

## **Interlanguage Errors In Senior High School Students' Recount Text Writing**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research is mainly concerned with the analysis of interlanguage errors of senior high school students in writing recount text. The purposes of this research are: to analyze the dominant types of interlanguage errors made by students in their recount text writing under the surface strategy taxonomy, to analyze the reasons why the errors occur to the students in writing their recount text, and to analyze the way interlanguage processes influence students to make errors in writing their recount text. This research used descriptive-qualitative methodology. The samples of this research were 15 eleventh-grade students of MA PK Ma'arif 2 Kuwarasan. The data were collected through documentation, table checklist, and interview. The technique of data analysis was triangulation. The results of this research indicate 1) the four kinds of error based on surface strategy taxonomy (omission, addition, misordering, and misformation); the dominant error that appears in students' writing recount text is misformation error, 2) the reasons why this error occurred, and 3) the three interlanguage processes influencing the students in making errors covering overgeneralization, strategies of second language learning, and language transfer.

*Keywords: interlanguage, error analysis, recount text writing*

### **Introduction**

#### *Background of the study*

English has been accepted as an international language. The current status of English is underpinned by its wide use in a range of fields such as politics, diplomacy, international trade and industry, commerce, science and technology, education, the media, information technology, and popular culture (Lauder, 2008, p. 12). It means that English is used in almost every aspect of human life as media to communicate. It can also be used in transferring technology, knowledge, and even cross-culture understanding.

The role of English in educational advance is very significant in Indonesia. Most scientific papers are published in English. English is also increasingly used in the medium instruction of schools and universities. English in Indonesia is taught as a foreign language (Lauder, 2008, p. 10). Understanding the growing demand for English in the world makes the Indonesian government places English as one of the mandatory subjects in Junior and Senior High Schools.

One of the difficulties is when students have to write in a foreign language. One thing that usually makes it difficult to learn a foreign language correctly and acceptably is

that one language has a different system to another. The language system of English is different from Indonesia. This can make students face difficulties in learning English. Its difficulties can be the reason for errors. In this study, the researchers consider analysing errors in writing recount text. According to Grace (2007, p. 30), recount text is a text that tells the reader or listener what happened in the past through a sequence of events. The social function of this text is to inform the readers about someone's past experiences by retelling events.

Error analysis is the first approach to the study of SLA, which includes an internal focus on learner's creative ability to construct language (Saville-Troike, 2005, p. 37). A primary focus of error analysis is on learner errors and the evidence of how learner errors could provide an understanding of the underlying process of second language acquisition (Erdogan, 2005, p. 263). Ellis (2008, p. 56) explains that errors can be classified based on surface strategy taxonomy. It is divided into four types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

There were at least two previous studies that are related to this study. The first is Hidayatulloh's (2014) thesis with the title "Interlanguage Error Made by Students in Writing Recount Text (A Study at MAN 2 Boyolali)" and the second is Anggoro's (2013) thesis with the title "Interlanguage Errors in Writing Descriptive Text by Students of SMA Negeri 1 Sumberlawang". Based on the previous studies, the researchers learn the main focus was on interlanguage in writing which was quite interesting. However, what was missing in the previous studies were the analysis of how interlanguage influences students in writing, and also those previous studies only analyze errors based on linguistics view.

The researchers want to analyze the interlanguage errors in different views which on surface strategy views. This is related to how learners construct the sentence of the target language. The researchers also want to analyze how the interlanguage processes influence learners in writing recount text. The researchers are confident that the finding of the previous studies and the current study will add to our understanding of how errors occur in the process of second language learning. Besides, these findings will help teachers of EFL to better understand the teaching-learning of the process of English.

The research deals with the interlanguage errors made by students in writing. The reason for choosing this topic is the distinction between English and Indonesia in the language system which influences the way students produce their language. Indonesian as a native language has differences from English as the target language. These differences make the students confused, and they will have difficulties in writing.

#### *Research Context*

This research was conducted at MA PK Ma'arif 2 Kuwarasan, taking eleventh-grade students as the sample of the study. It is located at Jl. Candiwulan Gandusari Kuwarasan Kebumen. The reason for choosing this school is that this school is the only vocational high school in Kuwarasan district. We want to know more about the writing skills of the students in this school and also how their first language influences them in writing recount text. The object of the research is the students' tasks. The researchers analyze the surface structure of students' tasks. The analysis focus is the words of the task.

