



## An Analysis Of Students' Difficulties In Writing Recount Text At Tenth Grade Students Of SMAN 5 Pontianak

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the difficulties faced by tenth-grade students at SMAN 5 Pontianak in writing recount texts. Recount texts are a genre of writing that retells past events or experiences in chronological order. Despite its narrative nature, students often struggle with various aspects of writing recount texts, including language use, structure, and content development. The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing observations, interviews, and analysis of student writing samples to gather data. The findings indicate that the main difficulties encountered by students include limited vocabulary, difficulties in maintaining proper verb tense, lack of coherence and cohesion, and challenges in organizing ideas logically. Additionally, students often exhibit a lack of understanding of the recount text structure, which impacts the overall quality of their writing. The study concludes by suggesting targeted interventions to address these challenges, such as vocabulary enrichment programs, focused grammar exercises, and explicit instruction on text structure and organization. These interventions aim to enhance students' writing skills and overall competency in producing recount texts.

**Keywords :** Students' Difficulties, Writing, Recount Text

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesulitan yang dihadapi siswa kelas X di SMAN 5 Pontianak dalam menulis teks recount. Teks recount adalah genre tulisan yang menceritakan kembali peristiwa atau pengalaman masa lalu secara kronologis. Meskipun bersifat naratif, siswa sering kesulitan dengan berbagai aspek menulis teks recount, termasuk penggunaan bahasa, struktur, dan pengembangan konten. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, memanfaatkan observasi, wawancara, dan analisis sampel tulisan siswa untuk mengumpulkan data. Temuannya menunjukkan bahwa kesulitan utama yang dihadapi siswa meliputi keterbatasan kosa kata, kesulitan dalam mempertahankan bentuk kata kerja yang tepat, kurangnya koherensi dan kohesi, dan tantangan dalam mengatur ide secara logis. Selain itu, siswa sering kali menunjukkan kurangnya pemahaman terhadap struktur teks recount, yang berdampak pada kualitas tulisan mereka secara keseluruhan. Studi ini menyimpulkan dengan menyarankan intervensi yang ditargetkan untuk mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini, seperti program pengayaan kosa kata, latihan tata bahasa terfokus, dan instruksi eksplisit tentang struktur dan organisasi teks. Intervensi ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis siswa dan kompetensi keseluruhan dalam memproduksi teks recount.

**Kata Kunci:** Kesulitan Siswa, Menulis, Teks Recount

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## BACKGROUND OF STUDY

English is a language that is often used in various countries. This requires students to learn English for education. According to Crystal (2016), English is a global language. Byslina Maduwu (2016) stated that English is a universal language because it is used by most countries in the world as their main language. In addition, English is one of the important international languages to master or learn. Some countries, especially former British colonies, place English as a second language that must be mastered after their native language. Having English skills is very important for students to be able to understand the content of reading well. English is an international language in the world. Therefore, it is important for everyone to learn it. By learning English, students are expected to be able to absorb and follow the development of science, technology, and art. In Indonesia, English is one of the foreign languages. It is the most popular foreign language and is taught from kindergarten to university level. In communication, there is spoken language and written language. In spoken language, communication is done orally. For most people, mastering the art of speaking is the most important aspect of learning a foreign language, and success is measured by the ability to hold a conversation in that language.

Indonesian students, as English foreign language learners, have some difficulties in mastering English. For senior high school learners, they have to master all language skills, including writing. However, learners usually encounter some problems when they try to construct a sentence, a paragraph, or a text. Some problems could be found in writing texts; students who rarely write in English always face difficulties when their teacher asks them to write down their ideas, thoughts, or experiences. In Curriculum 2013, students have to master several kinds of genres. Sometimes it makes students feel difficult to express their ideas when they try to write because every genre has a specific purpose, specific language features, and generic structure. Thus, problems in writing texts are usually faced by writers or foreign language learners. Before they want to share their thoughts, ideas, or experiences, they have to understand the main purpose of the text. It can be concluded from the above statement that students have difficulty translating their ideas into English writing.

