

Teachers' Perspectives on Causes of Errors in Malaysian Rural Primary School Pupils' English Writing

Wong Chu Hui^{1,2} and Nur Ainil Sulaiman²

¹SJKC Lembing, Sungai Lembing, Pahang, Malaysia, ²Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: wongchuhui519@gmail.com, nurainil@ukm.edu.my

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i3/22894>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i3/22894

Published Online: 11 September 2024

Abstract

With the consent of members of the United Nations on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the goal of SDG 4 is immersively taken into account by many countries. In this decade, quality education is a must to prepare our next generations for a better future. Malaysia has identified proficiency in English language as the anchor of achieving quality education. Hence, Common Europe Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is integrated into current Malaysia English curriculum. However, English writing skills are considered the most challenging to acquire among the four skills in English language. Hence, this qualitative research aims to explore teachers' perspectives on the causes of errors made by rural primary school pupils in English writing. The participants of this research are three English teachers from one of the rural primary schools in Malaysia. The findings from semi-structured interviews showed the causes of errors in pupils' English writing were due to interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer and context of learning.

Keywords: English, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), ESL Pupils, Writing Skills, Causes of Writing Errors

Introduction

Quality education is the important element to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in SDG 4, which promote lifelong learning opportunities and highlight inclusive and equitable quality education for all (Boren, 2019). This concept involves various aspects which are crucial for social inclusion, sustainable outcomes and holistic development. It prepares pupils for active socialization, future economic and workforce participation (Tulder et al., 2021). It also emphasizes the basic skills such as literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and problem solving skills. Education has become a vital tool in ensuring the development of a country as education brings knowledge to people and reshapes and changes a person's worldviews and values.

As a member of the United Nation, Malaysia also adopted the SDGs framework and implemented it into the education system. According to Ministry of Education (2013), the

Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025 has transform the education system. One of the aims of implementing the changes is to prepare Malaysian pupils to be more globally competent in the global economy and society in the 21st century. The MEB focused on six attributes, which are knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality and national identity. According to Tan et al. (2022), these attributes are consistent with the National Education Philosophy, which aspires to produce Malaysian citizens who can attain a high level of personal well-being and make a positive contribution to the advancement of the country, family, and society.

Moreover, Malaysia has recognize the importance of English language competence for achieving quality education. Hence, the MoE revised the primary school English curriculum (KSSR) to align with the Common Europe Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It focuses on the communicative approach in English as Second Language (ESL) teaching. This encouraged pupils to use language in their real life communications. Hence, the assessment of the language development in pupils is based on the CEFR's six levels, which are A1 for beginners and C2 for the advanced learners (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). Teachers need to assess pupils' English language proficiency according to the four language skills based on these levels with a score of 1 to 6, from weak to advanced, during classroom-based assessment in the English language classroom (Gurnam Kaur Sidhu, Sarjit Kaur & Lee, 2018).

According to Getie (2020) , writing skills is often considered as the most challenging skills to acquire among the four primary skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in second language acquisition. Writing requires a higher degree of proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, syntax, as well as the pupils abilities in organising and expressing their thoughts coherently in English language. Bhowmil and Kim (2021) stated that English writing consists of complex grammar rules and exceptions which is unfamiliar to ESL pupils. Pupils tend to make mistakes in choosing suitable vocabulary, mixing up the sentence structure and making errors in spelling and punctuations. These errors lead to inaccuracy and lack of clarity in their English writing.

Therefore, the study aims to explore teachers' perspectives on the causes of errors made by rural primary school pupils in English writing. It is important for the causes of errors in English writing from teachers' perspective to be investigated because teachers are the front liners in teaching and helping pupils in overcoming the challenges in English writing.

The Research Objective of this Research is:

1. To explore teacher's perspectives on the causes of errors in English writing made by rural primary school pupils.

The Research Question of This Research Is:

1. What causes the errors in rural primary school pupils' English writing from teacher's perspectives?

Literature Review

This research is grounded with the theoretical framework of the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) from Ellis's (1994) perspective and Richards' cause of error in language acquisition.