## Literary Review

### *Error Analysis*

According to Gass (2013, p. 87), error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make; it compares between the errors a learner makes in producing the target language and the target language form. It means that error analysis is one of the linguistic approaches focusing on analyzing learner's errors. Error analysis is a way to analyze errors made by learners in producing target language or target language form. Error and mistake are different. Some people still have misunderstandings in distinguishing these two things. According to Brown (1980) cited in Irawansyah (2017, p. 121), the error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learners, while the mistake is a performance error that is either a random guess or "slip", in that a failure to utilize a known system correctly. It means that error is learner's deviation in understanding a second language because of the learner's lack of competence while the mistake is learner's deviation performance due to performance factors such as fatigue, emotional strain, and memory limitation.

#### a. Types of Error

This research specifies errors undersurface strategy taxonomy. There are four types of errors in this strategy. They are:

- (1) Omission. Omission is a type of error which is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well- formed utterance (Ellis, 2008, p. 56). It means that omission error is caused by the absence of items that should be appeared.
- (2) Addition. Addition refers to any addition in a sentence or utterance (Kazemian and Shahbaz, 2015, p. 56). It implies that any appeared additional items could be the reason for errors in sentences and utterances.
- (3) Misformation. Misformation errors are those characterized by the use of the wrong form of a structure or morpheme (Ellis, 2008, p. 56). It means that misformation errors occur when learners use the wrong form and structure when forming sentences and utterances.
- (4) Misordering. Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance (Ellis, 2008, p. 56). It means that misordering errors occur when

learners put the incorrect placement of morpheme in the sentence or utterance.

#### b. Source of Errors

Erdogan (2005, p. 265) divided sources of error into two categories namely

- (1) Interlingual transfer. The beginning stages of learning a second language are characterized by a good deal of interlingual transfer from the native language (Brown, 2007 cited in Asni and Susanti, 2018, p. 136). It implies that learning a second language is related to language transfer from native language to target language.
- (2) Intralingual transfer. Tamimi (in Khresheh 2016, p. 54) asserts that there are still some errors caused by the negative transfer of the target language itself, and it is called intralingual transfer. It means that intralingual transfer is caused by the wrong transfer of the target language to the target language form itself.

*Interlanguage*

a. Definition of Interlanguage

According to Khresheh (2015, p. 123), interlanguage is the type of language which can be produced by foreign/second language learners who are in the process of acquiring a second language. It suggests that interlanguage is produced by learners of the second or target language in the process of acquiring a second language. Luna (2010, p. 61) states interlanguage could be defined as an intermediate stage between a learner's L1 and L2, in which she/he uses rules of both linguistic systems to produce sentences in L2. That means interlanguage is created by second language learners which is between the target language and native language. The learner uses both their native language and second language rules in producing the target language.

### *Types of Interlanguage Processes*

Selinker (in Khansir, 2012, p. 1030) identified five psycholinguistic of interlanguage processes.

- (1) Overgeneralization. James (1998) cited in Kazemian and Shahbaz (2015, p. 56) states that overgeneralization refers to the situation in which one form or rule of the language is overgeneralized over the other forms. It means that in this process of interlanguage process, the learners generalize some elements and rules of the target language.
- (2) Transfer of training. Transfer of training occurs when the second-language learner applies rules learned from instructors or textbooks (Dong, 2013, p. 42). It means that transfer training is related to how the second language is trained from the instructor (teacher) or the textbook.
- (3) Strategies of second language learning. Strategies of second language learning refer to the learner's conscious attempts to master the target language (Dong, 2013, p. 42). It implies that this strategy is related to how learners approach the target language.
- (4) Strategies of second language communication. Strategies of Communication are used by the learner to resolve communication problems when the interlanguage systems seem unequal to the task (Dong, 2013, p. 42). It denotes that this strategy is related to the way learners resolve communication problems when they try to communicate with others in the second language.
- (5) Language transfer. In language transfer, sometimes rules and subsystems of interlanguage might result from transfer from the first language (Kansir, 2012, p. 1030). It means that when producing the target language, the rules of the native language are shown in the target language form.

### *Writing*

In English, there are four basic skills namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. This study will explore writing skills. Writing is a language skill that is used to communicate indirectly (Javed, Juan & Nazli, 2013, p. 130). It means that in writing, learners use the written form to express their ideas and develop paragraphs. According to Hartley (2008) cited in Asni and Susanti (2018, p. 133), writing is an interactive process. It means that in writing someone does a lot of activities. In writing activity, learners not only write down sentences but also there are activities such as thinking ideas, designing written form, editing written form, and reviewing them.