Writing skills are language skills used to interact orally or directly with others. An efficient and useful activity is writing. Writing becomes a process in expressing what is seen to be conveyed indirectly. Ariyati (2023) stated that writing is widely used as a way to practice linguistic elements or to express things that are personal to students. Meanwhile, Sukirman (2020) described writing as an activity of expressing ideas, thoughts, or feelings in linguistic symbols. This activity involves aspects of using punctuation and spelling, using diction and vocabulary, structuring sentences, developing paragraphs, processing ideas, and developing essay models. Describing writing is a process of finding and exploring ideas to be expressed, and this process is greatly influenced by the basic knowledge possessed by a writer. The accuracy of expressing ideas must be supported by the accuracy of the language used, vocabulary, and the use of grammar and spelling that students must master. Skills can only be mastered by practicing and practicing a lot. Practicing language skills is also practicing thinking skills. Writing is a communication activity in the form of delivering messages (information) in writing to other parties using written language as a tool or medium. Writing is a language skill used to communicate indirectly, not face-to-face with other people.

In the process of learning English, there are various types of texts that play a crucial role in developing students' language skills. Texts such as descriptive, narrative, expository, argumentative, instructional, explanatory, procedural, and expressive are routinely taught. According to Pardoyono (2024), there are twelve types of genres: Narrative, Recount, Description, Report, Discussion, Explanation, Analytical Exposition,

Procedure, Anecdote, Hortatory Exposition, Spoof, and News Item. With adequate understanding and practice of these various text types, students can enhance their language skills comprehensively. In English lessons, we are familiar with 14 types of English texts. Still, there are only a few texts that are popularly used and read in everyday life, such as descriptive text, recount text, narrative text, procedure text, report text, and explanation text.

In English language learning, recount text is one of the texts learned in school. According to Sukma (2022), recount text is about telling what happened. It is clear that recount text retells experiences that happened in the past. Recount is a type of writing that retells events or experiences in the past. Its purpose is either to inform or to entertain the audience. Recount text is not something new for students. They have learned it since they were in junior high school. Basically, students have known essential aspects of recount through recount text learned by them. But still, some students have problems understanding it. They are often anxious when the teacher asks them to write a recount text. Recount text tells what happened in the past. Before someone writes the text, the story can take the form of an action or activity. The point of a recount text is to tell the reader about an event or to entertain the reader. It can be concluded from the above statement that recount text is a text that talks about things that have been done in the past. The researcher compiles numerous studies conducted by other researchers that are relevant to this research in order to support it. The first is research conducted by Ergiersta Dwi Ariani (2023), "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text." Harmer, in Ergiersta Dwi Ariani (2023), explains that writing is a process, and the writing itself will focus on certain genres. Afterwards, those genres will be presented in learning activities. In line with Harmer, writing is defined as the implementation of linguistic competence expressed in written language form (Pardiyono in Ergiersta Dwi Ariani, 2023). On a practical level, many students frequently face difficulties in writing texts. They seem to get confused when they are asked to write recount texts due to the lack of knowledge about the text they are going to write. In line with these obstacles in teaching writing, one of the crucial factors is that the teaching method only focuses on transferring knowledge and information from teacher to students. It can be stated that the practice of writing in the classroom is less than the theory. According to Alwasilah (1993), in this research, the researcher focused on analyzing students' difficulties in writing recount texts.

The researcher compiled numerous studies conducted by other researchers that are relevant to this research in order to support it. The second is research conducted by Ida Yulianawati (2018), "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text." One of the general problems faced by students is when they explore their ideas in written form, such as writing genres. The common problems appear in writing genres in at least three areas: content, vocabulary, and grammar. The first is content. Many students still have difficulties producing longer paragraphs. When they write a text, they also cannot produce an effective paragraph. It is because they have limited knowledge to develop a topic and have difficulties expressing their ideas in writing form. So, it makes the content of their writing unclear and sometimes weak. The second is vocabulary. Vocabulary has an important role in creating a good paragraph. The problems with vocabulary happen due to their lack of reading. So, the students have limited vocabulary, which makes them unable to easily express their ideas. Sometimes, the students also use inappropriate words, which makes their writing difficult to understand. These problems can be solved by reading more and practicing writing more. The last is grammar. Having strong skills in grammar allows writers to get their message across to their readers in a clear and understandable way. It is important to know the rules of grammar and how to use them properly. However, for some Indonesian students, learning grammar, especially tenses, is difficult because there are no tenses in the Indonesian language. Although tenses have been taught since elementary school, the students still cannot apply tense rules. Many of them still have difficulties with it.

