

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING
RECOUNT TEXT AT TENTH GRADE OF SMA N 1
SUNGAI LIMAU**

THESIS



**By
Allieni Harris
NIM 1204328**

*Submitted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements to obtain
a degree at Magister of Education*

**ENGLISH EDUCATION SECTION
GRADUATE PROGRAM
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG
2015**

ABSTRAK

Harris, Allieni. 2014. *An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text at Tenth Grade of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau*. Tesis. Program Pascasarjana. Universitas Negeri Padang

Penelitian ini berawal dari masalah rendahnya ketermapilan siswa dalam menulis terutama dalam penggunaan *grammar* pada siswa SMA N 1 Sungai Limau. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melihat kemampuan siswa dalam mengembangkan *recount texts*, serta menemukan kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh siswa.

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian quantitative. Populasi pada penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas X SMA N 1 Sungai Limau. selain itu, teknik *cluster sampling* digunakan untuk memilih sampel yakni kelas X.1 dan X.3. Instrumen yang digunakan berupa tes menulis. Data dari tes menulis siswa di analisa berdasarkan indikator dan kemudian diinterpretasikan dan menjadi temuan penelitian.

Dari hasil penelitian ini, ditemukan bahwa siswa memiliki kemampuan yang lemah dalam menulis *recount texts* dengan nilai rata-rata 2.3. Berdasarkan test yang telah diberikan, ditemukan pula kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh siswa ketika menulis *recount texts*, yakni dalam penggunaan *language features*. Kesulitan ini berhubungan dengan penggunaan *simple past tense*, *action verb*, *linking verb*, dan *pronoun*. Penyebab dari kesulitan ini adalah *interlingual transfer*, *intralingual transfer*, dan kurangnya kosa kata yang dimiliki oleh siswa.

Maka dapat disimpulkan bahwa siswa masih mengalami banyak kesulitan dalam menulis sebuah kalimat yang baik dan benar di dalam *recount texts* sesuai dengan aturan yang berlaku. Lebih lanjut, berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini diharapkan guru dapat memberikan teknik pengajaran yang lebih baik dan siswa dapat melakukan lebih banyak latihan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis *recount text*.

ABSTRACT

Harris, Allieni. 2014. *An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text at Tenth Grade of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau*. Thesis. Graduate Program. State University of Padang

This research based on students' low of ability in writing especially in using correct grammar at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau. This research aims to find out students' ability and their difficulties in writing recount texts at tenth grade of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau.

This research is quantitative research. The subject of this research was students of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau. Cluster sampling was used to take the sample. The sample of this research was the students of class X.1 and X.3. The instrument of this research was writing test of recount texts. Then, the score was analyzed based on indicators. Then, it was interpreted to get the findings.

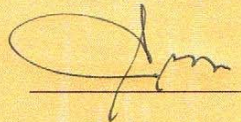
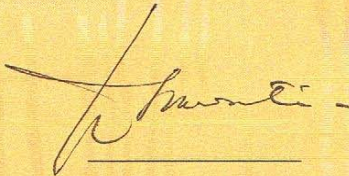
Based on the analysis, students' ability in writing recount text was weak with mean 2.3. Furthermore, it was found students' difficulties in writing recount texts in using language features. They were in using simple past tense, action verb, linking, and pronoun. The causes these difficulties were Interlingual transfer, Intralingual transfer, and lack of vocabulary.

It can be concluded that students still have some difficulties in writing correct sentences in recount texts. Moreover, it is hoped that teachers can give better techniques in teaching writing and students can do many practices to improve their ability in writing recount text.

