

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY TO WRITE  
SIMPLE SENTENCES USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE AT SMPN 1 IV KOTO  
AUR MALINTANG KABUPATEN PADANG PARIAMAN**

Digo Afria<sup>1</sup>, Ernati<sup>2</sup>, Fatimah Tanjung<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Student of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

E-mail : *digoafria@yahoo.com*

<sup>2</sup>The English Lecturers of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to describe the second year students' ability to write simple sentences using simple past tense at SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. This research was limited in three sentence forms; affirmative, negative and interrogative. The design of this research was descriptive in nature. The population of this research was the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. The total number of the population was 183 students. That are distributed into 6 classes. The researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample. To make the test reliable, the researcher used inter-rater technique by using two scorers. Then, the test was valid in term of content validity. Before doing the real test, the researcher gave try out test to the students out of the sample. The researcher got the result 0.99 (High Correlation). Generally, the result of analyzing data showed that the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences using simple past tense was moderate. It could be seen that 70.97% students have moderate ability. In detail the percentages of each of form sentence were; 64.52% have moderate ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative, 74.20% have moderate ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) negative sentences, and 77.42% have moderate ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) interrogative sentences. Based on the research finding. The teacher are suggested to give more explanation about past tense and explain the usege of mechanics. The students are suggested to learn more about past tense and use mechanics correctly.

**Key Words: Ability, Simple Sentences, Past Tense**

## INTRODUCTION

Everyone in every country should prepare himself to face the condition of globalization era. It means that everyone in the world should be able to master English. He is not only expected to be able

to communicate in spoken but he is also expected to be able to communicate in written form. In this era, everyone should be able to compete in getting information from many sources that are provided in

English. Besides that English is not only spoken by its native speakers, but also by people whose native language is not English.

There are four skills that should be taught to the English students. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language components like vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are also needed in mastering English. In Indonesia, English has been treated as a foreign language which is very important to study. It becomes a compulsory subject to study at junior high school up to university level.

Grammar is one of the components in language learning. At junior high school, grammar is an important component to teach. By learning grammar, students can do their exercises well. As we know, the grammar of language is the way to construct sentences. By studying grammar seriously the learner can arrange the words into sentences, from the word that does not have meaning into sentences that have meaning. According to Thornbury (1999:1), grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language sentences are formed.

According to Hornby (1974:375), grammar is study or science of rules for

combination of words into sentences (*syntax*), and forms of words (*morphology*). It is evidence that grammar cannot be ignored.

Based on the researcher's interview on Juni 22, 2014 with one of the English teachers at Junior High School at SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman (Jusmaini, S.Pd), the students had difficulties in writing sentence in past tense. In fact, the students' ability to write sentence was still not satisfactory. It was identified from the result of their exercises in writing simple sentences in simple past tense. They got problem to write sentences because they forgot the pattern and they did not know the verb. Besides they were confused in using some indicators such as form of verb, time signal and usege of did. Then, when the students learnt simple past tense, they were lazy to do the exercise. They thought that learning simple past tense was boring.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled "An Analysis of the Second Year Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentence Using Simple Past Tense at SMPN1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was a descriptive in research. According to Gay (1987:189), descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer question concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Furthermore, Gay (1987:190) states that the descriptive research is useful in investigating many kinds of educational problem. The purpose of this research was to describe the students' ability to write simple sentence in past tense.

According to Sugiyono (2012:117), population is generalization region consisting of: objects/subjects that have certain qualities and characteristic. The population of this research is the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. The researcher chose the second year students as population because they have studied simple past tense. It means, they should be able to write sentences in simple past tense. Total number of population is 183 students. They are divided into six classes; VIII.1, VIII.2, VIII.3, VIII.4, VIII.5 and VIII.6.

Because the population was large, the researcher took sample from the population that had been chosen. According to Gay (1987:111), a good sample is one that is representative of the population from which it is selected.

To select the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique. According to Gay (1987:110), cluster random sampling is sampling techniques in which the sample is in group and not individual are randomly selected, and all members of selected group have similar characteristics. The researcher took the sample by using cluster random sampling technique since the students have been grouped into six classes, and they were similar in term of teaching materials. There were six classes of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman (Table 3.1). To select the sample, the researcher wrote the name of each class with VIII.1, VIII.2, VIII.3, VIII.4 VIII.5 and VIII.6 on the small pieces of paper. After that, the researcher wrote each name of classes on six pieces of paper and put them into a box and shaken the box. The researcher closed his eyes and taken one of the paper in the box. So, one of class taken would be the sample. After the researcher taken one of the paper in the box, the result was class VIII.3 as try out and class VIII.2 as the sample of this research.

The instrument for collecting the data in this research was writing test in the form of writing sentences. In this research, the researcher asked the students to write ten simple sentences in simple past tense

of (verbal) affirmative sentences, ten simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) negative sentences, and also ten simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) interrogative sentences. The students were given 60 minutes to do the test. The researcher gave a try out test to the students class VIII.3 first. It was done to make sure the students understand the instruction of the test or not. The result that the time was enough to do the test, and the instruction was understood by the students.

