

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS ERRORS IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT  
(A Case Study in the Tenth Grade Students of SMA Free Methodist Medan )**

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**ABSTRACT**

The main objective of this descriptive study was to investigate and categorize the mistakes made by 10th grade students at SMA Free Methodist Medan when they wrote recount texts. Researchers assessed with a written test, which found 168 errors. The study showed that the five most common types of errors occurred, with misspellings being the most common accounting for 58 errors (35%), pronoun usage with 17 errors (10%), simple past tense with 46 errors (27%), punctuation with 23 errors (14%), and preposition usage with 24 errors (14%). Among them, spelling errors were found to be the most dominant, accounting for 35% of the total errors. The researchers also analyzed the causes of these errors and identified three main factors: first language interference with 51 errors (36%), carelessness with 71 errors (50%), and translation with 20 errors (14%). Carelessness was found to be the primary cause, contributing to 50% of the errors.

*Keywords: Recount Text, Writing, Error Analysis, English teaching.*

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Writing skills are different from other skills because they require mastery of grammar and other language rules in addition to sufficient vocabulary to build regular paragraphs. In the process of compiling written content, concepts and ideas are often communicated through the use of symbols such as letters and punctuation. According to Liu and Braine (2005), writing is more difficult because it can measure a person's language and communicative skills.

Recount text is one of the genres of text that is taught to students. The purpose of writing this text is to provide information to readers about past events, both related to personal experiences and general events. Unfortunately, many students fail to understand how to write this text correctly, especially in terms of compiling the contents of the text. The purpose of recount writing is to describe past experiences and follow the sequence of events that occurred chronologically. Recount text was chosen as teaching material in English lessons in this study, because recount text tells about events that happened in the past. Thus, students become more interested in improving their ability to use the simple past tense.

#### **1.1 Formulation of the Problem**

1. What are the types of student errors in writing recount text?
2. What are the most dominant types of students error in writing recount text?

#### **1.2 Research Purpose**

1. To find the types of student errors in writing recount text.
2. To find the most dominant types of student errors in writing recount texts.

#### **1.3 Benefits of Research**

This research is expected to be useful for students and teachers in the Department of English Education. Readers are expected to get valuable information and in-depth understanding of how students analyze errors in writing recount text. This research is also expected to be a valuable reference source in understanding common mistakes that are often made by students. In addition, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the errors that often occur in writing recount text. Thus, the reader will be able to learn more about the errors that often appear in writing recount text, so that the reader can recognize and overcome these errors more effectively.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.1 Research design**

This study used a qualitative research design that employed descriptive analysis. To calculate the error, the researcher used the Sudijono formula (2008). Sudijono (2008: 15) stated that descriptive qualitative research was a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism. This method was suitable for research that was objective and natural, with the researcher as the main instrument.

#### **2.2 Subject and object of the research**

This study aimed to analyze students' errors in writing recount texts at SMA Free Methodist Medan in class X. There was one class with 25 students who were the subject of this study. And the object of this research was the students' errors in writing recount text.

#### **2.3 Instrument of research**

The researchers used a written test that involved students in writing recount texts about unforgettable events. Additionally, the researchers prepared titles that the students could choose for their recount texts, such as New Year, Meeting an Old Friend, Visiting the Zoo, Being Late for School, and Funny Incident. The time limit for the test was 45 minutes after the test was given.

#### **2.4 Technique of collecting data**

Researchers used various techniques in conducting this research, such as:

1. The researchers visited the school and requested permission from the principal to conduct the research. After obtaining permission, the researchers collaborated with the English teacher to determine the research schedule.
2. The researchers used purposive sampling method to select one class as the research sample. Class X was chosen as the research sample.
3. The researcher gave materials to students which contained instructions for writing recount texts. After that, the researcher collected the students' writing tests and checked their recount texts.
4. The researcher analyzed the students' recount texts.
5. The researcher counted the number of errors made by the students and depicted them in a table based on error classification.
6. Then, the researcher explained the reasons why the students made those errors.
7. In the final step, the researcher drew conclusions from the conducted research.

## 2.5 Technique of analysing data

The researcher divided the data analysis technique into three main steps to analyze students' errors in writing Recount texts. The first step was collecting sample data to be used in the study. The second step was identifying errors, where the researcher identified the types of errors made by the students in writing Recount texts. The final step was error description, where the researcher described and provided explanations about the errors made by the students in writing Recount texts.

The researcher used a formula modified from Sudijono (2008) to conduct error analysis.