Rod Ellis's Perspectives in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Ellis's (1994) perspectives on SLA offer a comprehensive understanding of how an individual learn a second language (L2). Ellis emphasizes that SLA is a complex process influenced by various internal and external factors. He identifies several stages and mechanisms which ESL learners acquire a language. Ellis stated that input is crucial for language acquisition as ESL learners need to be exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current proficiency level, which often referred to as "i+1" in Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Alahmadi, 2019).

Besides, Ellis (1994) discusses the concept of interlanguage, which is the evolving linguistic system that learners create as they learn and acquire a L2. In Ellis's Interlanguage Theory, learner's mother tongue (L1) will influence acquiring process of L2. This influence mainly happened in transfer errors, where learners apply rules and structure from their L1 to the L2. However, the rules and language system developed by pupils in Ellis's Interlanguage Theory are unique, which are not directly derived from their L1 to L2.

Richard's cause of errors

Richard (1971) has extensively studied the nature and causes of errors made by language learners when acquiring L2. Errors in SLA are not merely random mistakes. It can be categorized and analysed to understand the underlying process of language learning.

According to Richard (1971), the causes of errors in SLA can be categorized into three aspects, which are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer and context of learning. Interlingual transfer refers to the errors that arise due to the influence of the learner's mother tongue (L1) on the targeted language (L2). When learners's errors that arise due to the influence of the learner's mother tongue (L1) on the targeted language (L2). While the intralingual transfer involves errors that occur within the targeted language itself. It happened due to the incomplete or incorrect application of L2 rules. These errors are not influenced by L1 but due to the complexities of the L2. There two key aspects in intralingual transfer, which are "overgeneralization" which refers to learners applying the L2's rule too broadly and "simplification" which refers to learners dropping the elements of language that are perceived as complex to them.

Moreover, the context which learning takes place also contributed to the errors. This includes the formal instructional context and informal environmental context. In the formal instructional context, the errors in language may arise from the way the L2 is taught. It includes the materials and methods used by teachers. While the informal environmental context are the surrounding linguistic environment of the pupils, including the language spoken by the peers and community.

Previous studies on the Errors in English Writing

Fitria (2020) researched the spelling errors in students' writing composition of descriptive text written by 24 undergraduates. Fitria had classified the findings of the spelling errors from the research into four aspects, which are omission (leaving a or more letters), substitution (replacing a or more letters with incorrect ones), transposition (reversing the position of a or more letters) and addition (including a or more letters). The examples of spelling errors from Fitria's research findings are 'accounting' as 'accounting' (omission), 'aktor' as 'actor' (substitution), 'humbel' as 'humble' (transposition) and 'forgetfull' as 'forgetful' (addition).

Among all of these spelling errors, the most dominant spelling errors that made by Fitria's research participants is the aspects of omission, which are 40 % of all the errors.

Sulaiman and Syahri (2021) conducted a research to 24 undergraduate teachers on the grammatical errors they made in descriptive essay, which emphasize on the use of simple present tense. The researcher analyzed the grammatical errors based on the surface structure taxonomy, which are omission, addition, misformation and misordering. The research finding showed the ranking of the grammatical errors made in writing are misordering (140 errors), omission (55 errors), addition (38 errors) and misformation (21 errors). According to the research findings, the example of the omission errors that happened the most among the grammatical errors are the omission of 's' in the verb which comes after a singular noun and the omission of irregular verb 'to be' (am, is, are).

Besides, Setiyorini et al. (2020)'s research presented the analysis on the type of grammatical errors found in essays written by 20 undergraduate students. The analysis of errors are done based on Keshavarz's theory describing how errors take place in a sentence, which are omission, addition, substitution and permutation. In contrary with Sulaiman and Syahri's (2021) research, most of the grammatical errors happened in the aspect of substitution, which is 57.97%.

