



ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS IN WRITING A RECOUNT TEXT (A CASE STUDY AT GRADE III IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT UNIVERSITAS HKBP NOMMENSEN)

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the students' error analysis in writing recount texts. This study aims to investigate the types of errors and the most dominant type of errors made by the third-grade students of the English department at UHN. This research applies qualitative research design. There were 31 students involved from the English department of Universitas HKBP Nommensen (UHN). The data were taken from their writing of recount texts. The results of the study showed that there are five types of errors made by the students, namely omission errors, addition errors, misformation errors, and disorder errors. In the students' writing there were 13 omission errors (6.5%), 12 addition errors (6%), 158 misformation errors (79%), and 17 disorder errors (8.5%). Therefore, the most dominant type of error made by the third-grade students in English department of UHN in writing recount text is misformation error, with the total number of errors is 158 (79%). It can be concluded that the third-grade students in the English department at UHN is still low in writing recount text especially in using tenses.

Keywords: analysis, error, writing, recount text

INTRODUCTION

The skills of speaking and writing are not the same as the other skills. The ability to write does not only need vocabulary to create a paragraph, but also fluency in grammatical forming, and other rules. To write a paragraph needs time for a good result. According to Nunan (1991) cited in Sadiyah and Royani (2019), the students can write more easily if the topics are related to their interests and challenging to them. They can think about an idea, or whatever comes in their minds and then consult or look for dictionaries and other book references. However in fact, the process of writing is a difficult skill to be mastered by students. Especially for the second language or foreign language learners, the writing difficulty does not only happen in formulating and organizing ideas but also in the process of translating those ideas into a readable piece of writing. Accordingly, Richards and Renandya (2002) as cited in Ratnaningsih (2016), stated that writing is the most difficult skill to master for the second or foreign language learners. The difficulty faced by the students becomes more prominent, moreover if their language proficiency is low. Writing then is a productive skill where the activities work together starting from gathering and formulating ideas, until constructing the sentences to be a good paragraph through following the linguistic rules. There are many aspects to be considered in order to make our writing can be easily understood by the reader. First,

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having a wide range of vocabulary mastery is one of the most important ability in learning English. Then, the ability of recognizing words; nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, etc. After that, knowing how to organize those words into a good arrangement of phrases or clauses; the subject, predicate and other are needed. Besides, the use of tenses is very important and unavoidable.

Writing has a wide definition by some experts from different points of view. According to Harmer (2004) cited in Husna and Multazim (2019) writing is a tool to express the idea from the mind. It is meant by writing paragraph, somebody needs higher intellectual level to think and write the idea in the paragraph. In composing a good writing, ideas also have an important role so the readers understand the writing. However, the grammatical forms of all sentences are very important too. For the students, writing a paragraph is not easy.

In addition, writing is an ability which needs to be practiced regularly by the learners. According to Sapkota (2012) as cited in Harris, Ansyar and Radjab (2014), writing is an activity of transferring graphical symbols to present a language in order to deliver some meanings so that the reader can comprehend the information conveyed by the writer. Thus, through writing, the students can deliver the messages to the readers from the time. The writing ability is considered to be a difficult skill because it transfers the idea from the mind into the written form. In other words, this skill consist of several aspects to master, including contents, organizations, vocabularies, grammatical structures, and mechanics. Therefore, the students must mater those parts to transfer the idea in writing. Writing is a method to communicate to the reader, deliver the message and to transfer the idea. This is very crucial to communicate with others in written form for the readers. In other words, this is one of the tools of communication with others. Writing is also an art since the writer can express and tell what is on the mind to the written form. Furthermore, according to Nunan (2003), writing is the ability to create the words and sentences, thinking about how to build, arrange them into paragraph so it is comprehended by the readers. In conclusion that writing is needs higher critical thinking to create sentences.