The formula was:

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Notes:

P = Percentage value

F = The number of frequencies / total error type

N = Ideal number / total value

100% = Fixed number

Furthermore, the researcher compiled the calculation results into a table and converted them into percentages. After that, the researcher created a pie chart based on the findings.

### CHAPTER III FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1 FINDINGS

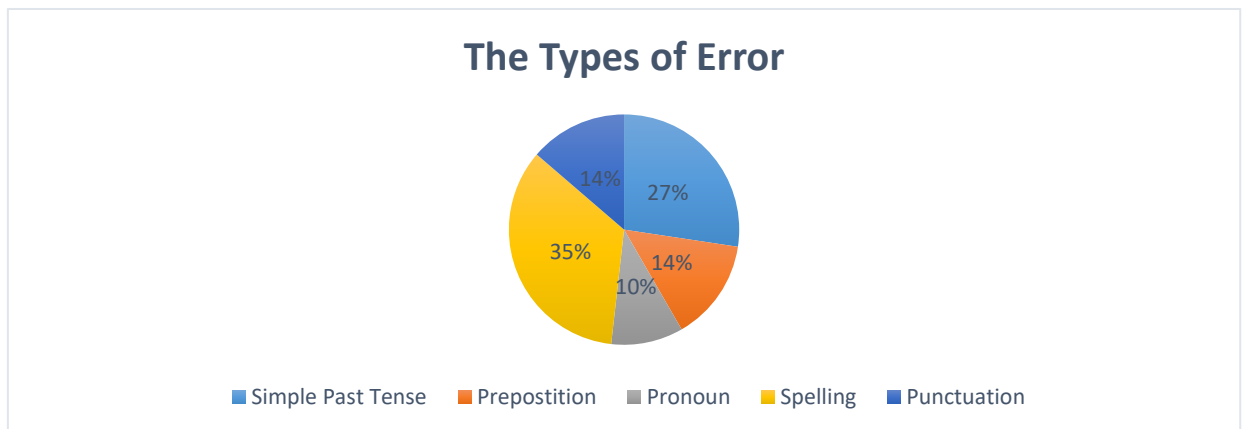
The researcher identified and counted the number of errors in the students' recount texts. Then, the researcher organized the calculation results into a table and converted them into percentages. To present the findings, the researcher also created a pie chart.

In the following table, there is a summary of the types of errors made by the students in writing recounts

**Table 3.1 Percentage of Student Errors**

Percentage of Student Errors			
No	Types of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Use of simple past tense	46	27%
2.	Use of preposition	24	14%
3.	Use of pronoun	17	10%
4.	Spelling	58	35%
5.	Punctuation	23	14%
<b>Total</b>		<b>168</b>	<b>100%</b>

A pie chart was created to illustrate the percentage of student errors, with the highest and lowest ranks.



Based on the student writing data, the pie chart above illustrates various errors made by students. The researcher arranged the results in the pie chart from the highest level of error to the lowest level.

### 1. Spelling

After analyzing the data, spelling errors were found to be the most frequent type of error committed by the students. This occurred in 58 errors (35%) out of the investigated samples in this study. Some examples of errors found are as follows:

1. Error in writing "**a shoes**" which should be changed to "shoes" because "shoes" is the plural form of "shoe".
2. Spelling error in the sentence "my **aont's** house" which is written as "my aunt's house" because of the misspelling of the word "aunt".
3. The use of the word "**circles**" instead of "circle" to ensure compatibility with the singular noun "circle".
4. Spelling error in the word "**brithday**", which should be "birthday", and the word "**casir**", which should be "cashier".

### 2. Simple Past Tense

The second type of error made by students was the use of simple past tense as much as 46 errors (27%). Some examples of errors found in the research are:

1. Wrong use of the word "**go**" which should be "went" in the simple past tense. For example, "My friend and I went to the market" because it describes an action that happened in the past.
2. Error in the sentence "We **buy** the shoes because now July 15th 2022 **my sister birthday party**" which should be "We bought the shoes because my sister's birthday party is on July 15th, 2022" to use the correct simple past tense and add a possession sign ('s) on "my sister's birthday party".
3. Incorrect use of the word "**gather**" which should be "gathered" in the sentence "I gather" because it refers to past actions.

4. In the sentence "One day, I **have** the chance to meet an old friend," the correct form to use is the simple past tense, which would be "One day, I had the chance to meet an old friend."