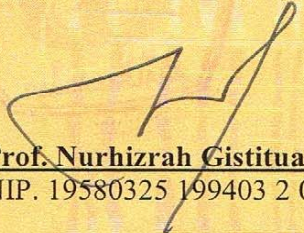
PERSETUJUAN AKHIR TESIS

Mahasiswa : *Allieni Harris*

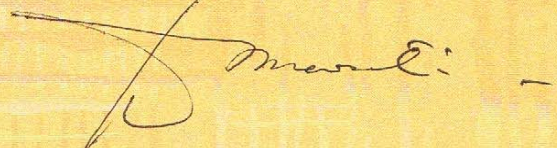
NIM. : 1204328

Nama	Tanda Tangan	Tanggal
<u>Prof. Drs. H. Mohd. Ansyar, Ph.D.</u> Pembimbing I		<u>9/2/14</u>
<u>Dr. Desmawati Radjab, M.Pd.</u> Pembimbing II		<u>27/2-015</u>

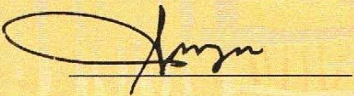
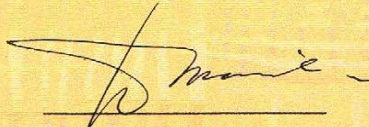
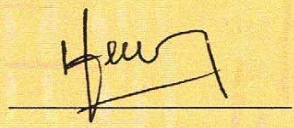
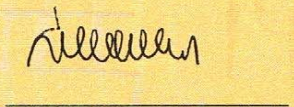
Direktur Program Pascasarjana
Universitas Negeri Padang


Prof. Nurhizrah Gistituati, M.Ed., Ed.D.
NIP. 19580325 199403 2 00 1

Ketua Program Studi/Konsentrasi


Dr. Desmawati Radjab, M.Pd.
NIP. 19501231 197703 2 002

**PERSETUJUAN KOMISI
UJIAN TESIS MAGISTER KEPENDIDIKAN**

No.	Nama	Tanda Tangan
1	<u>Prof. Drs. H. Mohd. Ansyar, Ph.D.</u> (Ketua)	
2	<u>Dr. Desmawati Radjab, M.Pd.</u> (Sekretaris)	
3	<u>Prof. Dr. H. Mukhaiyar</u> (Anggota)	
4	<u>Dr. Hamzah, M.A., M.M.</u> (Anggota)	
5	<u>Prof. Dr. Gusril, M.Pd.</u> (Anggota)	

Mahasiswa

Mahasiswa : *Allieni Harris*
NIM. : 1204328
Tanggal Ujian : 9 - 2 - 2015

SURAT PERNYATAAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa:

1. Karya tulis saya, tesis dengan judul “An Analysis of Students’ Difficulties in Writing Recount Text at Tenth Grade of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau” adalah asli dan belum pernah diajukan untuk mendapatkan gelar akademik baik di Universitas Negeri Padang maupun di perguruan tinggi lainnya.
2. Karya tulis ini murni gagasan, penilaian, dan rumusan saya sendiri, tanpa bantuan tidak sah dari pihak lain, kecuali arahan Tim Pembimbing.
3. Di dalam karya tulis ini tidak terdapat hasil karya atau pendapat yang telah ditulis atau dipublikasikan orang lain, kecuali dikutip secara tertulis dengan jelas dan dicantumkan sebagai acuan di dalam naskah saya dengan disebutkan nama pengarangnya dan dicantumkan pada daftar pustaka.
4. Pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya, dan apabila di kemudian hari terdapat penyimpangan dan ketidakbenaran pernyataan ini, saya bersedia menerima sanksi akademik berupa pencabutan gelar yang telah saya peroleh karena karya tulis ini, serta sanksi lainnya sesuai dengan norma dan ketentuan hukum yang berlaku.