To know the validity of the test, the researcher used content validity in which the test materials were constructed based on the syllabus and teaching materials. Gay (1987:129) says content validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area. Its function was to minimize the subjectivity of scoring the test.

According to Gay (1987:135), reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. To find out the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique by using two scorers (scorer 1 and scorer 2). The first scorer was the researcher and the second scorer was Zilvia Rismi MZ. The researcher chose her because she got A in grammar and writing subject. Its function was to minimize the subjectivity of scoring the test.

To calculate the coefficient correlation, the researcher used the Pearson Product Moment formula (Arikunto, 2009: 72) as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2\}\{n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

$r_{xy}$  = the coefficient correlation between variable  $x$  and  $y$

$n$  = the numbers of the students of the students who follow the test

$x$  = the scores given by first scorer

$y$  = the scores given by second scorer

$\sum xy$  = the total scores of the scorer  $x$  and  $y$

According to Arikunto (2009:75), the degree of coefficient correlation can be categorized as follows:

.81 – 1.00 : Very high

.61 – .80 : High

.41 – .60 : Enough

.21 – .40 : Low

.0 – .20 : Very low

In this research, the correlation of the test was (.99). It was significant because the value of  $r$ -calculated (.99) was bigger than  $r$ -table (.37). The correlation coefficient was very high correlation,

based on the degree of correlation of coefficient which is categorized by Arikunto above (see Appendix 3).

The data of this research were students' score on writing simple sentence in past tense. The researcher collected the data through following the steps:

1. The researcher gave writing test to the students.
2. The researcher copied the students' answer sheet. The original sheet was for the first scorer and the second one was for the second scorer
3. The researcher and second scorer read students writing.
4. The researcher and second scorer gave score based on the criteria.
5. The researcher and second scorer counted the total score of each student.

To analyze the data, the researcher would follow the procedures as follow:

1. Calculating the average score of two scorer.

To calculate the average score of two scorer, the researcher would use the formula below:

$$\frac{\text{Scorer 1} + \text{Scorer 2}}{2}$$

2. Presenting the raw score.
3. Calculating mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD).

To calculate mean and standard deviation, the researcher used the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

M = Mean

N = Number of the students

$\sum x$  = the total score of the students

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N} - \left(\frac{\sum x}{N}\right)^2}$$

Where:

SD = Standard Deviation

$\sum x$  = the total score of the students

$\sum x^2$  = the sum of all the squares; square of each score and add up the squares

N = Number of the students

4. Classifying the students' ability into high, moderate or low ability by using the following categories (Arikunto, 2012: 299):

$> M + SD$  = High

$M - SD \rightarrow M + SD$  = Moderate

$< M - SD$  = Low

5. Calculating the percentage of the students who get high, moderate or low ability by using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage of the students who get each ability.

R = The sum of the students who get high, moderate, or low.

T = The sum of the students.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Findings

The purposes of this research are to know and describe the students' ability to write simple sentences using simple past tense. Therefore, the researcher presents the findings of the research as follow:

### Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences Using Simple Past Tense

The maximum possible score of writing simple sentences in the simple past tense was 150 if students' sentences consist of all criteria. The researcher found the highest score of the students to write simple sentences using simple past tense was 148 and the lowest score was 73.5. Then, the researcher calculated the Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of

Mean was 122.06 and Standard Deviation was 17.08. The result showed that 5 students (16.13%) had high ability, 22 students (70.97%) had moderate ability and 4 students (12.90%) had low ability. It means that the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences using simple past tense was moderate. It can be seen on the following Table 4.1.1:

**Table 4.1.1:**

### The Percentage of Students Ability to Write Simple Sentences Using Simple Past Tense

Quality	Number of Students	The Percentage of the Students' Ability
High	5	16.13%
Moderate	22	70.97%
Low	4	12.90%
Total	31	100%

### Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Affirmative Sentences

This part presents the students' ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative sentences. The maximum possible score for this component was 40. The results showed that the highest score was 40 and the lowest score was 21.5. After that, the

researcher counted Mean and Standard Deviation.

The result of Mean was 32.27 and Standard Deviation was 4.49). The result showed that 7 students (22.58%) had high ability, 20 students (64.52%) had moderate ability and 4 students (12.90%) had low ability. It means that the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative sentences was moderate. It can be seen on the following Table 4.1.2:

**Table 4.1.2**

**The Percentage of Students Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Affirmative Sentences**

Quality	Number of Students	The Percentage of the Students' Ability
High	7	22.58%
Moderate	20	64.52%
Low	4	12.90%
Total	31	100%

**Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Negative Sentences**

The maximum possible score for this component was 60. The result showed that the highest score was 60 and the lowest score was 29. The researcher calculated Mean and Standard Deviation.