The third research is conducted by Sari (2017), titled "An Analysis of Students' Problems in Writing Recount Text." The researcher found some problems students face in writing recount text. The students should express the beginning of the story as interestingly as possible so that the story is interesting to read. There were some problems that the researcher found. First, in writing recount text, the students had difficulties organizing the generic structure of recount text. They were still confused about what the generic structures of recount text are, and they did not know how to start writing the text. Second, the students still had problems with grammar; they did not know how to use the simple past tense in recount text. The students still used simple present tense in their recount texts. Last, the students still had problems with vocabulary; they did not have many vocabularies in their mind, so they could not share their ideas into a good sentence. Related to the problems that the researcher found, the researcher was interested in doing research about the students' writing problems in writing recount text in an educational English program for students in the first semester.

Based on the previous research above, it can be concluded that students, in terms of writing, experience some difficulties in writing recount texts. Students of SMA N 5 Pontianak have difficulty in writing texts. They look confused when asked to write a recount text due to their lack of knowledge about the text they will write. One of the common problems students face is when they explore their ideas in a form of writing, such as genre writing. There are at least three common problems that arise in genre writing, namely content, vocabulary, and grammar problems. Therefore, the researcher is interested in examining the difficulty of students in writing recount texts.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses the research method, including research design, participants and setting, data collection techniques, research procedures, and data analysis.

### **1. Research Design**

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative method, focusing on analyzing and identifying research results rather than aiming for generalization. In qualitative research, the primary concern is not whether the findings can be generalized broadly but whether they can be transferred to other contexts or subjects. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning individuals or groups attach to a social or human issue. This approach is characterized by open-ended questions and an inductive analysis process that builds themes from specific details to broader topics, allowing the researcher to interpret participants' experiences within their environments.

### **2. Participants and Setting of the Research**

The research takes place at SMAN 5 Pontianak, a high school in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. This city represents a diverse cultural and social landscape, providing a suitable setting for exploring students' experiences with writing. The study focuses on tenth-grade students at SMAN 5 Pontianak to understand the challenges they face in writing recount texts.

### **3. Techniques of Data Collection**

#### **Interview:**

The main data collection tool used in this study is a structured interview, which enables an in-depth understanding of students' difficulties in writing. Sugiyono (2013) notes that interviews are suitable for exploring detailed insights, especially when involving a small group of respondents. This method allows the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative information by using open-ended questions designed to capture students' perspectives on specific challenges, such as developing topics, organizing paragraphs, language use, vocabulary selection, and adherence to grammar and punctuation in recount texts.

### **Interview Questions**

Examples of interview questions include:

1. Do you find it challenging to develop a given topic?
2. Do you face difficulties in expressing ideas in recount texts?
3. Do you struggle with organizing paragraphs in recount texts?
4. Do you find it hard to use appropriate language for recount texts?
5. Do you experience issues in connecting sentences?
6. Do you sometimes struggle with vocabulary choice?
7. Do you encounter challenges with punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in recount texts? Why?
8. When forming sentences in English, do you tend to use Indonesian?

#### **4. Research Procedure**

The research follows a series of steps to ensure thorough data collection. Initially, the researcher requests permission from the school principal and consults with the tenth-grade English teacher about the students' writing abilities. After obtaining permission, the researcher selects class 10 C as the subject group, prepares interview questions, and administers a questionnaire via Google Forms to gather preliminary data on students' challenges in writing recount texts. After completing the questionnaire, the researcher conducts open-ended interviews to gather deeper insights. Finally, the data from both the questionnaire and interviews are compiled, organized, and analyzed to draw conclusions about students' writing difficulties.