Padang, Oktober 2014

Saya yang Menyatakan



Allieni Harris

NIM: 1204328

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, the writer would like to express her gratitude to almighty God, Allah SWT, who has given her blessing, strength, health, opportunity, and patience to finish this thesis. Besides, this thesis would not be finished without any support, guidance, and valuable advice from many people. Therefore, the writer would like to express her deepest appreciation and thankfulness to:

1. Prof. Drs. H. Mohd. Ansyar, Ph.D. and Dr. Desmawati Radjab, M.Pd as her advisors, who have given a great deal of continuous guidance, valuable advices, meaningful contribution, and encouragement in accomplishing this thesis
2. Prof. Dr. H. Mukhaiyar, Dr. Hamzah, M.A., M.M, and Prof. Dr. Gusril, M.Pd, as her contributors who have given many contributions to improve this thesis
3. The director of Graduate Program of State University of Padang and all of the staff who provided the supporting facilities as well.
4. All lecturers of English Education section of State University of Padang who have taught her during study.
5. The Principal of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau who had permitted facilitated researcher in conducting her research.

Padang, February 2015

The Writer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRAK	i
ABSTRACT	ii
PERSETUJUAN AKHIR TESIS	iii
PERSETUJUAN KOMISI UJIAN TESIS.....	iv
SURAT PERNYATAAN	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xi

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem	1
B. Identification of the Problem.....	6
C. Limitation of the Problem	6
D. Formulation of the Problem.....	6
E. Research Questions	7
F. Purposes of the Research.....	7
G. Significance of the Research	7
H. Definition of Key Terms	8

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATUIRE

A. Writing	9
1. The concept of Writing	9

2. Teaching Writing	14
B. Recount Text	17
1. The Concept of Recount Text	17
2. The Generic Structure of Recount Text	20
3. The Language Features of Recount Text	21
C. Possible Difficulties in Writing Recount Text	23
D. Possible Causes of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Text...	26
E. Writing Assessment of Recount Text.....	28
F. Review Related Findings	33
G. Conceptual Framework	37

CHAPTER III THE RESEARCH METHODS

A. Research Design	40
B. Subject of the Research	40
C. Data	41
D. Instrumentation	41
E. Technique of Data Collection.....	42
F. Technique of Data Analysis	44

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings.....	46
1. The Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text.....	47
2. Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Texts	70
1) Students' Difficulty in Using Simple Past Tense	71
2) Students' Difficulty in Using Action Verb	74
3) Students' Difficulty in Using Linking Verb	76

4) Students' Difficulty in Using Pronoun	79
3. Causes of Students' Difficulties in Writing Recount Texts.....	82
a. Interlingual Transfer	82
b. Intralingual Transfer	84
c. Lack of Vocabulary	87
B. Discussion	90
C. Limitation of the Research	96
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	
A. Conclusion	97
B. Implications	98
C. Suggestion	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY	101
APPENDICES	105

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Conceptual Framework	39
Figure 2	The Percentage of Students' Ability	48
Figure 3	The Percentage of Students' Ability Based on Scorer 1	51
Figure 4	The Percentage of Students' Ability Based on Scorer 2	53
Figure 5	The Comparison of Students' Ability	54
Figure 6	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Developing Orientation....	56
Figure 7	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Developing Events	57
Figure 8	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Developing Reorientation	59
Figure 9	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Using Pronoun	62
Figure 10	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Using Simple Past Tense	64
Figure 11	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Using Action Verb	66
Figure 12	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Using Linking Verb	67
Figure 13	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Using Chronological Conjunction	68

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 The Indicators of Recount Text	32
Table 2 Range Score	45
Table 3 The Calculation of Students' Ability from Scorer 1 and Scorer 2	47
Table 4 The Calculation of Students' Ability based on Scorer 1.....	49
Table 5 The Calculation of Students' Ability based on Scorer 2	51
Table 6 The Calculation of Students' Ability in Term of Generic Structure...	55
Table 7 The Calculation of Students' Ability in Term of Using the Language Features	62
Table 8 Students' Errors in Using Language Features	70

