

# **The Second Grade Students' Grammatical Errors in Transforming Affirmative Sentences to Negative and Interrogative Sentences of Simple Present Tense at SMPN 2 Padang**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to find out the grammatical errors made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense. Descriptive method was used as the design of this research. The population of this research was the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang academic year 2014/ 2015 (249 students). The researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample. The total number of sample was 31 students (class VIII.1). The researcher used inter-rater method to know the reliability of the test. The test was reliable (.94). It was categorized as very high. The test was valid in terms of content validity. Generally, the result of analyzing data showed that the second grade students made four types of errors (omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. It was proved by the fact that there were 32.48% errors in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences, 30% were errors in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/ no questions, and 37.52% were errors in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. Based on the result, the researcher gives suggestions to both teachers and students. The teachers are suggested to pay to the grammar when they teach about transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences form. The students should study and pay more attention to the rules (grammar) in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences.

**Key words:** Grammatical Error, Transforming, Simple Present Tense

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## **Introduction**

English is widely used in the world, with around 400 million speakers and a similar number of bilingual speakers in several dozen English-speaking countries, and hundreds of millions more users in other countries where English is widely known and used in business, government, media, and also education. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2007: 1).

In Indonesia, English teaching aims at mastering four basic skills of language, which include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Moreover, English also has its own components. They are grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation. In fact, these English skills and English components are not easy to master, especially grammar is the basic rule of language.

Grammar is one of the language rule that allows human to form and interpret the words and sentences of their language. Based on Widodo (2006: 122), grammar is thought to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Grammar deals with the form of sentences and smaller units: clauses, phrases and words (Huddleston and Pullum, 2007: 1). The researcher realizes that learning grammar actually help me to learn a foreign language effectively. Without learning grammar, she feels like a blind, a dumb, and a deaf person that do not know where to go, what to say, and what to hear.

Simple present tense is one kind of tenses that is used to write or speak in English. The simple present tense indicates actions or situations which happen repeatedly, all the time, or at any time, including established scientific facts and findings, definitions, proofs etc.(Wallwork, 2013: 49). It is learned when we first begin to study English and is used all the time. It is important because simple present tense usually takes place in speaking or writing activity, especially in transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences.

There are affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences in simple present

tense. First, affirmative sentence tells us what someone or something has, does, or is that has positive meaning, for example; I always wake up at 5 AM every day. Second, negative sentence tells us what someone or something doesn't (doesn't) have, cannot (can't) do, or is not (isn't) that is in negative meaning or not true, for example; She doesn't buy Harry Potter. And the third, interrogative sentence is a sentence which the purpose is to ask a question and get information. It always ends with a question mark. It can be in the form of yes/no questions and WH-questions, for example; Do they go to the party? Or Where do you buy this novel?

Errors are always made by English learners. It is a deviation from accuracy or correctness. Technically, errors can occur in both comprehension and in production, but comprehension errors are difficult to detect as it is often impossible to locate the precise linguistic source of an error (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005: 51). In short, student may have errors in their language production, even in speaking or writing. Furthermore, error analysis emerges as a reaction to the view of second and foreign language learning which saw language process as the central process.

At SMPN 2 Padang, grammar has been taught from the first level. The students are taught about grammatical form, sentence

and tenses. One of them is a kind of tense that is simple present tense. Simple present tense is used to talk about facts or things that are generally true, repeated action, general truth, etc. (Davidson, 2003: 47).

Based on an informal interview that the researcher did when she practiced her teaching practice at SMP N 2 Padang with the English teacher, Mrs. Marliance S.Pd, it was found that some of the students get difficulties in constructing sentences, especially in simple present tense. They still had errors in transforming sentences from affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences, especially the students that are at the second grade. Although the students had studied about simple present tense, they still got difficulties in constructing the sentence. For example they wrote: I *has* a nice day to see you for I *have* a nice day to see you, She *do not* open the conversation, it should be, She *does not* open the conversation, and Where you go? for Where do you go? etc.

Based on the facts above, the researcher was interested in doing her research on titled “The second grade students’ grammatical errors in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense at SMPN 2 Padang”. The researcher chose the second grade students as sample for

this research because they had learnt about simple present tense at the first level.

Generally, the purpose of the research was to find out the types of grammatical errors made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense. Specifically, the purposes of the research were follows:

1. To find out the type of grammatical errors made by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences.
2. To find out the type of grammatical errors made by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to interrogative sentences of Yes/ No questions.
3. To find out the type of grammatical errors made by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to interrogative sentences of WH-questions.