Previous studies on the causes of English writing errors

Ouledkaddour and Traiki (2022) did a research on the causes of tense errors in English essay writing among 21 undergraduates. The researcher distributed questionnaires to students and teachers to obtain the data needed for the research objective on causes of errors. According to the data collected from 13 student's questionnaire, 50% of the students see the lack of practice as the main factor of causing tense errors in writing. While the language transfer (27%) ranked as the second causes followed by lack of motivation (15%) and lack of good teaching (8%). As for the data from 6 teacher's questionnaire, teacher ranked the causes of errors by language transfer (43%), ignorance of the rule (29%), overgeneralization (14%) and lack of motivation and carelessness (14%). However, teachers do not see the lack of practice as one of the cause of errors in tense, which is opposite to the data collected from students. Prasetyawan (2023) carried out mixed method research by employing written test with 26 ninth-grade junior high school students and unstructured interviews with some of the students and English teacher to explore the cause of the errors in writing based on the concept of errors by Erdogan, which are intralingual and interlingual. According to the findings in the written test and interviews, the cause of errors are mainly due to the intralingual transfer, which is 67.7% on the analysis from the written test, and the interlingual transfer is 32.2%. The interviews with students and teachers highlight the intralingual transfer happened because student faced challenges in using action verbs due to lack of vocabulary, absent of simple present tense in imperative sentences and forget the addition of suffix "-s" in plural for uncountable nouns.

Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this research. It is qualitative research that aims in exploring the causes of errors in English writing among rural primary school pupils from teacher's perspectives. The methodology will discuss on the research design, sample, instruments and data collection procedure and data analysis.

Research Design

This research is qualitative research which provides in-depth insights of specific context. This type of research focuses on how a phenomenon occurs and capturing individual's perspectives and experiences. The data of this research are collected through thematic analysis from semi-structured interviews with teachers by the researcher.

Research population and sample

The targeted population of this research is one of the rural primary school's English teachers from Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC) X in Pahang, Malaysia. Pseudonyms is used for the school's name and Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC) stands for the Chinese national-type primary schools which uses Mandarin as the main medium of instruction. This is a low-enrolment rural primary school with only 62 pupils in the school.

Moreover, purposive sampling was used in selecting research participant for this research. There are three English teacher with more than five years of teaching experience in English subject from the targeted school were selected. They will be interview primarily on the causes of errors in English writing of their Year 5 pupils (11 years old).

Research instrument

Semi-structured interviews were used as the data collection method in this research. It is a type of interviews which consists of a list of open-ended questions to provide flexibilities and adaptability for the researcher to adapt the interview based on the responses from the research participants. It will also encourage detailed responses from the participants which help researcher in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon intended.

Furthermore, it is important for researcher to design a list of open-ended questions that align to the research objectives, which is to explore teacher's perspectives on the causes of errors in English writing. This semi-structured interview consists a list of 8 open-ended questions and it is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Semi-structure Interview Questions

Open-ended Questions	
Q1	Can you describe your experiences in teaching English in rural primary school?
Q2	What are the most common types of errors you observe in your pupils' English writing?
Q3	In your opinion, what are the primary causes of these writing errors?
Q4	How do you think the pupils' first language (L1) influences their English writing?
Q5	To what extend do you believe pupils' exposure to English outside the classroom affects their writing skills?
Q6	How do instructional methods and curriculum design contribute to writing errors?
Q7	What challenges do you face in helping pupils improve their English writing skills?
Q8	What kind of support or resources do you believe would help you better address writing errors in pupils?

Data Collection Procedure

Before carrying out this semi-structured interview, the list of open-ended questions are being reviewed by one of the primary school principal to make sure it is ethical and applicable to the relevant of the research context being studied.

The semi-structured interviews were done through face-to-face with the selected English teachers. The list of interview questions was given to teachers one day ahead to allow teachers review the questions and plan for answers before the interview started. Each interview session takes about 20 minutes.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used for analysing the data collected from the sei-structured interview. The responses from three English teachers are transcribed and researcher read through the transcription for recurring ideas and patterns. The researcher will do the thematic coding based on the phrases or specific point of view from the responses based on the research objective. The codes were categorized into different themes to help explain and answer the research question as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Codes for Data Analysis

No.	Category	Codes
1	Semi-structured Interview Questions	Q(<i>Number of Question: Q1-Q8</i>)
2	English Teacher	T(<i>Teacher's number: T1-T3</i>)
3	Causes from Interview Transcripts	C (<i>Causes's number</i>)
Example of Writing Codes		<i>Q1/T1/C1</i>

Ethical Consideration, Validity and Reliability

Attention to ethical consideration is needed when conducting research in educational settings to protect the research participants. All the personal data of the research partipants, including the data of the pupils mentioned in the interviews were protected and kept confidential. The researcher used pseudonyms and codes for all of the participants' identities. Before conducting the semi-structured interview with the selected teachers, the purpose of the interview was explained to each of the teacher.

