CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background and rationale of the study. It explains the importance of writing skills in English language learning, the role of textbooks in supporting cognitive development, and the relevance of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy as a framework for analyzing cognitive levels in writing tasks.

1.1 Background of The Study

Textbooks have played an important role in facilitating student learning, especially in language acquisition. The 'English for Nusantara' textbook was developed for 8th-grade students in Indonesia. It is specifically designed to enhance the English language proficiency of young learners. One of the central focuses of the curriculum is to strengthen students' writing abilities (Megawati, 2024). Writing requires engages in cognitive processes that challenge their understanding and creativity. To achieve this goal, textbooks must incorporate tasks that align with cognitive development (Huda, 2024), which ensuring that students are given tasks that encourage higher-order thinking while reinforcing foundational knowledge.

This study was motivated by my prior experience during the *Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa* (PKM), a mandatory teaching internship required by my university, during which I taught eighth-grade students using the *English for Nusantara* textbook. I found the textbook to be pedagogically engaging; however, students' responses to the learning activities were mixed. This observation prompted my interest in conducting a closer examination of the textbook. In particular, I aimed to verify the cognitive demands of the writing tasks by analyzing whether they predominantly emphasized Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) rather than Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS), which may have contributed to students' learning difficulties. The eighth grade was selected as the focus of this study because it represents an intermediate stage within

the junior high school curriculum, offering a balanced perspective between introductory and advanced levels.

Bloom Taxonomy presents an influential framework that is unique in terms of classification of cognitive engagement (Bloom, 1956). Taxonomy is a well-organized manner of conceptualizing various levels of thinking beginning with the simplest tasks, i.e., remembering information to the complex tasks, i.e., synthesizing and generating new ideas. The original taxonomy of Bloom, had six levels including Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. In 2001 Anderson and Krathwohl added fundamental change to the taxonomy and reorganized it into the six levels, including Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create (Putri, 2024).

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy has been applied in various studies to determine the effectiveness of textbook tasks in facilitating learner cognitive growth particularly on language skills in learning English. According to these studies, it has been illustrated that majority of the tasks in the English textbooks are found to address the lower-order thinking skills (LOTS), i.e. Remember, and Understand, as opposed to the higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) i.e. Analyze, Evaluate, or Create. As an illustration, Arsana et al. (2023) reported that 64.4 percent of activities included in the English for Nusantara Grade 7 textbook belonged to the Remember level, and merely 25.4 percent corresponded with HOTS (Arsana 2023). Equal by equal, Rustiyani et al. (2021) also discovered that only minimal evaluative and creative tasks were present in Pathway to English, with 84.5 percent of the total tasks being LOTS (Rustiyani 2021).

Moreover, a similar investigation of writing tasks published in the Bahasa Inggris textbook in the 10th grade (Saputra, 2021) shows a more pronounced percentage of tasks aimed at a higher level, with 38.46%[28] of the percentage of tasks directed at the level of creating included. This implies that an increasing number of textbooks are starting to incorporate

more cognitively challenging writing assignments that promote synthesis and creative expression (Saputra 2021). These results show that more task division is required on all levels of cognitive involvement, especially in the writing passages, to facilitate the development of critical thinking and language skills in the students.

All these studies show that most of the textbooks still tend to place students at lower cognitive levels of thinking and some textbooks have tried to challenge the students to higher-level thinking. This body of work justifies its relevance and necessity of the proposed study, which is intended to examine the levels of cognitive domains of writing items in the English for Nusantara textbook in 8th grade.

This research is important because the study can influence educators, curriculum designing, and textbook designers to get meaningful feedback. This research can point out these areas where the writing tasks in the textbook of English for Nusantara may require modification or improvement toward the cognitive development primarily through the in-depth analysis of these writing tasks. In case the gaps in some cognitive levels are observed, it may suggest that more multifaceted tasks should appear to facilitate students to practice higher-order thinking (Finansu, 2025). On the contrary, in the event when the assigned tasks are too difficult and challenging to 8th-grade students, it might signify that the textbook must be modified, so that the students do not feel overwhelmed and receive sufficient assistance in acquiring the essential skills.