The result of this research is expected to be useful for teachers, students and also then researcher. By having known about the students’ grammatical errors in transforming affirmative to negative and interrogative sentences, the teacher will consider in applying the appropriate techniques in

teaching English. For the students, the result of this study will help them to be aware to transform the sentence, especially simple sentence in simple present tense, for the future. At the end, for the researcher, this research is useful to improve her knowledge in doing a study in the future.

### Research Method

The researcher applied the descriptive research design. Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer question concerning the current status of study (Gay, 1987: 189). In this case, the researcher conducted this research to find out the types of students' grammatical error in transforming affirmative to negative and interrogative sentences in simple present tense.

According to Gay (1987: 102), population is the group to which the researcher would like the result of a study to be generalized. In this research, the target population was the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang. The researcher chose them because they had studied about simple sentence in simple present tense. They were divided into eight classes, as shown in Table 3.1 that is about the distribution of population members of the second grade student at SMPN 2 Padang.

**Table 3.1**  
**The Distribution of Population**  
**Members of the Second Grade Student at**  
**SMPN 2 Padang**

No.	Class	Number of Students
1.	VIII. 1	31
2.	VIII. 2	32
3.	VIII. 3	31
4.	VIII. 4	30
5.	VIII. 5	30
6.	VIII. 6	31
7.	VIII. 7	32
8.	VIII. 8	32
TOTAL		249

One of the eight classes became the sample of this research. According to Gay (1987 : 101), sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. In descriptive research, sample should be at least 10 % of the big population. It means more than 10 % is received. The researcher took one class of the population. The class selected was VIII. 1 (31 students).

The researcher used cluster random sampling technique to select the sample because the population was grouped in classes and they are homogeneous; in term of similar syllabus, the same materials, and the same

time allocation. Gay (1987 : 110) states that cluster random sampling is a sampling technique in which the sample in group and not individual is randomly selected and all member selected group have similar characteristics.

To select the sample, the researcher wrote eight pieces of paper with the name of each class. Then, she put them into a box. After shaking it, she took out one of the paper. The class selected became the class sample and all of the class members became the sample of this research. In fact, the researcher took class VIII.1 as the sample of this research.

**Instrumentation**

Grammar test in a kind of transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative (yes/no question and WH-question) sentences of simple present tense was used in this research to collect the data. It consisted of 30 items. There are 10 items for negative sentences in simple present tense, 10 items are for yes/ no questions, and 10 items are for WH-questions. The specification of the test can be seen on Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2**  
**Test Specification**

No.	Indicators	Number of Items	Total of the Test
1.	Negative sentence - In singular form - In plural form	2, 4, 6, 8, 10 1, 3, 5, 7, 9	10
2.	Yes/ No question - In singular form - In plural form	2, 4, 6, 8, 10 1, 3, 5, 7, 9	10
3.	WH-question - Ask about subject - Ask about object	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	10
Total			30

A good test should be valid and reliable. A test is valid if it measures what is supposed to be measured (Gay , 1987 : 128). According to Arikunto (2006 : 169), one of the types of test validity is content validity. It means that this test was constructed based on the curriculum and syllabus used at SMPN 2 Padang.

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures

(Gay, 1987: 135). To find out the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater method. It means there are two assessors. The first assessor was the researcher and the second assessor was Mrs. Marliance Seltia S.Pd. She is one of the English teachers at SMPN 2 Padang. Besides, two assessors were used to minimize the subjectivity in scoring the test.

The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Formula (Arikunto, 2006: 276) to analyze the coefficient correlation of the two assessors:

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

Where:

- $r_{xy}$  = the coefficient correlation between variable x and y
- N = the number of students
- X = the number of errors identified by first assessor
- Y = the number of errors identified by second assessor
- $\sum xy$  = the total scores of cross product xy
- $\sum x^2$  = the square of x
- $\sum y^2$  = the square of y

Finally the researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation based on Arikunto's idea (2006: 276).

.80 – 1.00 = very high correlation

.60 – .80 = high correlation

.40 – .60 = moderate correlation

.20 – .40 = low correlation

< .20 = very low correlation

The result of analyzing the reliability between the errors checked by two assessors was .94 (very high correlation).

The data of this research were the types of second grade students in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense. The researcher analyzed each student's sentences and checked the errors by the following steps:

1. The researcher gave direction to the students to do the test.
2. The researcher distributed test to the students.
3. The researcher copied the students' answer sheets. The original ones were for the first assessor and the other ones were for the second assessor.
4. The researcher and the other assessor read the students' answer sheets one by one.
5. The assessors signed the errors found in the students' work by underlying the errors that learners made and then wrote the number of errors made by the students.

6. The researcher classified the types of students' errors.

The researcher used these steps followed in analyzing data:

1. Calculating errors

In this step, the writer counted the percentage of errors in transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences by using the formula as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = the percentage of error

F = the frequency of error

N = the total number of errors

2. Making table of the result

After the errors were corrected and arranged, the researcher made a table of the result of the analysis.