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Topics of Writing Test for the Try-Out	105
Appendix 2	List of Topics that was chosen in the Try-Out	106
Appendix 3	Writing Test of Recount Texts	107
Appendix 4	The Calculation of Students' Ability which is Scored by Scorer 1	108
Appendix 5	The Calculation of Students' Ability which is Scored by Scorer 2	109
Appendix 6	The Calculation of Students' Ability in Writing Recount Texts	110
Appendix 7	The Quality of Students' Ability in Writing Recount Texts	111
Appendix 8	The Percentage of Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text	112
Appendix 9	List of Students' Errors in Writing Recount Texts	113
Appendix 10	The Students' Writing Recount Texts	114

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Writing is one of the skills that should be mastered by students when they are learning a language, so there are some reasons for them to master it. First, writing is an activity to deliver information in written form by combining and arranging words. Then, writing is a form of communication to deliver thoughts or to express feelings through written forms. It is used as a media to inform something and help writers to communicate with the readers about their ideas, thoughts, and feelings in various written forms.

That is why writing is an important skill for students learning a language. In addition, by writing students can generate more knowledge because when they are going to write, they should have a lot of ideas and information to write. It means that what students write can show how much knowledge they have got. Furthermore, writing can help students to improve their critical thinking. Because, when they write, they need to evaluate and then consider what kind of information they should deliver to readers. Thus, they need to select words to reflect their thought about the subject appropriately. In short, students can use writing as a media to communicate with other people and to entertain readers or they can write letters or e-mails to make their communication easier.

In addition, writing is one of the skills that must be learned by students in learning English beside listening, speaking, and reading. At senior high school in Indonesia, the students have to learn writing to enable them to produce texts that can improve their competence to communicate with other people in written forms. According to the curriculum that is used in Indonesia, the students have to be able to produce a text as an expression of their thoughts. They can write and express their ideas in written forms to help them interact in the society. Then, they are required to be able to produce kinds of texts (genre).

One of the texts that should be mastered by students is recount text. Based on the syllabus of senior high school, recount text is taught at the first semester of tenth grade students and it has been learned by the students when they were in junior high school. Recount text is a text that tells someone past experiences. Recount is retelling past events in order to inform or entertain about what and when it happened (Gerot and Wignel, 1994:194). In other words, recount text can be said as a text that is used by students to deliver their feelings. Thus, the students have to know the characteristics of recount text. They should understand the generic structure and language features of recount texts. Orientation, series of events and re-orientation are parts of the generic structure in recount texts. If they want to write a recount text, they need to follow this organization. For the language features, recount text uses simple past tense, action verbs, personal pronoun, and emotives.

However, students still got some problems in writing recount texts. They got problem in choosing appropriate words to present their ideas. They needed to select which words that were suitable for their writing, and presented their ideas and their feeling about the experience that they had. Because recount text talks about one's experience, the students must use words that can present what have already happened in the past well.

Then, students got difficulties in organizing their ideas that come in their mind and deliver them in the written forms. Because each text has different generic structure, the students should know what the arrangement of a recount text is. They have to understand how to deliver their ideas based on its generic structure. They need to learn what idea should come first. A good organization of ideas in recount text will help readers to understand the stories or experiences of the writers. According to Gerot and Wignel (1994:194), for the generic structure, orientation is the first thing that should be written by students. Then, the students can continue to write some events in their recount text and after that they can conclude their story by writing re-orientation.

The next problem that students got in writing recount texts was using correct grammar. The students needed to use correct and appropriate grammar to arrange the words that they already have. Grammar is the rule of language and each language has different rules and it is important for students to apply the grammar when arranging their ideas because if they do not use correct grammar

in writing, the ideas that they deliver are hard to comprehend. For a recount text, the students have to consider the use of language features. When writing a recount text, students need to use specific participant, action verbs, circumstances places and time, use past tense, and focus on temporal sequence (Gerrot and Wignel, 1994:194). Because of that, the students need to learn more about the use of appropriate grammar to make their writing intelligible to the readers.