There are some kinds of texts in writing, including recount text, narrative text, descriptive text, report text, etc. This study focuses on students' error in writing recount text. In general, recount text tells event that occurred in the past time. According to Anderson (1997) cited in Nazalia, Huzairin and Putrawan (2017), recount is a part of writing that retells events in order wherein they happened to provide the readers a description of what took place and occurred in the past time. Recount is basically a reconstruction of something that happened in the past. This text tells the readers about the participants involved, events, where the events took place and when it happened. Drewianka (1990) cited in Ardin (2017) assumes that recount unfolds a sequence of events over time. It recreates the past experience by using language in order to keep the past alive and also to interpret the experience. Therefore, recount text uses past tenses. In describing the events it uses a plenty of verbs (action words) and adverbs to add more detail to the verbs. Furthermore Derewianka (1990) classifies five types of recount text, namely: (1) Personal recount, which retells an event that the writer personally involved in, for instance: diary, journal, personal experience, entries, anecdotes, personal letter, and postcard. It is usually written by using the first person I and we, in order to entertain and to inform; (2) Factual recount, which deals with recalling events accurately, such as science, accidents, police report, structured research, and news recording. It emphasizes the precise, factual, and detailed language, hence the reader can obtain a complete picture of certain experience, event, or achievement; (3) Imaginative or literary recount that entertains the reader by regenerating the events of an imaginary world as if they are real such as fiction; (4) A procedural recount records the steps taken in a task completion, such as including a flow chart of the required actions in bread making, and the steps or procedures to solve a mathematical problem, and last (5) A biographical recount that tells

the story of a person's life by using a third person narrator such as he, she, and they. Meanwhile, in an autobiography, first person narrations (I, we) are used.

Generally, recount text has three main sections, including orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation. It also usually includes some language features, such as using the simple past, past continuous, past perfect, and past perfect continuous tenses, using temporal sequence, (e.g. on Sunday, on Monday, on Saturday), focusing on specific participants such as I, the writer, using the conjunctions, (e.g. before, after, then), and using action verb, e.g. went, stayed, etc.

In writing the textual content of recount, students must be aware to privy and comprehend the language features of recount text. Since recount text retells the past activities, the textual content have to use past tenses, which includes simple past, past perfect, past continuous, and past perfect continuous tenses. It is one of the difficulty of the students in using the appropriate tenses for recount text. The research found some students did not realize the errors in their writing. It is found on the students' papers while submitting the assignment for some works. Most of the students with less vocabulary did not use the correct "to be", tenses and the structures, while they were required to write a personal past activity in the paragraphs. The researchers supposed that may be they translate the words one by one following their first language that make their writing far from the criteria. Another difficulty is the students' ability to write a recount text. Likely, the students do not recognize the suitable converting structures of verb tense they write in their writing and they are not able to place or put *to be* in writing the non-verbal or verbal sentences. The interference of the students' first language or their deficiency of competence is commonly reflected in how much they had learned the grammatical rules of the target language. The statement above is supported by the theory of Jordan (1997) as cited in Pratiwi (2016) who believes that writing is quite difficult because it should put and place the structures into the correct grammatical form in the paragraph.

Specifically, Indonesian students also find problems to write the recount text in English, as it does not use their mother language uses a foreign language, in this case is English. In addition, the Indonesian language does not use tenses in composing the sentence. There are no differences whether they talk about events which are happened in present, past or future means same all. While in English, people use tenses. There are different tense forms whether they talk about events that happened in present, past or future. Therefore, sometimes Indonesian students make some errors in writing a recount text. For instance, they do not use the appropriate tenses in writing a recount text. In retelling the event, they often uses present tense while the event happened in the past. That is why, to find and to solve this case, the writers choose to identify the errors to write the recount text.

In this regard, errors commonly happen because of a lack of ability in learning English as the foreign language. However, making an error is the usual case made by the learners, especially in writing. According to Brown (2007) as cited in Dwiyanti (2017), an error is an important divergence from the learners' grammar of native speaker, which demonstrates their competence. Furthermore, according to Corder (1974) as cited in Islami (2020), errors are generally made by people who do not understand some institutionalized language system. This is called as competence errors.

However, some authors distinct the errors and mistakes. According to Lee (1990) cited in Nushi, Jafari and Tayyebi (2021), a difference is commonly produced among errors and mistakes. In this case, mistakes are defined as performance related errors either in spontaneous speech or writing, which may happen in the native speakers' speech as well, while errors are characterized as deviations from the standards of the target language commonly produced by non-native speakers. However, errors are considered as a fruitful pedagogical tool in the context of L2 teaching. Additionally, according to Corder (1974) cited in Jobeen, Kazemian, & Shahbaz (2015), errors occur because of learners' lack of knowledge and it cannot be self-corrected. On the other hand, mistakes occurs because of poor performance of language concerning to the