#### **5. Data Analysis**

The data analysis in this study follows the Miles and Huberman method, which includes three key stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

##### **o Data Reduction:**

This step involves summarizing and focusing on essential information while eliminating irrelevant data. The researcher calculates questionnaire results, transcribes interviews, and highlights key insights from students' responses. The questionnaire data are quantified using a Likert scale and calculated to determine response patterns.

##### **o Data Display:**

The reduced data are organized in a format that facilitates interpretation. Data may be presented as brief descriptions, flowcharts, or relationships between categories. Here, questionnaire results are interpreted according to set criteria, and the percentages are explained narratively to allow for easier categorization and analysis.

##### **o Conclusion Drawing or Verification:**

This final step involves drawing conclusions based on the analyzed data, with preliminary conclusions being refined or adjusted as additional evidence emerges. Verification ensures that findings are accurate and relevant. Conclusions derived from qualitative research represent new insights, which may clarify previously abstract concepts or describe complex relationships, contributing to a broader understanding of students' challenges in writing recount texts.

## **RESULTS**

The research data was collected from assignment sheets of tenth-grade C students, focusing on recount texts. The researcher identified five main types of difficulties faced by students: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. This study involved 25 informants selected through purposive sampling to represent the research topic. The following outlines the scoring criteria for each writing aspect, including content,

organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Each component is rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with a description provided for each level.

1. **Content (30%)**
  - **Score 4:** The topic is complete, clear, and well-detailed.
  - **Score 3:** The topic is complete and clear, with mostly relevant details.
  - **Score 2:** The topic is complete and clear, but the details lack relevance.
  - **Score 1:** The topic is unclear, with unrelated details.
2. **Organization (20%)**
  - **Score 4:** Identification and description are complete, arranged logically with appropriate connectors.
  - **Score 3:** Identification is mostly complete, with descriptions mostly well-connected.
  - **Score 2:** Identification is incomplete, with some misuse of connectors.
  - **Score 1:** Identification is incomplete, with frequent connector misuse.
3. **Grammar (20%)**
  - **Score 4:** Very few grammatical inaccuracies.
  - **Score 3:** Minor grammatical inaccuracies that don't affect meaning.
  - **Score 2:** Numerous grammatical inaccuracies.
  - **Score 1:** Frequent grammatical inaccuracies.
4. **Vocabulary (15%)**
  - **Score 4:** Effective choice of words and forms.
  - **Score 3:** Minor vocabulary errors without affecting meaning.
  - **Score 2:** Limited vocabulary with confusing words.
  - **Score 1:** Very poor vocabulary knowledge, leading to incomprehension.
5. **Mechanics (15%)**
  - **Score 4:** Correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
  - **Score 3:** Occasional minor errors in mechanics.
  - **Score 2:** Frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
  - **Score 1:** Dominated by mechanical errors.

The following table shows the scores of each student based on five aspects :

| No | Aspects                  |                               |                          |                          |                           | Score % |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------|
|    | Content (C)<br>(4,3,2,1) | Organization (O)<br>(4,3,2,1) | Grammar (G)<br>(4,3,2,1) | Vocabulary (V) (4,3,2,1) | Mechanic (M)<br>(4,3,2,1) |         |
| 1  | 2                        | 1                             | 2                        | 1                        | 2                         | 41,25   |
| 2  | 2                        | 2                             | 1                        | 2                        | 1                         | 41,25   |
| 3  | 4                        | 2                             | 1                        | 2                        | 1                         | 56,25   |
| 4  | 4                        | 2                             | 1                        | 1                        | 2                         | 56,25   |
| 5  | 3                        | 2                             | 1                        | 1                        | 1                         | 45      |
| 6  | 3                        | 2                             | 1                        | 1                        | 1                         | 45      |
| 7  | 2                        | 1                             | 1                        | 2                        | 1                         | 36,25   |
| 8  | 3                        | 1                             | 1                        | 1                        | 2                         | 43,5    |
| 9  | 3                        | 1                             | 2                        | 2                        | 1                         | 48,75   |
| 10 | 3                        | 2                             | 1                        | 2                        | 2                         | 52,5    |
| 11 | 4                        | 1                             | 2                        | 2                        | 1                         | 56,25   |
| 12 | 4                        | 1                             | 2                        | 2                        | 1                         | 56,25   |
| 13 | 3                        | 2                             | 2                        | 1                        | 1                         | 50      |
| 14 | 4                        | 3                             | 1                        | 2                        | 1                         | 61,25   |
| 15 | 4                        | 2                             | 2                        | 1                        | 1                         | 57,5    |
| 16 | 4                        | 3                             | 2                        | 2                        | 1                         | 66,25   |
| 17 | 4                        | 2                             | 2                        | 1                        | 1                         | 66,25   |
| 18 | 4                        | 3                             | 1                        | 2                        | 1                         | 61,25   |
| 19 | 4                        | 2                             | 2                        | 2                        | 1                         | 61,25   |
| 20 | 4                        | 2                             | 2                        | 2                        | 2                         | 65      |