### 3. Preposition

The third type of error observed is related to prepositions, accounting for 24 errors (14%). Some examples of errors found are as follows:

1. The incorrect use of the preposition "of" in the phrase "gather **of** grandma's house" which should be written as "gather at grandma's house." The correct preposition to indicate the location is "at" instead of "of."
2. In the sentence "And that night we ate at a **Chinese Shop**," the use of the word "Shop" is not quite right to refer to a restaurant. Should be "And that night we ate at a Chinese restaurant."
3. There is an error in the use of the preposition "to" in the context of payment **to** the cashier. It should be changed to "at" to correctly indicate the location of the payment.
4. In the sentence "after **iyu** we went home," there is an error in writing the word "iyu" which should be "that" so it becomes "after that, we went home."

### 4. Punctuation

The fourth type of error that occurs is an error in the use of punctuation marks, covering 23 errors (14%). The example of the mistake can be seen below:

1. Error in the use of commas in the sentence "When we got to the beach, we enjoyed the beautiful beach at **5pm** we decided to go home." It should be written as " After arriving at the beach, we enjoyed the beauty of the beach. At 5pm, we decided to go home." The error occurred in placing a comma after the phrase "at 5pm".
2. Wrong placement of punctuation marks in the sentence "**On january 1st** we and our family went on vacation to the Pond and river." It should be written as "On January 1st, we and our family went on vacation to the pond and river." Notice the use of a comma after the phrase "On January 1st"

3. In the sentence "**we are new years there** And on the 3rd we went home," there is a lack of necessary punctuation. It should be written as " We attended the New Years celebration there, and then we came back on the 3rd.."

4. In the sentence "We immediately set off **fire works** right along with the turn of the year," there is a space error in the word "fireworks." It should be written as " We immediately set off fireworks at the turn of the year."

### 5. Pronoun

The last type of error that occurred is errors in pronoun usage, accounting for 17 errors (10%). Here are some examples of errors:

1. Error in the sentence "**I and my family** were in my grandpa's hometown." It should be written as "My family and I were in my grandpa's hometown." The error lies in the order of the pronouns, where "My family" should come before "I" to obtain the correct sentence structure.

2. In the sentence "In the end, **me** gave back my friend's money." It should be written as "In the end, I gave back my friend's money." because "I" is the correct pronoun to function as the subject in that sentence.

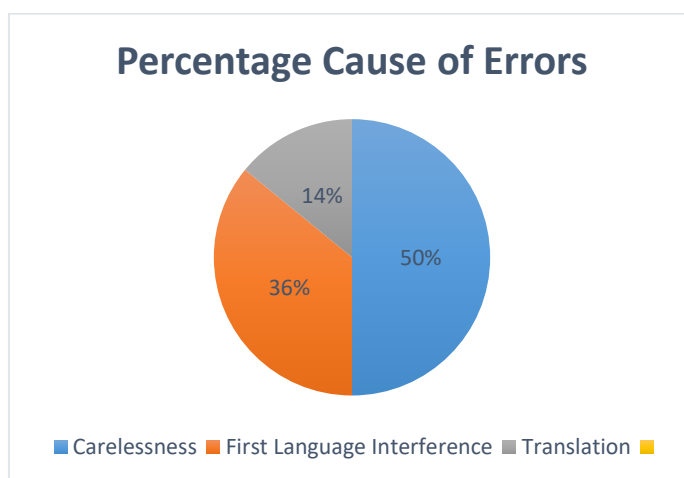
3. In the sentence "**Me and my friend's** playing in my yard," there are two errors. Firstly, the usage of the pronoun "me" should be replaced with "I" to match the subject of the sentence. Secondly, the use of "friend's" as a possessive form is irrelevant in that context. It should be written as "My friend and I were playing in my yard."

**Table 3.2 Percentage of Student Error Causes**

Percentage of Student Error Causes			
No	Types of Error Causes	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Carelessness	71	50%
2.	First language interference	51	36%



3.	Translation	20	14%
<b>Total</b>		<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>



The researcher provided an explanation from the pie chart of student error causes mentioned above, by sequentially explaining from the highest to the lowest error levels as follows.

### 1. Carelessness

The main cause of students' errors is carelessness, which accounts for 71 (50%) of the total. Here are some examples found in this study: "I am planned for meet to my friend" should be corrected to "I planned to meet my friend" to use the correct verb form and eliminate the unnecessary "am." "On new year 2023" should be "On New Year's Day 2023." "Me and our family" should be "My family and I." "My ount's house" should be "My aunt's house." "When holiday school" should be "During the school holiday."

### 2. First Language Inteferece

The second cause of errors made by students is first language inteferece, which accounts for a total of 51 (36%). Here are examples of errors caused by first language interference: "Once Upon i and family Go to pasir pangaraian" should be corrected to "Once upon a time, my family and I went to Pasir Pangaraian." The sentence sounded awkward or unnatural in English. "Make cakes" should be changed to "Made cakes". "Made" is more suitable to indicate "helping mom make the

cakes". "We go to the zoo and Aquarium" should be changed to "We went to the zoo and aquarium" as the action took place in the past.