In addition, this study addressed a large research gap in the sense that it pays specific attention to the English Nusantara as a textbook up to date that has never been critically analyzed using the Bloom revised Taxonomy. The result of this study will not only contribute to the knowledge about Indonesian educational materials, but also make a stepping stone in gauging textbooks in other settings. The knowledge of how various cognitive levels are reflected in the textbooks will aid educators to develop even more effective instructional techniques and allow students to learn material in a manner that fosters future cognitive

and academic development (Hamdi, 2025).

This study has examined the cognitive domain levels that have been engraved in the writing activities of the English for Nusantara textbook. Using the modified Bloom Taxonomy to assess these assignments, the research will determine what areas of cognition are being addressed, as well as determine whether the textbook is doing its due diligence in balancing lower-order and higher- order cognitive assignments. The study is expected to help to enhance the structure of the textbook, as well as the abilities to write of the students and get them ready to increasingly cognitively challenging tasks of both academic and real life.

1.2 Research Question

The main research question in this research is:

1. What cognitive domain levels are represented in the writing tasks according to the Bloom's revised Taxonomy?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

This study aims to discuss the ideas of levels of thinking maintained on the given writing assignments of the English textbook of Nusantara- designed, which should be explained by employing the conceptualization of the modified scheme of Bloom Taxonomy. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the tasks in terms of the support of cognitive skills necessary in the development of good writing skills by students. The results will give details on how the textbook may be refined to stimulate the upper-order thinking and creativity among the students so that the writing activities stimulate the students at different levels of thinking.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is focused on examining the hierarchical levels of cognitive domains imbedded to the writing assignments of the textbook entitled 'English for Nusantara' eighth grade textbook which is under the Merdeka Curriculum of Indonesia. It does not examine other language

skills such as reading, speaking, or listening. The findings are specific to this textbook and may not be generalized to other textbooks or grade levels.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the study focused only on writing activities in the 8th-grade English for Nusantara textbook and did not analyze other skills such as reading, listening, or speaking. Therefore, the results cannot represent the overall content and cognitive level of the entire textbook.

Second, this study only examined one textbook, without comparing it with other English textbooks that might be used in other schools or regions. This makes the results difficult to generalize or apply broadly to different educational contexts.

Despite these limitations, this study provides a useful initial overview of the cognitive level of writing tasks in the English for Nusantara textbook and can serve as a basis for further, more in-depth research.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1. Theoretically

This study is of value to the theoretical knowledge of the interaction between textbook design and the cognitive processes. Through applying the Bloom's revised Taxonomy into analyzing the writing tasks, it serves to expand the body of literature on cognitive domains of language learning especially writing. Bloom Taxonomy is a consistent approach to educational study that already has been adopted by many, and the incorporation of Bloom Taxonomy on language textbooks outside of the English- speaking world, such as Indonesia, will complement the research. The research will contribute to the corpus of knowledge regarding the manner in which textbooks may be constructed to appeal to students with different levels of cognitive abilities, encouraging them to think critically and creatively

relating to language acquisition and learning. In addition, the project will offer wisdom of the cognitive load in different forms of writing task which might also be useful to researchers with prior curiosity of cognitive advancement in academic institutions.

2. Practically

The findings of this study are expected to have positive implications for several parties. For teachers, this research provides a clear picture of how writing activities in the *English for Nusantara* textbook correspond to different levels of cognitive skills. With this understanding, teachers will be better equipped to design instruction that meets the cognitive demands of the tasks, ensuring that students are appropriately challenged and supported in developing their writing abilities.

For curriculum developers and textbook designers, the findings offer valuable feedback on the cognitive load embedded in textbook writing activities. This information may assist in improving the alignment of tasks with Bloom's Taxonomy, ensuring that activities promote higher-order thinking and creativity. The research can also serve as a reference for revising existing tasks or designing new ones that more effectively enhance students' cognitive development and fulfill curriculum objectives.

For educational organizations, the study can be used as a source of information when selecting or reviewing textbooks. By understanding the impact of the *English for Nusantara* textbook on students' cognitive development, schools can make more informed decisions about which textbooks are most likely to support cognitive growth and prepare students for future academic challenges. Ultimately, this may contribute to improving the overall quality of education and students' learning experiences.