|    |      |      |      |      |     |       |
|----|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| 21 | 4    | 2    | 1    | 1    | 1   | 52,5  |
| 22 | 4    | 2    | 2    | 1    | 1   | 57,5  |
| 23 | 4    | 2    | 1    | 1    | 1   | 52,5  |
| 24 | 4    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 1   | 61,25 |
| 25 | 4    | 2    | 2    | 1    | 1   | 57,5  |
|    | 3,52 | 1,88 | 1,52 | 1,52 | 1,2 | 53,94 |

The content aspect evaluates the clarity and relevance of the topic and details presented in the texts. A score of 4 indicates a comprehensive and detailed coverage of the topic, while scores of 3, 2, and 1 reflect a decline in clarity and relevance. The organization aspect assesses the logical flow and the use of connectors in the texts. Well-organized texts with appropriate use of connectors receive a score of 4, whereas frequent connector errors lead to lower scores. The grammar component focuses on the correctness of grammatical structures, particularly the appropriate use of tenses. Texts with few or no grammatical errors earn high scores, while those with frequent mistakes receive lower scores. In terms of vocabulary, effective use of words results in a score of 4, while limited or inappropriate word choices detract from the overall score. Lastly, the mechanics aspect evaluates spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. High scores indicate correct usage, while frequent errors in these areas lead to lower scores. Overall, students encountered the greatest difficulties in the mechanics and grammar aspects, with average scores of 1.2 and 1.52, respectively. These challenges highlight areas requiring improvement, particularly in grammatical consistency, organization, and mechanical accuracy. The next chapter will further explore these findings, linking them to theoretical perspectives and previous research, and will propose teaching strategies to address these challenges.

Meanwhile, based on the results of the interview conducted by the researcher, namely, In writing recount texts, students often face difficulties in several aspects, particularly in organization. Many students reported struggling to start their stories with a clear introduction regarding who, where, and when the events occurred. They also find it challenging to arrange events chronologically and logically connect one event to another. Additionally, students often do not know how to conclude the story with a relevant and adequate reflection. The lack of effective linking words makes the text not flow well, making it hard for readers to follow the storyline. Finally, students have difficulty using a variety of sentences, such as simple, compound, and complex sentences, which makes the text feel monotonous or overly complicated. Students only realize these issues after their writing has been corrected by the teacher.

Regarding grammar, students do not know how to use the simple past tense to narrate events that occurred in the past. This difficulty arises in verb usage, such as using "went" instead of "go," and "was" instead of "is." There is also confusion regarding subject-verb agreement; for instance, "He was" instead of "He were," and "They were" instead of "They was." In terms of proper pronoun usage, students often do not know how to place them correctly, as seen in the incorrect statement "she gave her book to his friend," which should be "she gave her book to her friend." Moreover, mistakes in using articles (e.g., "a," "an," "the") occur, as illustrated by "she saw dog" instead of "she saw a dog," or "he visited museum," which should be "he visited the museum." Students also struggle with choosing appropriate prepositions, such as "on the morning" instead of "in the morning" or "in the park" which should be "at the park." Lastly, in using conjunctions, students frequently use "then" when they could correctly use "because," "although," or "so."