various factors such as inattention on the part of learners etc. However, learners realize the correct structures but they do not care for the accurate part of it. In other words, error occurs because of incomplete knowledge. The students did not realize of what has been written in their writing meanwhile mistakes happen because of temporary laps of memory. Truly the students have known but they forgot it. In this regard, error analysis is one of the important things in looking for the errors in every case that should be solved especially the case that most students experience in their learning process. This is used to investigate the errors produced by the learners. James (2013), also stated that error analysis is a method of figuring the nature, incidence, as well as causes and effects of unsuccessful learners. As a learner, producing errors in the language process could be very not unusual. This includes of producing mistakes and errors. It assists the learners to set up the nearer correspondences to the system of the target language.

Furthermore, according to Brown (1980) as cited in Pamungkas (2016), errors investigation is the method to examine, investigate, and identify the rules in the target language, and to reveal the systems operated by the learners that can be used to analyze the errors made by them. However, Corder (1974) elaborates Error Analysis (EA) as part of the methodology of the psycholinguistic investigation of language learning, which aims to tell us something about the psycholinguistic process of language learning. Furthermore, Ellis also states that EA is used as a tool to investigate how learners acquire a second language (L2). It can be concluded that through error analysis, we can find out, especially for teachers, what errors often occur in students and through error analysis, educators can be more vigilant in overcoming the mistakes made by students. Therefore error analysis can be defined as the process of investigating the nature of foreign learning in acquiring the language that consists of identifying, describing, analyzing and explaining the errors.

However, sometimes the teachers are difficult to elaborate the concept of error and mistake. It is because this error and mistake and so do the carelessness of this error and mistake then often brings negative feedback to the learners in understanding and estimating their ability in the learning. Thus, a systematic explanation of the differences between error and mistake is very important to be clear described. Producing error is an unavoidable part of gaining knowledge of. The students are not able to learn a language without producing mistakes. Brown (2000) also states that learning is basically a system that involves the making of mistakes. Hence, mistakes, misinterpretation, miscalculation, and faulty assumptions shape a crucial thing of getting to know in reality and skill or obtaining information. It means that producing mistakes and errors is naturally occurs because it is a part of learning in the process of acquiring the language.

Additionally, Keshavarz (2008) cited in Yusnita (2018), also describes that there is a distinction between errors and mistakes. Errors are usually rule governed, naturally systematic, internally principled and free from arbitrariness. They can display learners underlying knowledge of the target language, which is their transitional competence. On contrary, mistakes are random deviations and have no relation to any systems. They are usually related to learners' performance, and can occur both in the speech and writing, like slip of the tongue, slip of the pen, false start, and slip of the ear. Moreover, Keshavarz (2008) assumes that mistakes are related to non-linguistic factors such as memory limitations, fatigue, strong feeling, lack of concentration, etc. Those kinds of mistakes can be actually corrected by the learners themselves they are brought to their attention.

Table 1. The Distinction between Error and Mistake

Mistake	Error
Refer to the learners' quality knowledge.	Refer to the learners' inadequate knowledge
considered the learners' short term impediment or faulty when use the target	considered the learners' comprehending or ability in the target language.

Mistake	Error
language.	
Irrational deviation.	rational deviation.
Produced by some factors such as lack of attention and motivation, carelessness, fatigue, etc.	Produced by learners who have not mastered the L2 rules yet.
Can be self-corrected when students pay more attention.	Cannot be self-corrected because the students do not know the correct L2 rules.

According to Norrish (1983) cited in Hasyim (2002), there are three reasons of errors, namely: (1) Carelessness, which further often closely related to the lack of motivation. In this case, many teachers admit it is not continually the learners' fault if they interest lost; possibly the learning material or the type of performance that do not match them; (2) First language interference: the change of learning a language into a counted of addiction formation. The learners' sentences were supposed to be regularly structured towards those of the language; (3) Translation: possibly, the students' error in general is to translate in English while writing. It occurs because the learners translate the sentences through a word-by-word process. To sum up, the reasons of forror are classified into three categories, including carelessness, first language interference and translation. Those reasons can come either from the students themselves or from the teacher and teaching method.