### *Writing Processes*

There four processes in writing:

- (1) Prewriting. In this step, the writers choose what topic they want to write and collect the ideas and information that are related to the topic.
- (2) Outlining. In this second writing process, the writers have to organize the ideas into an outline. In this stage the ideas are organized into an outline to choose a specific part to develop a paragraph.
- (3) Writing. In this step, the writer starts to write a rough draft following the outline that he/she made.
- (4) Polishing. In this final step the writers fix the content and organization and also

edit the grammatical rules and punctuation. This is the time for writers to fix it after they finish the whole writing form.

### *Recount Text*

Recount text is written out to make a report about an experience of a series of related events (Knapp, 2005 cited in Saragih, Silalahi & Pardede, 2014, p. 57). It suggests that recount text is a text that is written to tell experience. The generic structures of recount text are orientation, record of events, and record of events. Orientation provides information about who, where, and when (Hyland, 2004, p. 124). It means that in orientation, it is important to inform readers about the participants, place, and time. A record of events usually is recounted in chronological order (Hyland, 2004, p. 124). It means that the writer tells the events of their experience or someone's experience in chronological order. It begins from the first event then the second event and soon. According to Lancashire Council (2008) cited in Husna (2019, p. 56), reorientation is the closing step of statements that include elaboration. In this reorientation, the writer could give a personal comment or statement. It means that there are closing statements and personal comments of the writer in the reorientation.

This article aims to analyze dominant types of interlanguage errors made by students in their recount text writing under the surface strategy taxonomy, to analyze the reason why the errors occur to students in writing recount text, and to analyze the way interlanguage processes influence students to make errors in writing recount text.

## **Method**

### *Research Design*

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This descriptive qualitative approach is implemented because the data analysis is presented descriptively. Creswell (2012, p. 626) defines qualitative research as an inquiry approach useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. It means that qualitative research is used to explore and understand the central phenomenon. Creswell (2012) adds that to learn about this phenomenon, the inquirer asks participants broad, general questions, collects the detailed views of participants in the form of words or images, and analyzes the information for description and themes. Based on the data, the researchers analyze and interpret the meanings of the data, drawn from personal thoughts and the theoretical framework used in this research. That means the researchers can learn about the phenomenon by asking the participants, collecting detailed views, and analyzing from descriptions and themes. After that, the researchers interpret the meaning of information and drawing personal thoughts based on the data.

### *Research Participants*

To determine the participants in this research, the researchers use cluster sampling. Cluster sampling is a form of sampling in which clusters (a collective type of unit that includes multiple elements) rather than single-unit elements are randomly selected (Johnson & Cristensen, 2014, p. 359). It means that cluster sampling is one kind of sampling that considers multiple elements as participants rather than a single-unit element. In this research, the researchers choose the second-year students to class A of MA PK Ma'arif Kuwarasan as participants.

### *Technique of Data Collection*

This study uses three data collection techniques. They are documentation, checklist, and interview.

- (1) Documentation. The researchers use the documentation method to collect data. Bowen states that 'documentation is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents' (2009, p. 27). It means that by using the documentation method, the researchers will review and evaluate the document data of the research. For this research, the researchers take students' composition of recount text as documentation data.
- (2) Checklist. According to Trigueros (2017, p. 13), a 'checklist is a list of aspects to observe as contents, abilities, and behavior'. It suggests that by using the checklist, the researchers can observe certain contents of the data. In this research, the researchers use a table checklist as one of the data collection methods used to classify the errors that students made in writing recount text.
- (3) Interview. Harrell and Bradley (2009, p.8) define interviews as discussions, usually one-on-one interaction between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics. The researchers use interview method to validate the reason and how interlanguage influence students' error. In this research, the researchers use a semi-structured interview protocol. The interview protocol is used to strengthen the result that obtained from the students based on student opinion.

### *Data Analysis*

After data are collected, the researchers analyze and interpret them. This research will analyze errors made by students in writing recount text. The researchers will use steps of errors analysis by Ellis (2008, p. 48) to analyze document data. The first step in this process of data analysis is the researchers identify students' interlanguage errors from students' documents. In this stage, the researchers mark the errors that students made in their recount text. The second step is the description of errors. This step describes the students' errors involving the classification of kinds of errors made by the students. In this stage, the researchers classify the students' errors based on surface strategy taxonomy theory in their writing recount text. The classified errors will be put in the table checklist. The third step is the explanation of errors. The researchers will explain the errors based on the data that she gets from the table checklist and interview. The last step is evaluation errors. The researchers will evaluate errors that students made and also giving corrections to the errors.