Besides, validity of the interview questions by getting it reviewed by the one of the rural primary school principal, who has more than seven years of teaching experiences in primary school. This is to make sure the open-ended question were able to gain detailed responses about the causes of English wring from teachers' perspectives. Moreover, the reliability of the interview question were ensured through the consistent use of words by the researcher when conducting the interviews. This is to ensure all the research participants were able to have the same interpretation of the interview questions.

Findings

The semi-structured interviews with three English teachers reveals the causes of erros in pupils' English writing. According to the interview transcripts, the causes of errors are analysed based on Richard's causes of errors. The themes are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Themes in Causes of Errors

Causes's Number	Themes in Causes of Errors	Codes	
C1	Interlingual Transfer	Interferences from Chinese language	<i>C1_CL</i>
		Code Switching	<i>C1_CS</i>
		Direct Translation	<i>C1_DT</i>
C2	Intralingual Transfer	Vocabulary	<i>C2_V</i>
		Spelling	<i>C2_SP</i>
		Syntax	<i>C2_ST</i>
		Grammatical Rules	<i>C2_GR</i>
C3	Context of Learning	Teacher Competence	<i>C3_TC</i>
		Instructional Methods	<i>C3_IM</i>
		Peer Influences	<i>C3_PI</i>
		Exposure to English	<i>C3_EE</i>

What causes the errors in rural primary school pupils' English writing from teacher's perspectives?

Interlingual Transfer

Interlingual transfer refers to errors that arise due to the influence of pupils' mother tongue (L1) while acquiring English language (L2). The semi-structured interviews with teacher brought insights on the errors causes by interlingual transfer. The quotes from the interviews are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Quotes from Semi-structured Interviews' Transcript on Themes of Interlingual Transfer

Causes	English Teacher	Quotes	Codes
Direct Translation	T1	"...most of my pupils are Chinese...they plan their writing using Chinese..."	Q1/T1/C1_DT
		"One of the common errors my pupils made is the translation causing the sentence to be weird, such as “我感觉很饿。” is translated into “I feel very hungry.” instead of “I am very hungry.” or “You do what?” (你在做什么?) instead of “What are you doing?” .	Q2/T1/C1_DT
		"Pupils always think in Chinese before they write anything in English."	Q4/T1/C1_DT
	T2	"For Chinese pupils, normally I can see translation in their English writing but not much in Malay's (pupils) English writing."	Q2/T2/C1_DT
		"I've seen pupils write the sentence in Chinese and change it to English word by word. The grammar in that particular sentence is wrong."	Q4/T2/C1_DT
Influence of Chinese Language	T1	"... do not add “s” at the back of noun for plurals... “I have two cat in my house.” because in Chinese, we use only numbers to show it is plural for the noun."	Q4/T1/C1_CL
	T3	"I found out that pupils write English sentences using sentence structure from Chinese language, such as “我明天会去学校 I tomorrow will go to school.” . The “tomorrow” should be placed at the back of the sentence."	Q4/T3/C1_CL
Code Switching	T3	Pupil B mixed up the Malay and English language in sentence, like “I makan nasi at home” instead of “I eat rice at home”. This is due to their daily usage of Malay language rather than English.	Q4/T3/C1_CS
		"... although most of my Chinese pupils speak Chinese daily, I normally didn't see any mixed up of Chinese language in English writing."	Q4/T3/C1_CS

Based on the quotes from Table 4, Interlingual Transfer errors that were made by pupils are direct translation from L1 to L2, influences from L1's language structure and the cause of code switching in daily communication. According to English Teacher 1 (T1), English writing errors caused by direct translation happened quite frequently among the pupils. It has become a normal practice for pupils to think and plan in their L1 before they started their English writing and translate the language into English language production (refer to Q1/T1/C1_DT and Q4/T1/C1_DT). English Teacher 2 (T2) agreed that interlingual transfer is the one of the common types of errors among rural primary school pupils' English writing (refer to Q2/T2/C1_DT).