Meanwhile, the experts also classify several types of error. Corder (2008) cited in Cholipah (2014) divides three types of error based on their system, namely: (1) Pre-systematic errors happen because the learner does not comprehend the linguistic structures in the target language; (2) Systematic errors that happen because the learner discovered the wrong rule; (3) Post-systematic errors, which happen because the learner is inconsistent in making a mistake or careless to their writing. In addition, other type of errors is introduced by Dulay et al (1982) as cited in Sompong (2014), who categorize error into descriptive classifications, namely: linguistic category, surface strategy taxonomy, comparative taxonomy, and communicative effect taxonomy. In this regard, linguistic category taxonomies categorize errors according to either or both the language component or the particular linguistic constituent the errors effects: (1) Language components including the phonology (pronunciation), syntax and morphology (grammar), semantic and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary), and discourse (style); (2) Constituents, that includes the elements that cover each language component, for instance, within syntax one may ask whether the error is in the main or subordinate clause; and within a clause, which constituent is affected, e.g. the noun phrase, the auxiliary, the verb phrase, the preposition, the adverb, the adjectives, etc; (3) Surface Strategy Taxonomy: Dulay et al (1982) divide the error into four categories, namely Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misorder.

Furthermore, omission errors are identified by the nonappearance of an object that ought to appear in the available structured of an utterance. In this case, content morphemes carry the dimensions of the referential meaning of a sentence: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. In this regard, language learners often omit grammatical morphemes more frequently compared to content words. Meanwhile, addition errors are the opposite of omission errors. It is identified by the appearance of an item that should not be appeared in the utterance. This is categorized into four types of addition errors, namely: (1) double marking, (2) regularization, (3) simple addition, and (4) regularization errors which markers are usually added to linguistic items erroneously added to an extraordinary item of a certain class that does not use a marker. Additionally, misformation errors are noticed by the utilization structure of the words. In misformation errors the learner adds something wrong. The next error is alternating forms, as the learner's vocabulary and

grammar grow, the use of archi-forms often gives way to the apparently fairly free alternation of various members of a class with each other. Last is misordering errors are recognized by the wrong structures form of the words in an utterance.

Based on the explanation above, there are two problems investigated in this study, namely the types of errors in writing recount texts made by the third-grade students in the English department at UHN, and the most dominant type of error in writing recount texts made by the third-grade students in English department at UHN. Therefore, referred to the formulation of the research problems above, the purpose of this current study are to find the types of errors and the most dominant type of error in writing recount texts made by the third-grade students in English department at UHN.

METHODS

The design of this study is qualitative research. According to Creswell (2014) cited in Sinurat (2020), qualitative research investigates and the meaning by specific or general related to the social or human problems. Additionally, according to Denzin & Lincoln (2000) cited in Hanurawan (2012), qualitative research is an established activity that subjectively place the researcher in the condition of the participant or subject about the relevant phenomena. Qualitative research method tends to use an inductive form of the scientific method to develop theory about phenomena in the world. The method of the data collection that will use in this research is case studies. Yin (1984) in Zainal (2007), defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, in which the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident by using multiple sources of evidence. The aim of this research is not only to tell what the object under study is like, but also to explain how it exists and why it happens. It means that the case study research is not merely finding the answer of the research problem about 'what' the object under study, but more thoroughly and comprehensively is about 'how' and 'why' the object occurs.

The source of data is taken from the third-grade students at the English department UHN Medan (in the academic year of 2019). There are 31 students asked to be involved in writing the recount text in order to collect the data of this research. The students have finished the classes from semester one to five, which means that the students learned English for more than two years in the university. Here, the researchers only take students' personal writing recount text in the written form. It will help the researchers to find out errors from the lowest, middle until the highest frequent errors made by them. The research data used in this research is quantitative data, which is calculated and interpreted numerically. In other words, it is elaborated by using numbers and numeric variables.

Furthermore, the researchers conducted an observation to the object of the research. The instrument used in this research is papers for writing the students' unforgettable experiences. The researchers gave a writing task to the students in the form of recount text telling their unforgettable moments. The students were given an opportunity to write their story in 90 minutes on a piece of paper. The students were also allowed to open the dictionary to find out the difficult words. The researchers collect the data from the third-grade students in the English department at UHN Medan. To do this research, the researchers distributed the papers to the students, gave a task of writing a recount text about their past experiences, gave 90 minutes to finish their task, and collected their task of writing recount text.