In order to prove this argument, a preliminary research was conducted on 25th February 2014 to see the students' products in writing a recount text. This preliminary research was conducted for 22 students at tenth grade of senior high school in SMA N 1 Sungai Limau. The data acquisition of this preliminary research was helped by one of the English teacher in the school. The students were asked to write a recount text about their last holiday.

Based on the result of the preliminary research, it was found that 79% students could not write recount text well. The students did many mistakes in writing recount texts. One of the example was **I am go to rice field**. This example showed that the students did not understand about grammar. For recount text, the students should use past tense as the language feature. However, they still got difficulties to differentiate the tenses. They got confused to apply the correct grammar based on the text they write. Considering the fact that was

faced, it was important to categorize the students' ability in writing recount texts in order to find other difficulties that students face when writing recount texts.

Related to this, there were some researchers that investigated students' ability and problems in writing. Iswahyuni (2014) conducted a research with title *“Error Analysis on The Use of Simple Past Tense in Recount Texts Written by the 8th Grade Students of SMPN 3 Probolinggo”*. The finding of this research showed that based on surface strategy taxonomy, there were error in omissions, additions, misformations and disordering. Then, Erma (2008) did a research related to the students' ability in recount text. The title of this research is *“An Analysis of Generic Structure in Students Writing of Recount Texts: A Case at Year VIII Students of Junior High School 27 Padang”*. It was found that students could not able to develop their idea in writing orientation, events, and reorientation. Karani (2008) also did a research with the title *“Area of Problem in Writing Recount Texts”*. The research was conducted at SMP 10, Palang Karaya. The findings of this research showed that the area of students' problem in writing recount texts was content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and spelling.

Although some researches have been conducted on this text, more information about students' writing recount text were still needed to explore. Even so, this research did not only focus on how students' ability in writing recount text, but also this research investigated and analyzed the students'

difficulties in writing recount text and the causes of the students' difficulties in writing recount text.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on preliminary research at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau and previous research, it was found that the students were not able to write recount texts well. One of the problems that was found in writing recount texts is the students could not write recount text with correct grammar. They got confused to use grammar effectively based on the text they wanted to write. They just wrote sentences that came into their mind without considering the rules of language.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the problem identified above, the limitation of this research was to analyze the students' difficulties in writing recount text. This research also wanted to find some causes which made the students' difficulties in writing recount text. However, in order to find the students' difficulties in writing recount text, the analysis of students' ability in writing recount text was done first.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this research was formulated in this following question:

“What were students' difficulties in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau?”

E. Research Questions

Based on the formulation of the problem mentioned above, the research questions were stated as follow:

1. How was students' ability in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau?
2. What were students' difficulties in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau?
3. Why did students get difficulties in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau?

F. Purposes of the Research

Based on the research questions stated above, the purpose of this research is:

1. To investigate how students' ability in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau
2. To find out students' difficulties in writing recount text at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau
3. To find out the causes of students' difficulties in writing recount texts at SMA N 1 Sungai Limau and try to give the solution to the difficulties

G. Significance of the Research

The findings of this research were expected could give contribution to the teaching and learning foreign language.

1. Contribution to the practical learning, this research is to give more information about students' ability in writing recount text. Besides, this research can give contribution to teachers. By knowing their students' difficulties, they can improve their teaching so that the students can write a text well. In addition, this can help the headmaster of the school be aware about the facility that should be fulfilled in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning English, especially writing.
2. Contribution to development of teaching writing recount texts, this research is to enlarge the knowledge of the researcher and support the theories of recount text and writing. Furthermore, this research can be used as one of basic theories for further research.

H. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid confusion of readers in understanding the topic that is discussed, some key term are in involved in this part:

1. Writing: an activity of transferring ideas into a good written form by considering some elements such as grammar, vocabulary and mechanics.
2. Recount text: a text which tells about past experience chronologically.
3. Analysis : a careful study of something to learn about its parts, what they do, and how they are related to each other

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the findings in the chapter 4, it can be concluded that the students' writing ability in recount texts at the tenth grade of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau was weak. It was based on the analysis of all of indicators in this research, concerning with generic structure and language features of recount texts.