### 3. Translation

The lowest cause of errors is translation, with a total of 20 (14%). Here are examples of errors caused by translation: Some translated sentences from other languages into English sound unnatural or less accurate, such as "We will See my sister Photoshoot graduation," which should be corrected to "We will attend my sister's graduation photoshoot." The use of the word "held" for "Christmas" should be replaced with "celebrated" because Christmas is a celebration, not an event. The use of the word "put" for "fireworks" should be replaced with "set off" because we are "releasing" or "lighting" the fireworks, not "putting". Additionally, in the sentence "after that We took a vacation to Parapat," it should be corrected to "after that, we went on a vacation to Parapat."

## 3.2 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the types of errors made by students when writing recount texts in Grade 10 at SMA Free Methodist Medan and determine the most dominant type of error.

### 1. Types of student error in writing recount text

The research findings reveal several common types of errors made by students in writing recount texts at SMA Free Methodist Medan. The identified errors include:

1. Spelling Errors: There were 58 errors (35%) in spelling words in recount texts. Students often made mistakes in spelling, such as reversing letters, omitting or adding unnecessary letters, or using capital letters incorrectly.
2. Pronoun Usage Errors: There were 17 errors (10%) in pronoun usage in recount texts. Students frequently made mistakes in using pronouns, either by using inappropriate or inconsistent pronouns, or possibly lacking a clear understanding of their usage.

3. Simple Past Tense Errors: There were 46 errors (27%) in using the simple past tense in recount texts. Students often used incorrect verb forms.
4. Punctuation Errors: There were 23 errors (14%) in punctuation usage in recount texts. Students frequently made mistakes in using punctuation marks such as periods, commas, exclamation marks, question marks, etc. They also tend to under-utilize or misuse required punctuation.
5. Preposition Usage Errors: There were 24 errors (14%) in preposition usage in recount texts. Students often made errors in using prepositions, either by using inappropriate prepositions or lacking a proper understanding of their usage in the correct context.

## **2. The most dominant types of student errors in writing recount text**

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that spelling errors are the most dominant type of error in writing recount text at SMA Free Methodist Medan in grade 10 students, namely as many as 58 errors (35%). These errors occur in the form of writing letters upside down, omission or addition of letters that are not appropriate, or the use of capital letters that are not appropriate.

In this study, the researchers also analyzed the causes of students' errors in writing recount texts. The results of the analysis show that some of the causes of students' errors in writing recount text are:

1. First Language Interference: Students are often influenced by their mother tongue in writing recount texts in the target language. A total of 51 errors (36%) occurred due to this influence, leading to errors in the use of sentence structure, vocabulary, and conventions of the target language.
2. Carelessness: Students often make mistakes due to a lack of care or attention in writing recount texts. A total of 71 errors (50%) occurred because of this factor. They may not double-check their writing for spelling errors or punctuation errors.

3. Translation: Students tend to translate literally from their mother tongue into the target language when writing recount texts. A total of 20 errors (14%) occurred because of this factor. This can lead to errors in sentence structure and the use of vocabulary that is not in accordance with the target language.

In this study, it can be concluded that the main cause of students' errors in writing recount texts is carelessness. total of 71 errors (50%) occurred because of this factor. Students may not check their writing for spelling errors or punctuation errors.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **4.1 Conclusion**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that there were several common errors in writing recount texts among the 10th-grade students of SMA Free Methodist Medan. These errors include spelling errors, pronoun usage errors, simple past tense errors, punctuation errors, and preposition usage errors. However, the most dominant type of error is spelling errors, accounting for 35% of the total errors. Furthermore, the study also identified the main causes of these errors. The causes include first language interference, carelessness, and translation. Among these causes, carelessness stands out as the primary factor students' errors, accounting for 50% of the total errors.

#### **4.2 Suggestion**

Researchers provide some suggestions to English teachers for regularly conducting spelling exercises activities to enhance students' spelling skills. After completing a writing test, take the time to review spelling errors, focusing on words that are often a source of spelling mistakes, and correct any errors found. Additionally, to address the main cause of errors, which is carelessness, encourage students to pay attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. Reading the writing test aloud can also help identify awkward or unclear sentences. Future researchers are advised to further explore the research findings related to this issue. Furthermore, the researchers hoped that the results of this study would inspire future researchers to further investigate the analysis of writing errors, thus enriching the existing research.

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