Moreover, influences from Chinese language in interlingual transfer has also caused English writing errors among pupils. Since the research population of this research is from Chinese National-type rural primary school, most of the pupils are Chinese. Hence, English Teacher 3 (T3) and T2 identified the influences of Chinese language structure, such as the missing of plural markers “s” in plural nouns and the placement of time expression in Chinese language

causes pupils to made errors in their English sentences (refer to *Q4/T1/C1_CL* and *Q4/T3/C1_CL*).

Besides, T3 also mentioned that one of the Malay pupils in the school made errors in English writing due to pupils' practice of alternating between Malay language and English language in daily communication. Examples of errors, such as writing Malay words with English words within a single sentence, caused by code switching can be seen from *Q4/T3/C1_CS*. However, T3 stated that this type of errors hardly be seen in Chinese pupils (refer to *Q4/T3/C1_CS*).

Intralingual Transfer

Errors occurred through intralingual transfer are the errors happened due to the overgeneralization or incorrect application of rules by pupils within the English language. The errors are categorized in Table 5.

Table 5

Quotes from Semi-structured Interviews' Transcript on Themes of Intralingual Transfer

Causes	English Teacher	Quotes	Codes
Vocabulary	T2	"...hilarious mistakes on the word choice when pupils try to explain something they do not know the vocab in English, such as "big decision" instead of "important decision"."	<i>Q1/T2/C2_V</i>
		"...lack of exposure causes lack of vocab in pupils...they do not have a lot of chances in reading English book, so they do not know a lot of words or even how to use them."	<i>Q5/T2/C2_V</i>
	T3	"Pupil B mixed up the Malay and English language in sentence, like "I makan nasi at home" instead of "I eat rice at home"."	<i>Q4/T3/C2_V</i>
Grammatical Rules	T1	"... do not add "s" at the back of noun for plurals... "I have two cat in my house." because in Chinese, we use only numbers to show it is plural for the noun."	<i>Q4/T1/C2_GR</i>
		"...definitely the reason of not knowing English grammar correctly. They tend to make lot of weird and questionable sentences by using part of the grammar rules wrongly...past tense, ing, a or an..."	<i>Q3/T1/C2_GR</i>
	T2	"...the past tense of the words used is incorrect for the pupils. They learn to use "ed" at the end of the verb for past tense, but they use it for all the verbs."	<i>Q3/T2/C2_GR</i>

		One of the easy example is the word “eat” become “eated”.”	
		“...adding “s” to all the plural nouns, such as childs, mans and foots.”	
	T3	“I personally think that most of the pupils are confused with the English’s grammar rules. This is the main cause that affect their English writing. “	<i>Q3/T3/C2_GR</i>
Syntax	T1	“SVA (Subject-Veb-Agreement)” in pupils also is a big problem. They cannot identify the singular or plural in a sentence with more than two noun. “The list of names are on the desk.” The verb should be “is” not “are” because the focus of the setence is the “list” not the “names”.	<i>Q2/T1/C2_ST</i>
Spelling	T3	“The sound of the word will confuse the pupils in writing English word, such as “shef” instead of “chef”, “restraint” instead of “restaurant”.”	<i>Q2/T3/C2_SP</i>
		“...silent sound in some of the words is all difficult for pupils to spell, as they always write based on the sound of the word they hearn, such as “leven” for “eleven”.	

According to Table 5, all three English teachers agreed that lack of knowledge in English grammar is the main causes of the errors in English writing. In the interview question about primary causes of the writing errors (Q3), all of the teachers explain about the grammatical errors they found in pupils’ writing. T1 and T3 even stated specifically that grammatical errors are the main causes of errors in English writing (refer to *Q3/T1/C2_GR* and *Q3/T3/C2_GR*). T1 and T2 also given a few example of grammatical errors from pupils’ English writing, such as the omission of “s” in plural nouns and overgeneralization of grammar rules while writing past tense by adding “ed” and irregular plural noun by adding “s” (refer to *Q4/T1/C2_GR* and *Q3/T2/C2_GR*).