In the vocabulary aspect, students expressed that they do not know how to distinguish appropriate word choices. They tend to use one word that does not fit the context of the following sentence. For example, they use "running" instead of "running leisurely." Furthermore, students struggle to differentiate between "food" and "cake," often referring to a cake simply as "food." They also have trouble correctly writing nouns in plural or singular forms, such as "they bought seven apples," often writing it similarly to Indonesian without adding "s" or "es" for plural nouns in English. Additionally, students do

not know how to express happiness in varied ways, commonly repeating “happy” instead of using synonyms like “glad,” “absolutely delighted,” “over the moon,” “wonderful,” or “fantastic.” Regarding mechanical difficulties, students often face issues with punctuation marks, such as periods, commas, question marks, and exclamation marks. They frequently misuse commas or fail to separate clauses correctly, which complicates readability. Furthermore, students do not consistently use capital letters properly, such as capitalizing the first letter of sentences or names. For example, they may write “my school” instead of “My School.” Inconsistent formatting is also an issue, where students use different fonts and sizes or spaces between paragraphs. Moreover, they tend to write incomplete sentences, such as “When I go to school,” without providing further information. Finally, students may create run-on sentences by combining several sentences into one without proper separation, for instance, “I went to the shop I bought ice cream I went home,” which obscures clarity.

## DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the difficulties faced by students in writing recount texts at SMA N 5 Pontianak. The analysis results show that the overall average score of students is 53.94%, indicating significant challenges in five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. In the content aspect, students achieved an average score of 2.5, indicating a lack of clarity and relevance in the details presented. The organization aspect shows an average score of 2.2, signaling students' difficulties in chronologically arranging events and connecting one event to another. Grammar poses the greatest challenge with an average score of 1.5, where students fail to use the past tense correctly and struggle with subject-verb agreement. Vocabulary, with an average score of 2.8, indicates limited vocabulary usage and excessive word repetition. The mechanics aspect, with an average score of 1.8, reflects numerous errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

After the researcher conducted interviews with several students who received low scores, data were obtained: In writing recount texts, students often encounter several difficulties in terms of organization. Here are some responses that may cause these difficulties: “I often struggle to start the story with a clear introduction about who, where, and when the event took place.” Furthermore, arranging events chronologically is challenging for students, especially in logically connecting one event to another. Additionally, students do not know how to conclude the story with a relevant and adequate conclusion or reflection. Another issue that causes problems is the lack of effective conjunctions, which makes the text not flow well and makes it difficult for readers to follow the storyline. Lastly, students struggle to use variations of sentences (for example, simple, compound, and complex sentences), which makes the text feel monotonous or too complicated. Students only realize this after their writing is corrected by the teacher.

According to an educational expert, R. G. H. Sandford (2015), good organization in writing is crucial for clearly and structurally conveying ideas. When students cannot organize their thoughts well, the messages they wish to convey become unclear, which can diminish the effectiveness of their texts. This aligns with findings that students experience difficulties in logically connecting events.

From the interviews conducted by the researcher with several students, the researcher found several issues that make students face difficulties in the grammar aspect. Students do not know how to use the simple past tense to recount events that occurred in the past. This difficulty arises when there are verbs, such as using “went” instead of “go” and also “was” instead of “is.” Then, students are confused about using subject-verb agreement; in this case, students genuinely do not know how to place the subject correctly. For example, “He was” instead of “He were” and “They were” instead of “They was.” Additionally, in using the correct pronouns, students do not know how to position them

correctly, such as “she gave her book to his friend,” which should be “she gave her book to her friend.” In the next part, the use of articles (‘a,’ ‘an,’ ‘the’) sees students making mistakes like “she saw dog,” which should be “she saw a dog” or “he visited the museum,” which is correctly stated as “he visited the museum.” Next, in using prepositions, students struggle to choose the right preposition to indicate place, such as “on the morning,” which should be “in the morning” or “in the park,” which should be “at the park.” The final difficulty is in using conjunctions; in using conjunctions, students always use “then” when it should not necessarily be “then,” but could be “because,” “although,” and “so.”