For the interview, the researchers will use the process that involved preparing and organizing the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of interview text, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding, and finally forming an interpretation from data analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2011 cited on Vu, 2018, p. 272). Besides using the analysis from Ellis that is mentioned before, the researcher also uses unit analysis as a process in analyzing errors. The unit analysis of the research is the word that students produce in their recount text.

## Findings and Discussion

### *Findings*

The researchers analyze 15 documents from the eleventh-grade student. The documents are from students' tasks in writing recount text. From the documents, the researchers found some errors that would be listed on the table checklist to clarify and identify the error based on surface strategy taxonomy. After analyzing table checklist data, the researchers found that the dominant error of students in writing recount text based on surface strategy taxonomy is misformation error. Then it is followed by omission error, addition error, and misordering error. From the data result, it can be concluded that students have difficulties in forming English sentences. This problem makes students produce errors in writing recount text.

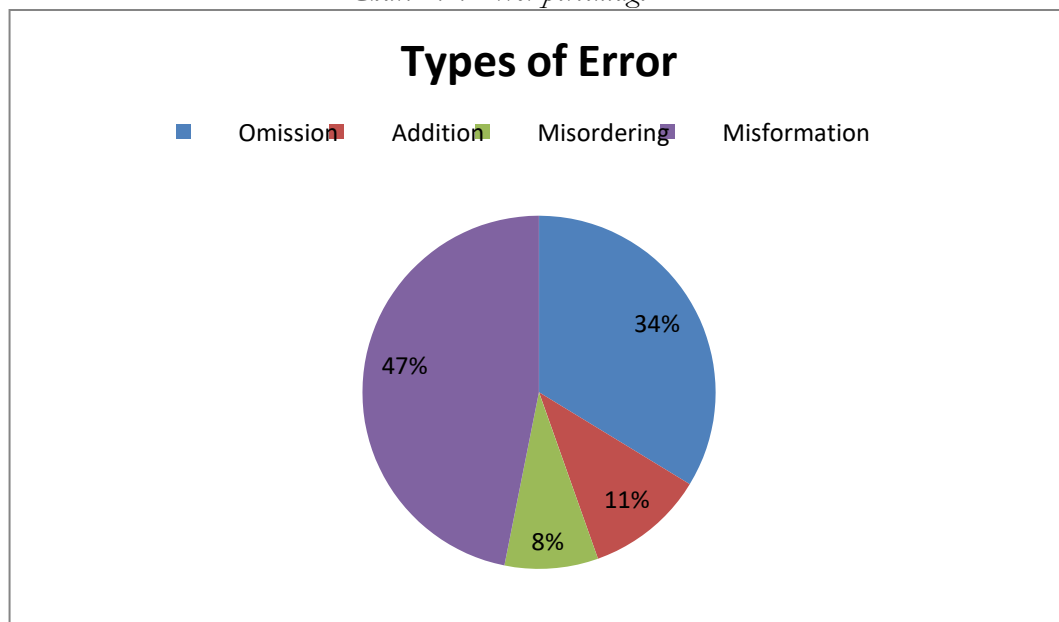
*Table 1.1: Accumulation of table checklist*

Student (S)	Types of Error				Total
	Omission	Addition	Misordering	Misformation	
S1	1	1	1	5	8
S2	10	2	0	3	15
S3	1	1	0	4	5
S4	3	0	0	4	7
S5	5	1	0	3	9
S6	3	2	5	8	18
S7	4	2	0	7	13
S8	4	1	1	9	15
S9	4	1	0	5	10
S10	5	0	0	4	9
S11	5	2	0	6	13
S12	5	1	0	2	8



S13	2	0	0	8	10
S14	3	1	1	8	13
S15	4	4	7	6	21
	59	19	15	82	175

Chart 1.1: Error percentage



The data above show students' errors in writing recount text. The highest percentage reflects the most errors students made in writing recount text. As we can see the most frequent error in students' writing recount text is misformation error; [47%] followed by omission error; [34%], addition error; [11%] and misordering error; [8%].