Furthermore, limited in English vocabulary also causes errors in English writing. T2 mentioned the lack of exposure in English materials caused pupils to have less knowledge on the varieties of English vocabulary and knowledge on how to apply it in the English sentences (refer to *Q5/T2/C2_V*). Hence, pupils will make “hilarious” errors in English writing because they do not know the meaning of the word choices they made within context (refer to *Q1/T2/C2_V*). T3 stated pupils will replace the vocabulary that they do not acquire with words which are familiar to them, even tough the words are not English (refer to *Q4/T3/C2_V*).

T1 also discussed on the errors caused by syntax (refer to *Q2/T1/C2_ST*). Subject-Verb-Agreement (SVA) is the basic of the English sentence structure. However, pupils will get mixed up on the main subject in the sentence when there are two nouns in a single sentence, which caused the pupils to use the verb “to be” in plural based on the placement of nouns that is

nearest to it in the sentence. For example, “The list of names are on the desk.” instead of “The list of names is on the desk.”

Besides, T3 discussed on the spelling errors among pupils’ English writing (refer to Q2/T3/C2_SP). The spelling errors among pupils are mostly due to the English phonics. Pupils tend to spell phonetically based on how it sounds and ignored the silent sound of the word. For example, pupils spelled “restraunt” instead of “restaurant” and “leven” instead of “eleven”.

Context of Learning

The context in which pupils learn English language will impact pupils writing proficiency significantly. The findings on the causes of errors due to context of learning are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Quotes from Semi-structured Interviews’ Transcript on Context of Learning

Causes	English Teacher	Quotes	Codes
Teacher Competence	T1	“...non optionist of English teacher caused pupils to learn English wrongly. My school does have one teacher who is forced to teach English due to the lack of TESL optionist teacher.”	Q6/T1/C3_TC
		“...they didn’t even good and proficient in English, so they can’t teach pupils fluently. They will use direct translation throughout the whole English lesson. ”	
	T3	“I think the knowledge of pupils on the topic taught is important as we are the one who teach puils on the topic. However, we will sometimes taught the wrong information to pupils when it comes to the topic that is unfamiliar to us or even to pupils.”	Q6/T3/C3_TC
		“...sometimes, I need to google the information on the spot if pupils ask me some of the words that I am not familiar with.”	Q7/T3/C3_TC
Instructional Methods	T1	“...they didn’t even good and proficient in English, so they can’t teach pupils fluently. They will use direct translation throughout the whole English lesson. ”	Q6/T1/C3_IM
	T2	“...used videos from Youtube in teaching English lesson, but the explanation from the videos are too difficult to pupils because the youtuber	Q6/T2/C3_IM

		are speaking in a speed which are too fast for the pupils.”	
		“...teacher did not give feedback to pupils’ English writing, causing pupils to make the same mistake repeatedly.”	<i>Q8/T2/C3_IM</i>
	T3	“...teacher need to give more writing practices to pupils and give feedback to them. This help pupils to practice their writing and at the same time notice the errors that made in the English writing.”	<i>Q8/T3/C3_IM</i>
Exposure to English	T1	“Our pupils are mostly not from a family with high education background. They didn’t have much English books at home. The only opportunities they listen to English are mostly in English lesson”.	<i>Q5/T1/C3_EE</i>
	T2	“I don’t think my pupils have much exposure of English outside of classroom.”	<i>Q5/T2/C3_EE</i>
	T3	“Yes, I have pupils sharing their experiences in English exposure outside of the school. However, their exposure are not a positive exposure. They tend to exposed to rojak or broken English outside of school settings. This really affect their English writing as I can see mixing of different language in their writing.”	<i>Q5/T3/C3_EE</i>
Peer influences	T1	“I faced challenges in guiding pupils writing, but at the same time their friends are guiding them too, but wrongly! ...pupils will visit their friend house and do their English written tasks together and they all make errors that are similar...”	<i>Q7/T1/C3_PI</i>
	T3	“One of the biggest challenges I faced is the “copying answer from friends”. Pupils tend to just copy the English writing from friends without actually reading the whole writing. So, they make the same English writing errors in the written tasks.”	<i>Q7/T3/C3_PI</i>

Based on the findings in semi-structured interviews, T1 and T3 identified the English teachers’ own competence in English language affect pupils learning of English writing skills.