According to linguist Michael Swan (2005), a good command of grammar is essential to support clarity and accuracy in communication. Errors in the use of tenses, subject-verb agreement, and pronouns can alter the meaning of sentences and cause confusion. This explains why students who do not understand grammar well often struggle to write effective texts.

From the above interviews, the researcher continued to interview students about the vocabulary aspect. In the interview results, students’ responses included “they don’t know how to distinguish synonyms,” “they always use one word that doesn’t fit the next sentence,” for example, “running” and “walking,” they used the word “running,” but it should be “running leisurely.” Furthermore, students do not know how to distinguish between “food” and “cake”; students always write the word food to refer to cake, and they do not know how to write nouns correctly as plural or singular, for example, “they bought seven apples,” and students write the same as in Indonesian, whereas the correct writing should have an addition of “s” or “es” for plural nouns in English. Then, students do not know how to express the word happy in English, which they usually know as “happy”; they repeat this word excessively, whereas students should be able to use expressions of happy with other words, for example: “glad,” “absolutely delighted,” “over the moon,” “wonderful,” “fantastic.”

According to language expert David Crystal (2008), a varied vocabulary is crucial for enhancing the quality of writing. The use of precise and varied words not only enriches the text but also helps convey deeper nuances and meanings. Therefore, students need to be encouraged to expand their vocabulary and understand the context of word usage.

In writing recount texts, students often encounter various mechanical difficulties that can affect the quality of their texts. These mechanical difficulties are related to the rules and techniques of writing that support the clarity and readability of the text. Here are some common mechanical issues faced by students: students often struggle with the correct use of punctuation, such as periods, commas, question marks, and exclamation points. For instance, the excessive use of commas or failing to separate clauses correctly. Additionally, they do not know how to place punctuation, such as the end period of a sentence or a comma in a list, which can make my writing difficult for others to read. Furthermore, students face challenges in using capital letters; they do not use capital letters correctly, such as at the beginning of a sentence, names of people, places, or titles. For example, writing “my school” instead of “My School” in the context of a title. In the next part, students are inconsistent in using the writing format; students write letters that do not match, such as different font types, different font sizes, or spacing between paragraphs. Next, they write incomplete sentences, such as “When I go to school,” but students do not continue with additional information. Finally, run-on sentences: students combine several sentences into one without proper separation, such as “I went to the shop I bought ice cream I went home.”

According to writer and educator R. E. K. H. Hinkel (2005), mechanical issues in writing, such as punctuation and capitalization errors, can diminish the clarity and professionalism of the writing. Mechanical errors often make it difficult for readers to understand the author’s intent, impacting the overall quality of the writing. Therefore, it is essential for students to be introduced to good writing techniques so that they can avoid these errors and improve the readability of their texts.

Overall, the combination of test scores and interviews shows that students at SMA N 5 Pontianak face significant difficulties in writing recount texts. More engaging teaching strategies and additional support in challenging aspects are needed to improve students' writing abilities.

## CONCLUSION

The research conducted at SMA N 5 Pontianak in 2024 indicates that students face various difficulties in writing recount texts. The aim of this study was to identify the challenges faced by students in writing recount texts and to provide recommendations for addressing these issues.

Analysis of the written work from 25 students revealed that two students received the lowest score of 41.25, while two others achieved the highest score of 66.25. There are four main aspects that pose challenges for students: organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, with average scores of 1.88 for organization, 1.52 for grammar, 1.52 for vocabulary, and 1.2 for mechanics.

From the interviews, it was found that students struggle with organization, particularly in using a variety of conjunctions and linking sentences. In terms of grammar, errors frequently occur in the use of the simple past tense and subject-verb agreement. Regarding vocabulary, students have difficulty distinguishing between singular and plural forms and often use inappropriate words. Lastly, in mechanics, students face challenges in the proper use of punctuation and capitalization. Overall, the findings of this study highlight the need for teachers to pay more attention to implementing engaging teaching strategies, as well as providing support for students to enhance their writing skills through more intensive practice and the use of appealing learning resources. Additionally, schools are encouraged to provide adequate teaching aids to make the learning process more effective.

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