The result of Mean was 50.27 and Standard Deviation was 7.65. The result of calculation showed that 4 students (12.90%) had high ability, 23 students (74.20%) had moderate ability, 4 students (12.90) had low ability. It means that in general the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) negative sentences was moderate. It can be seen on the following Table 4.1.3:

**Table 4.1.3:**

**The Percentage of Students Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Negative Sentences**

Quality	Number of Students	The Percentage of the Students' Ability
High	4	12.90%
Moderate	23	74.20%
Low	4	12.90%
Total	31	100%

**Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Interrogative Sentences**

The maximum score for this component was 50. The result showed that the highest score was 49 and the lowest score was 19. After that, the researcher counted the Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of Mean was 39.52 and

Standard Deviation 7.12. The result of this calculation showed that there were 3 students (9.68%) had high ability, 24 students (77.42%) had moderate ability, and 4 students (12.90%) had low ability. From the calculation of this result, it could be seen that the ability of second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) interrogative sentences was moderate. It can be seen on the following Table 4.1.4:

**Table 4.1.4:**

**The Percentage of Students Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Interrogative Sentences**

Quality	Number of Students	The Percentage of the Students' Ability
High	3	9.68%
Moderate	24	77.42%
Low	4	12.90%
Total	31	100%

**Discussions**

**Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences Using Simple Past Tense**

The result of the research, in general, the students' ability to write simple sentences using simple past tense was moderate. There were 22 out of students (70.97%) who had moderate

ability. It means that the students still had trouble how to write simple sentences using simple past tense. Based on the students' answer sheet, there were some students used incorrect "verb 2" in writing simple past tense, they used auxiliary 'did' but they forget to add not after 'did', even they used many capitalizations in writing sentences.

For examples:

- Dela slepted two days ago.  
The corret one is "Dela slept two days ago.
- Mother did sit in sofa last day.  
The correct one is "Mother did not sit in sofa last day.
- Did He Give me money yesterday?  
The correct one is "Did he give me money yesterday?"

**Students' Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Affirmative Sentences**

Based on the result of research, it was found that the students' ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative sentences was moderate. There were 20 students (64.52%) from 31 students who had moderate ability. It means that the students still had trouble to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative sentences. Based on the students' answer



sheet, some of the students are still confused to use Verb II and they did not use right spelling.

- Yogi go to Bandung yesterday.  
The correct one is “Yogi went to Bandung yesterday.
- Mela standed last week.  
Te correct one is” Mela stood last week.
- Budi waited friedn.  
The correct one is “Budi waited friend yesterday.

### **Students’ Ability to Write Simple Sentences in Simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Negative Sentences**

Based on the result of research, it was found that the students’ ability to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) negative sentences was moderate. There were 23 students (74.20%) from 31 students who had moderate ability. It means that most of students were still confused to write simple past (verbal) negative sentences on the students answer sheet, the researcher found some of students did not put “not” in sentence. Besides that, they used Verb II of simple past tense after auxxliary.

For examples:

- I did sit with Lisa last year.  
The correct one is “ I did not sit with lisa last year.

- He did not cooked last week.  
The correct one is “ He did not cook last week.

### **Students’ Ability to Write Simple sentences in simple Past Tense of (Verbal) Interrogative Sentences**

Based on the result of research, it was found that the students’ ability to write simple past (verbal) interrogative sentences was moderate. There were 24 students (77.42%) from 31 students who having moderate ability. It means that the students did not understand well how to write simple past (verbal) interrogative sentences. Based on the students answer sheet, the researcher found some students forgot to put question mark in sentences, they also did not use right capitalization.

For examples:

- Did Lisa buy orange two days ago  
The correct one is” Did Lisa buy orange two days ago?
- Did budi follow ifnu to house yesterday.  
Thecorrect one is Did Budi follow Ifnu to house yesterday.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

In general, it can be concluded that the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang

Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences using simple past tense was moderate. This conclusion was indicated by the fact that there were 5 students (16.13%) who had high ability, 22 students (70.97%) who had moderate, and 4 students (12.90) who had low ability to write simple sentences using simple past tense. Specifically the conclusions of this research are:

1. The ability of second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) affirmative sentences was moderate. There were 20 students (64.52%) from 31 students had moderate ability.
2. The ability of second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) negative sentences was moderate. There were 23 students (74.20) from 31 students had moderate ability.
3. The ability of second year students of SMPN 1 IV Koto Aur Malintang Kabupaten Padang Pariaman to write simple sentences in simple past tense of (verbal) interrogative sentences was moderate. There were 24 students

(77.42%) from 31 students had moderate ability.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the conclusions, the researcher gives suggestions to teachers, students, and further researcher as follows:

1. For English teachers, since the students' ability to write simple sentences using simple past tense was moderate, the teachers should give more explanations about simple past tense and the teacher also asks students to remind regular and irregular verb that will be used to write verbal affirmative sentences in simple past tense. Beside that, teachers also explain how to use mechanics (capitalization, punctuation and spelling in writing sentences.
2. For the students, they are suggested to learn more about simple past tense especially irregular verb and how to use mechanics in writing sentences and they are also suggested to pay attention to use "did" and "not".
3. For the further researcher, the researcher suggests to find out the difficulties of the students to write simple sentences using simple past tense.

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