Teachers who do not have the qualification to teach English subject were asked to teach pupils in English caused the teachers to use “Direct Translation” instructional method in class (refer to *Q6/T1/C3_TC*). T3 highlighted on the knowledge of teacher on the topic taught is important as teachers are front liners in teaching them about the writing skills. Lack of knowledge on the topic caused teachers to give wrong information to the pupils (refer to *Q6/T3/C3_TC*) and they even need to clarify the information on the spot before doing further explanation (refer to *Q7/T3/C3_TC*).

Moreover, all three teachers agreed that inappropriate instructional methods caused English writing errors among pupils. Direct translation instructional methods (refer to *Q6/T1/C3_IM*), teaching through mass media, such as Youtube videos (refer to *Q6/T2/C3_IM*), and teaching without providing constructional feedback to pupils (refer to *Q8/T2/C3_IM* and *Q8/T3/C3_IM*) are the instructional methods discussed by all three teachers.

Besides, T1 and T2 mentioned the lack of English exposure outside of classroom setting causing pupils to have less opportunities to practice and learn the English language they have learnt (refer to *Q5/T1/C3_EE* and *Q5/T2/C3_EE*), while T3 had a different opinion on this. According to T3, the pupils were exposed to English language with incorrect grammar and language structure, causing them to make English writing errors in terms of sentence structure and mixing of different languages within a sentence (refer to *Q5/T3/C3_EE*).

Furthermore, T1 and T3 had notice the influences from peers were causing English writing errors in pupils. T1 stated that the peer teaching causing pupils to write incorrectly and they made the similar errors throughout the English writing (refer to *Q7/T1/C3_PI*). T3 found out that pupils tend to copy each other answers without knowing there were errors in the written tasks and made the exact same errors (refer to *Q7/T3/C3_PI*).

Conclusion

Discussion

The semi-structured interviews with English teachers from rural primary schools have provided a comprehensive understanding of the various causes of errors in English writing among rural primary school's pupils. These findings highlight the nature process and challenges pupils encountered during the learning and acquiring of L2 (Ellis, 1994). Errors arising from the influence of the pupil's L1 on their English writing are significant. Common issues including the incorrect word order, direct translation from L1 and code switching. These errors highlight the impact of linguistic inferences, where L1's language structures and rules are wrongly applied in English language (Richard, 1971).

Moreover, Intralingual transfer errors within English language, such as inappropriate of word choices, spelling mistakes due to phonetics, syntactical errors and misapplication of grammatical rules, are prevalent. These findings are supported by the research finding from Prasetyawan (2023) as this research also shown that teachers agreed that intralingual transfer are the main causes of the English writing errors. These errors often rooted from the overgeneralisation of language rules, confusion between similar words and limited vocabulary knowledge (Richard, 1971). The complexity of English spelling and grammar further contributed to these causes in pupils' English writing.

Besides, the educational environment plays a crucial role in the causes of English writing errors. Causes such as teacher competence, instructional methods, influences from peers, exposure to English outside of classroom settings and environmental factors significantly affect pupils' writing proficiency. Ineffective teaching strategies, lack of practice opportunities

and insufficient exposure to proper English language outside of classroom settings contribute to persistent errors in English writing.

Implication

This research is significant for improving the English writing proficiency among primary school pupils. The findings highlight the necessities of addressing the various causes of English writing errors, which include the interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer and contextual learning factors. By exploring these errors, teacher training programs can enhance their training to ensure educators are equipped with effective strategies to teach English writing. The training emphasis should be placed on the addressing intralingual transfer issues and fostering better instructional methods. Besides, structured approach to error correction that focusses on common interlingual and intralingual errors should be implemented. By providing constructive feedback and encouraging self-correction can help pupils internalize the correct English language structures.