Then, the weak of students' ability in writing recount texts was because some difficulties faced by students. The difficulties were dealing with the language features of recount texts. It was proven by the data of students' writing recount texts. It was found that students did many mistakes in using simple past tense, action verb, linking verb, and pronoun.

In addition, based on the analysis of students' writing, it was found some causes that made students did some mistakes in writing recount texts. The first cause was interlingual transfer. The students' mother tongue was still influenced the way of students' writing. The next cause of students' difficulties was intralingual transfer. It related with the students' knowledge in using correct grammar. Students had lack of grammar knowledge that made them did many errors in their writing. The last cause of students' difficulties in writing recount texts was lack of vocabulary. Based on students' writing, it was found that students used some inappropriate vocabulary to show their ideas.

B. Implication

Based on the findings of this research, there are some implications that can be found:

1. It can be implied that the tenth grade students of SMA N 1 Sungai Limau have low ability in English especially in writing skill. So, students should learn more how to write well especially in writing recount text.
2. It can be implied that students did many errors in their writing recount text. It means that students should hard work to learn about language features of recount texts and do some exercises to avoid the same errors when writing.
3. It also can be implied that students still used their mother tongue in writing recount text, because of that students have to try to use English in their daily life.

C. Suggestion

Based on the result of this research, the students' ability in using appropriate language features in writing recount texts was categorized low. It is important to improve the students' comprehension about the language features. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers can emphasize the materials which relate to the use of language features in contexts. It is hoped that teachers may give several exercises which focus not only on arranging the components of language but also how to use it appropriately in the texts in order to decrease the students' difficulties writing texts.

It is also suggested that teachers are able to search and apply techniques in teaching writing. The technique in teaching writing should be able to promote the students' ability in arranging and relating the ideas, choosing the words, and using the tenses. Giving more exercise to the students is quite important to control the students' progress in writing ability, especially in developing the generic structure and language features. As well, teachers may offer feedback for the students' writing in order to improve the writing ability. Through this research, it is also hoped that teachers can distribute the result of the research to the students, thus students will know their weaknesses.

REFERENCES

- Al-Buainain, H. 2006. Students' Writing errors in ESL: A Case Study. *Unpublished Thesis*. Department of Foreign Languages Qatar University.
- Anderson, M. & Anderson, K. 1997. *Text types in English 1*. Southyourra: Macmillan.
- Ansyar. 2012. Errors in Using Simple Past Tense in Recount Texts Written by the Eighth Graders of SMP LAB UM. *Unpublished Thesis*. Malang: State University of Malang.
- Asmara, Farida. 2011. The Vocabulary Used in Written Recount Texts of the Eighth Year Students of SMP Negeri 02 Wirosari, Grobogan. *Unpublished Thesis*. Semarang: IKIP PGRI Semarang Press.
- Barwick, Jhon. 1999. *Targeting Text: Photocopiable Units Based on English Text Types, Upper Level*. Glebe: Blake Education.
- Birch, B.M. 2002. *English L2 reading: Getting to the Bottom*. New York: Erlbaum
- Bitchener, J. & Basturkmen, H. 2006. Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*. 5(1): 4–18.
- Bram, Barli. 1995. *Write Well Improving Writing Skill*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Brown, H D. 2000. *Principles of Language Learning Teaching*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Brown, H D. 2001. *Principles of Language Learning Teaching*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc.
- Brown, H. D. 2004. *Language assessment--principles and classroom practices*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Chittravelu, N. et al 1995. *The Process Oriented Approach to Writing Instruction*. Wesly: Longman.
- Chokwe, Jack M. 2013. Factors Impacting Academic Writing Skills of English Second Language Students. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 4(14): 377-383.