To analyze the data, the researchers firstly identifying the students' errors by highlighting the errors item, and classifying those errors based on surface strategy taxonomy. Then, the researchers identified the students' errors by underlining and giving initial code the Surface Strategy Taxonomy namely: (1) Omission (OM), (2) Misformation (MF), (3) Addition (AD), (4) Misordering (MO). After that, errors were classified to find out the frequency of errors. There are four types of errors calculated based on Surface

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Strategy Taxonomy namely: the percentage of omission, percentage of addition, percentage of misformation and percentage of misordering. The researchers calculated the percentage of students' errors based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy by using the following formula;

- (1) POM = $\frac{\text{Total of Omission} \times 100\%}{\text{Total Errors}}$
- (2) PAD = $\frac{\text{Total of Addition} \times 100\%}{\text{Total Errors}}$
- (3) PMF = $\frac{\text{Total of Misformation} \times 100\%}{\text{Total Errors}}$
- (4) PMO = $\frac{\text{Total of Misordering} \times 100\%}{\text{Total Errors}}$

In which: (1) POM is Percentage of Omission,
 (2) PAD means Percentage of Addition,
 (3) PMF refers to Percentage of Misformation,
 (4) PMO is Percentage of Misordering.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data were taken from the students in writing recount text. There were 31 data that had been collected by the researchers. In this case, the students had been asked to write a recount text. After identifying the data, the researchers analyzed the errors and classified them based on Dulay et al's (1982) theory. There are four types of error namely, Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misorder. This part is intended to report data classification and calculation, the percentage, and the chart from types of errors made by grade III in the English department of UHN. Below is the table of students' errors in writing recount text:

Table 2. Students' Error in Writing Recount Text at grade III in English department UHN

No	The Data	Types of Error				Total
		Omission	Addition	Misformation	Misorder	
1.	Data 1	-	-	12	2	14
2.	Data 2	-	-	4	-	4
3.	Data 3	-	-	1	-	1
4.	Data 4	-	-	5	-	5
5.	Data 5	1	-	12	-	13
6.	Data 6	-	-	2	1	3
7.	Data 7	-	1	7	-	8
8.	Data 8	1	-	3	-	4
9.	Data 9	-	1	1	-	2
10.	Data 10	-	-	4	-	4
11.	Data 11	-	1	6	1	8
12.	Data 12	2	-	7	1	10
13.	Data 13	-	1	6	1	8
14.	Data 14	-	1	8	1	10
15.	Data 15	-	1	6	1	8
16.	Data 16	-	1	7	-	8
17.	Data 17	-	-	5	-	5
18.	Data 18	1	1	6	-	8
19.	Data 19	2	-	5	-	7
20.	Data 20	-	1	6	-	7
21.	Data 21	-	1	7	-	8

22.	Data 22	-	-	4	1	5
23.	Data 23	2	-	7	1	10
24.	Data 24	-	1	1	-	2
25.	Data 25	-	-	1	-	1
26.	Data 26	-	-	1	-	1
27.	Data 27	1	-	2	-	3
28.	Data 28	-	-	7	1	8
29.	Data 29	-	1	6	1	8
30.	Data 30	2	-	6	1	9
31.	Data 31	1		3	4	8
Total		13	12	158	17	200

The following is the percentage of students' errors based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy:

$$(1) \text{ POM} = \frac{13}{200} \times 100\% = 6.5 \%$$

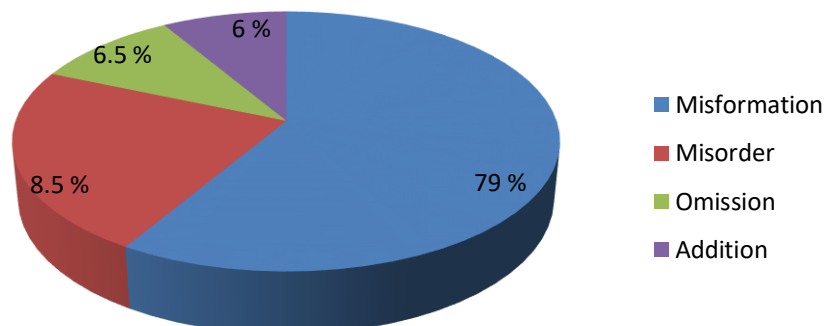
$$(2) \text{ PAD} = \frac{12}{200} \times 100\% = 6 \%$$

$$(3) \text{ PMF} = \frac{158}{200} \times 100\% = 79 \%$$

$$(4) \text{ PMO} = \frac{17}{200} \times 100\% = 8.5 \%$$

After the researchers classified and calculated the percentage types of errors found in the students' writing of recount text, the researchers drew a chart, so that the other readers or researchers can see and understand which one is the dominant errors that made by grade III at the English department of UHN as can be seen in Chart 1 below:

Chart 1. Students' Errors in Writing Recount Text



As can be seen in chart 1, there are four types of errors made by grade III students in the English department of UHN. There are 13 (6.5%) of omission errors, 12 (6%) of addition error, 159 (79%) misformation errors, and 17 (8.5%) disorder of errors. In addition, based on the data analysis above, the most dominant type of errors made by grade III in the English department UHN in writing recount text is Misformation Error with the total of 159 (79%) errors.

The researchers discussed the research finding by using the theory of Dulay et al (1982:154-162) as cited in Agustina and Junining (2016:7). Based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, the researcher found that;

(1) Errors of Omission

Based on the research finding, errors of omission made by the third-grade students in writing recount text were found 13 items or 6.5 %. Most of the students omitted some grammatical items, such as to be (was,were), Some of students also used the wrong preposition in their writing. The others were also confused in using the correct articles. Accordingly, Dulay et al (1982) state the omission is recognized from the missing of morphemes in the sentences. In this case, certain linguistic structures may be omitted by the learners because their production is complicated.

(2) Errors of Addition

Dulay et al (1982) defines addition as the presence of an item, which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. This also means that learners tend to not only omit redundant elements, but also to add redundant elements. Based on the research finding, errors of omission made by the third-grade students of English Department in writing recount text were found 12 items or 6 %. Most of the students confused in using morpheme-s to indicate singular and plural, and in the using of preposition or article in composing sentences.

(3) Errors of Misformation

Misformation is the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure (Dulay et al, 1982). The research finding showed that errors of misformation made by the students in writing recount text were found 158 items or 79 %. Most of the students faced some difficulties in changing the form of verb, because in the Indonesian language there is no changing the form of word related to the tenses. Meanwhile in the writing task, the students must be able to change the verb form. As a result, the students often used verb 1 to express the past event in writing a recount text.

(4) Errors of Misorder

The last type of error found in this study is, disorder. It is indicated by the incorrect placement of a morpheme in an utterance (Dulay et al, 1982). Based on the research result, errors of disorder made by the students in writing recount text were found 17 items or 8.5 %. In this case, some students were confused in placing a morpheme in an utterance. It means that the students were still lack of knowledge about the rules of tenses especially using verb 2 (past tense).

The results of the study indicate that in writing a recount text, the students faced some difficulties that led them to make some errors in their writing. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to give adequate guidance and using various teaching method as well as teaching media that can motivate and help students to improve their writing skills. It is expected that they can have a better ability to express their ideas in the written form by using the appropriate language.

CONCLUSION

From the result and discussion and all of the data that already exist about the students' errors of grade III in the English department UHN in writing recount text, it can be concluded that the students' ability in writing recount text is considered to be low. It is evidenced by the errors made by the third-grade students of the English department of UHN when the researcher asked them to write a Recount Text about their own experiences. There are four types of errors made the third-grade students of English Department of UHN in writing a recount text, namely omission errors (6.5%), addition errors (6%), misformation errors (79%), and disorder errors (8.5%) disorder of errors. Therefore, misformation errors become the most dominant type of errors made by the third-grade English department students of UHN in writing recount text.

Regarding the results of the study. The researchers suggest that the teachers should give more attention to the learners. This means that they should give more help to the learners in solving their problems to reduce or eliminate the errors in writing a recount text. They should explain the materials more clearly, especially about the use of simple past tense in writing recount text. They should also encourage the students to memorize the regular and irregular form of verbs. In addition, the teachers should try to find a better method to teach the learners, especially in teaching writing a recount text. Besides, the students are also suggested to pay more attention to the teaching and learning process, in order to improve their understanding and mastery of tenses, especially simple past tense. The Students should also be more motivated in learning English especially in writing. With all the limitations of this study, the researchers expect that further research can investigate the more detailed and/or comprehensive issue related to students' error in writing different genre of texts.

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