text Writing

The second theme revealed that brainstorming also helped students organize their ideas. All five students organized their ideas chronologically following the recount text structure: orientation, events, and reorientation. The *when* and *where* questions guided the orientation section, the *what* and *why* questions guided the events section (what happened and why it happened), and the *how* question guided the reorientation section (how they felt or the conclusion).

This finding is supported by previous research which found that brainstorming techniques help students organize their writing (Gaffuri, 1991). The journalistic questions provided a clear organizational framework that reduced the cognitive burden of deciding where to place information. As Participant 1 explained: *"After I answered all the questions, I knew how to start my writing. I used 'when' and 'where' for the opening, then 'what' and 'why' for the middle part (the events and the reasons), and 'how' for the ending to show my feelings. It made my story organized."*

Participant 4 also stated: *"I just followed the questions. I wrote about 'who' and 'where' first, then I wrote about 'what' happened, and then I wrote about how I felt at the end. It was like having a map for my writing."*

This confirms that brainstorming directly supports students in organizing their recount texts. The questions acted as a "map" that guided students step by step through the writing process. Students no longer had to guess how to structure their writing; the questions told them what to write first, second, and last. Research has similarly found that students arranged sentences into a good paragraph by answering the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* (Rosalinah et al., 2020).

In recount text writing specifically, brainstorming helps students organize because recount texts require a clear chronological structure. The journalistic questions naturally guide students to arrange their ideas in the correct order: first, the orientation (background information: *when* and *where*), then the events (chronological sequence: *what* and *why*), and

finally the reorientation (personal response or conclusion: *how*). This confirms that brainstorming is highly compatible with the requirements of recount text writing.

3. Why Students with the Same Brainstorming Technique Produced Different Writing Achievement

The third and most significant theme revealed that while brainstorming helped all students generate and organize ideas, it did not fully help them develop their ideas into complete and detailed recount texts. The quality of the final written texts varied significantly among students. Three factors emerged to explain why brainstorming did not fully support idea development: vocabulary mastery, confidence, and selective omission of details.

1. Vocabulary Mastery

Students with limited vocabulary struggled to develop their ideas into detailed sentences. Participant 2 admitted: *"I didn't have enough English words to describe everything."* Participant 4 also stated: *"I didn't have enough vocabulary to write detailed sentences."* This finding is consistent with previous research which found that students' difficulties in writing recount texts are often caused by lack of vocabulary (Rosalinah et al., 2020). Even though brainstorming helped students generate ideas, they could not express those ideas effectively because they lacked the vocabulary to elaborate and develop them.

This shows that brainstorming only works when students have sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Brainstorming helps students find ideas, but vocabulary is needed to turn those ideas into detailed sentences. Without vocabulary, students could only write simple sentences and could not develop their ideas fully.

2. Confidence and Risk-Taking

Students who lacked confidence tended to write simple sentences to avoid making mistakes. Participant 4 shared: *"I just wrote simple sentences that I was sure were correct."* Participant 5 similarly stated: *"I was afraid of making mistakes, so I just wrote what I was sure about."* In contrast, Participant 1, who had higher confidence, wrote: *"I tried to write as much as I could remember because I wanted my story to be clear and complete."*

This finding aligns with previous research which found that brainstorming helps students build confidence (Gaffuri, 1991), but it does not automatically eliminate students' fear of making mistakes. Students who lacked confidence still wrote simple sentences even though they had ideas. This shows that brainstorming helps students feel more confident to start writing, but it does not necessarily give them the courage to take risks and develop their ideas fully.

3. Selective Omission of Details

Some students chose to omit details from their brainstorming sheets because they felt those details were "not important" or they did not know how to express them. Participant 3 explained: *"I wrote many things in the brainstorming, but when I started writing, I felt some details were not important, so I didn't include them."* This finding suggests that students may lack the ability to evaluate which details are essential for developing a coherent recount text. Previous research has found that students often struggle with deciding which details to include (Sulistyorini & Wibowo, 2018).

Brainstorming Effectiveness for Different Student Levels

The analysis revealed that brainstorming was not equally effective for all students. The categorization of students into high, moderate, and low brainstorming quality showed clear patterns:

Table 9 Different Students Level

Student Level	Generate Ideas	Organize Ideas	Develop Ideas
High Achiever	Highly Effective	Highly Effective	Highly Effective
Moderate Achiever	Effective	Effective	Partially Effective
Low Achiever	Partially Effective	Partially Effective	Not Effective
Student Level	Generate Ideas	Organize Ideas	Develop Ideas
High	P1	Detailed, elaborated answers	Longest text, rich details

Practical Implications

The findings suggest several implications for teaching writing using brainstorming. First, teachers should continue using brainstorming strategies in teaching recount texts, as this approach trains students to write and think critically. However, brainstorming alone is not sufficient for low achievers; they require additional support to develop their ideas. Second, teachers should integrate vocabulary instruction with brainstorming activities, as students naturally expand their vocabulary when they encounter new words and use dictionaries during the writing process (Rahmawati, 2022). Third, teachers need to create a supportive classroom environment where students feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and try new things in writing (Renner, 1992). Finally, low-achieving students require additional scaffolding, such as sentence starters, modeling, and one-on-one guidance to help them elaborate their ideas effectively (Sulistiyorini & Wibowo, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study explored how students utilize brainstorming in recount text writing. The findings confirmed that brainstorming using journalistic questions is effective for helping students generate and organize ideas in recount text writing. However, brainstorming was not fully effective for helping students develop their ideas into complete and detailed texts. Vocabulary mastery, confidence, and selective omission of details were the main factors limiting idea development.

The study also revealed that brainstorming is most effective for high and moderate achievers. For low achievers, brainstorming did not help them develop their writing. These students could generate and organize ideas through brainstorming, but they could not develop those ideas into detailed sentences because they lacked vocabulary, confidence, and selective omission of details. This confirms that brainstorming alone is not sufficient for poor achievers; they need additional instructional support to develop their writing skills.

This study has several limitations. It employed a descriptive qualitative design that focused on exploring how students used brainstorming during recount text writing. As a result, the study did not compare students' writing performance before and after using brainstorming or with students who completed the writing task without brainstorming. Therefore, the findings cannot determine whether students' writing performance was associated with the use of brainstorming. In addition, the study was conducted in a single classroom with a limited number of participants, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide practical implications for writing instruction. teachers are encouraged to apply brainstorming strategies to train writing and thinking skills, but they must also provide additional support for students who struggle with vocabulary and confidence. Schools must support teachers in implementing innovative strategies to make learning interesting and effective. Future research could investigate combining brainstorming with other strategies such as mind mapping or vocabulary instruction to address the challenges identified in this study.

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