This research also highlights the importance of revising the curriculum to incorporate more comprehensive and contextually relevant writing exercises, sufficient teaching resources and learning materials that are cater for the rural primary school's context. By providing adequate teaching resources and learning materials is essential for supporting both teachers and students. Additionally, increasing pupils' exposure to English outside the classroom setting through extracurricular activities, reading programs and interactions with native speakers can help reinforce the correct English language use among the pupils. This will provide ample opportunities for pupils to practice their English language and improve their overall English proficiency.

Recommendation and Suggestion for Future Research

According to the research findings, there are several areas are suggested for future research to further understand and address the causes of errors in English writing. Longitudinal research would be valuable in tracking the language learning progress of pupils. This type of research provides insights into long-term effectiveness of various teaching strategies and interventions, helping to identify which methods of teaching are able to improve pupils' English writing proficiency.

Researchers are also suggested to do comparative research between pupils from rural and urban setting. By comparing the teaching methods and instructional approach across diverse environments, researchers can determine the best practices and contextual factors that contribute to successful language acquisition. This comparative analysis will also help teachers to create interventions to specific context of learning and enhance the teaching and learning effectiveness of both teachers and pupils.

Moreover, future research can be done by investigating the impact of integrating digital tools and online resources on pupils' writing skills. Exploring how technology can be used to provide interactive and engaging writing practice could lead to innovative solutions that make learning more accessible and effective, particularly in resource-constrained rural areas.

Conclusion

The findings of this research reveal that errors in English writing among rural primary school pupils are influenced by interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer and contextual learning factors. By addressing these causes of errors from teacher's perspectives can help educators

create a more supportive and effective learning environment which improves language acquisition and writing proficiency for pupils from rural areas.

References

- Alahmadi, N. S. (2019). The role of input in second language acquisition: an overview of four theories. *Bulletin of Advanced English Studies (BAES)*, 3(2), 70-78.
- Boeren, E. (2019). Understanding Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on “quality education” from micro, meso and macro perspectives. *International Review of Education*, 65(2), 277–294.
- Bhowmik, S., & Kim, M. (2021). K-12 ESL writing instruction: a review of research on pedagogical challenges and strategies. *Language and Literacy*, 23(3), 165-202.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fitria, T. N. (2020). Spelling error analysis in students’ writing English composition. *Journal GEEJ*, 7(2), 240-254.
- Getie, A. S. (2020). Factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. *Cogent Education*, 2020(7), 1738184.
- Gurnam Kaur Sidhu, Sarjit Kaur & Lee, J. C. 2018. CEFR-aligned school-based assessment in the Malaysian primary ESL classroom. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 8(2): 452–463.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2013). *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025*. Malaysian Ministry of Education.
- Ouledkaddour, R. & Traiki, R. Investigating English language students’ causes of tense errors in essay writing. Master. Dissertation, Ibn Khaldoun University-Tiaret.
- Prasetyawan, W. T. Error analysis of language features in writing procedure text of the ninth grade students at MTsN 2 Ponorogo. Master. Thesis. Islamic Institute of Ponorogo.
- Richard, J. (1971). Error Analysis and Second Language Strategies. *English Language Teaching*, 25, 115-135.
- Setiyorini, T. J., Dewi, P., & Masykuri, E. S. (2020). The grammatical error analysis found in students’ composition. *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan Kesusastraan, dan Budaya*, 10(2), 218-233.
- Sulaiman, M. & Syahri, I. Grammatical errors in descriptive academic writing. *International Journal of Education Research and Development*, 2(1), 37-44.
- Tan, T.H., Ahmad Fauzi Mohd Ayub, Manisah Mohd Shah, & Ajurun Begum Ahamed. (2022). Implementation of Classroom-Based Assessment in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 11(4):76-87.
- Tulder, R. V., Rodrigues, S. B., Mirza, H. & Sexsmith, K. (2021). The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals: Can multinational enterprises lead the decade of action? *J Int Bus Policy* 4(1): 1-21.