From table 1.1 and chart 1.1, the researchers found the total of errors is 175 errors from 15 data. The researchers classified the types of error based on surface strategy taxonomy. We can see that there are four types of error. They are omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. The dominant errors are misformation error. We elaborated the types of error into four parts from the dominant one into the lowest one: (1) misformation, (2) omission, (3) addition, and (4) misordering. Its result also answers research question number 1, what is the dominant error that students make in writing recount text based on surface strategy taxonomy. The answer is misformation error.

From the interview result we know why the errors happen and how interlanguage processes that influence the students in writing recount text. From those tables, we know that students' errors it caused by the interlingual transfer. The interlingual transfer itself is a situation where students' first language influences students in transferring the first language into the foreign language. In this case, Indonesian as students' first language influence student when they transfer into English as a foreign language. It is caused by some factors, the first factor is caused by the lack of vocabulary. The second factor is caused by the effect of their first language in transferring language. The third factor is caused by the effect of Indonesian in writing English. The interview results also show interlanguage processes that are causing errors in students' writing recount text. From those five interlanguage processes, three processes appear when students wrote recount text. They are overgeneralization, strategies of second language learning, and language transfer.

## Discussion

Based on the result of table checklist, the researchers found four types of error based on surface strategy taxonomy. They are omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. The dominant error of students in writing recount text is misformation error. Its error is characterized by the use of the wrong structure or morpheme. It refers to the problem of wrong selection of the students when forming words, sentences, or utterances. This finding is linked with Susanti's finding (2017: 37), which said that the most common errors made by students in writing recount text are misformation errors.

Based on the document and the student opinion on the interview result, the researchers concluded that the reasons of students' errors in writing recount text are interlingual transfer. Interlanguage transfer is related to the negative transfer of language from the first language into the target language. In this case, the negative transfer is from Indonesian into English. The finding of this research shows that the reason of errors of students in writing recount text is the effect of native language to the target language. This finding is linked with Cholipah's view that interlanguage transfer occurred when students are influenced by the first language in using the target language (Cholipah, 2014, p. 68).

On the ground of the interview results, the researchers analyze that errors in students' writing recount text are influenced by the interlanguage process. From the five types of interlanguage processes there are three types of interlanguage processes that influence students in making errors in writing recount text. The first is an overgeneralization. Overgeneralization happens where students generalize words or sentences based on their knowledge. The second interlanguage process is the strategy of second language learning. This interlanguage process happens when students face difficulties in understanding and forming a second language. This finding is linked with Richards and Schmidt's view (2010) in Feisal (2016, p. 111) who states that overgeneralization is indicated when a language learner extends patterns from the target language. It means that the students generalize words or phrases based on their knowledge and the structure of their native language.

The second interlanguage process is the strategy of second language learning. This interlanguage process happens when students face difficulties in understanding and forming a second language. Then they make some efforts to compose English sentence. This attempt might result some errors in writing recount text. This finding is linked with Khresheh's view (2015) that states "second language learning strategies are consciously based on problem-solving, directed by purpose, and seek to increase the efficiency in the study". He also said that the learners of L2 might real their errors and make progress when a proper learning strategy is adopted or followed.

The third interlanguage process that happens to the students in writing recount text is language transfer. This process occurs when students transfer their first language into the target language without regarding target language structure. This finding is linked with Feisal's view that some of the subjects translated the words directly from Indonesian into English without considering the meanings and the functions of the words in English (Feisal, 2016, p. 110). It means that the finding of thesis research is similar with Feisal's findings where the students directly translate subjects from Indonesian into English without considering the meanings and the functions whether it is appropriate or not.

## Conclusion

After analyzing the result of this research, the researchers would like to conclude that the dominant error of eleventh-grade students of MA PK Ma'arif 2 Kuwarasan in writing recount text is misformation error, it takes 47%. Then followed by omission error; 34%, addition error; 11% and misordering error; 8%. The reason of errors is caused by interlanguage transfer. And the interlanguage processes that influenced students to make errors are overgeneralization, strategies of second language learning, and language transfer.

After we carried out the research, the researcher would like to give some suggestions related to the results of this research. The researcher hope it can help in teaching-learning activities and decrease the errors. First, the teacher should create an impressive teaching writing technique that can draw students' attention to the English writing activity. Second, Writing has some rules and types of text. Hence, the teacher should simplify her explanation without minimizing the material essence that is given. Third, the teacher should give the student explanation about the difference between Indonesian language system and English system. And last, the teacher should give feedback to the students' writing and communicates their progress in writing.

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