**Findings and Discussion**

There were four types of grammatical errors made by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense. They are omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. There were 32.48% errors made by the students in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences. Then, there were 30% errors made by the students in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/ no question. Finally, there were 37.53% errors made by the students in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. These

percentages were found based on the number of errors in each classification made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang.

**Table 4.1**  
**The Percentage of Students' Grammatical Errors in Transforming Affirmative Sentence to Negative and Interrogative Sentences**

No	Errors in transforming affirmative sentences to negative and interrogative sentences	Total of errors	Percent age	Types of grammatical error	Total of errors	Percentag e
1.	Errors in transforming affirmative to negative	293.5	32.48%	a. Omission	148	50.42%
				b. Addition	82	27.94%
				c. Misinformation	51	17.36%
				d. Misordering	12.5	4.26%
2.	Errors in transforming affirmative to yes/no question	271	30%	a. Omission	65	23.98%
				b. Addition	84.5	31.55%
				c. Misinformation	115	42.44%
				d. Misordering	5.5	2.03%
3.	Errors in transforming affirmative to WH-question	339	37.52%	a. Omission	124.5	36.72%
				b. Addition	93	27.43%
				c. Misinformation	121.5	35.84%
				d. Misordering	0	0%

## Errors in Transforming Affirmative Sentence to Negative Sentence

### 1. Errors in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences

#### a. Omission

The researcher found that there were 50.42% errors made by the students in terms of omission in changing affirmative sentences to negative sentences. It indicated that the students did not understand how to transform affirmative to negative sentence, for example *They not always go to school*. Auxiliary *do* should be added after the subject. The correct one is *They do not always go to school*.

#### b. Addition

It was found that there were 27.94% errors made by the students in terms of addition in changing affirmative sentences to negative sentences, such as this sentence: *Mrs. Jane does not never comes late to school*. We should omit *s* from the word *come*. The correct one is *Mrs. Jane does not never come late to school*.

#### c. Misinformation

It was found that there were 17.38% errors made by the students

in terms of misinformation in changing affirmative sentences to negative sentences. The students used wrong form of the morpheme or structure, for example: *My mother and my sister does not enjoy seeing statue and old painting*. The word *does* should be changed to *do*. The correct one is *My mother and my sister do not enjoy seeing statue and old painting*.

#### d. Misordering

It was found that there were 4.26% errors made by the students in terms of misordering in changing affirmative sentences to negative sentences, for example: *Mrs. Jane never does not come late to school*. The word *does not* should be placed after the subject. The correct one is *Mrs. Jane does not never does not come late to school*.

### 2. Errors in transforming affirmative sentence to yes/ no questions

#### a. Omission

The researcher found that there were 23.98% errors made by the students in terms of omission in changing affirmative sentences to



yes/ no questions, for example: *Does never come late to school?* The subject *Mrs. Jane* should be added after auxiliary *does*. The correct one is *Does Mrs. Jane never come late to school?*

b. Addition

It was found that there were 31.55% errors made by the students in terms of addition in changing affirmative sentences to yes/ no questions, such as this sentence: *Does Mrs. Jane never comes late to school?* *S* should be omitted from the word *come*. The correct one is *Does Mrs. Jane never come late to school?*

c. Misinformation

The researcher found that there were 42.44% errors made by the students in terms of misinformation in changing affirmative sentences to yes/ no questions, for example: *Does my mother and my sister enjoy seeing statue and old painting?* The word *does* should be replaced with *do*. The correct one is *Do my mother and my sister enjoy seeing statue and old painting?*

d. Misordering

It was found that that there were 2.03% errors made by the students in

terms of misordering in changing affirmative sentences to yes/ no questions, for example: *Do have you an English course every Thursday and Friday?* The subject *you* should be placed after the auxiliary *do*. The correct one is *Do you have an English course every Thursday and Friday?*

3. Errors in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions

a. Omission

The researcher found that there were 36.73% errors made by the students in terms of omission in changing affirmative sentence to WH-question, for example: *What Tina do?* Auxiliary *does* should be added before the subject. The correct one is *What does Tina do?*

b. Addition

It was found that that there were 27.43% errors made by the students in terms of addition in changing affirmative sentence to WH-question, such as this sentence: *Who does always goes to school by bus?* The word *does* should be omitted. The correct one is *Who always goes to school by bus?*

### c. Misinformation

It was found that there were 35.84% errors made by the students in terms of misinformation in changing affirmative sentence to yes/no WH-question, for example: What *does* George and his friends do regularly? The auxiliary *does* should be replaced with *do*. The correct one is *What do George and his friends do regularly?*

### d. Misordering

The researcher found that that there were no errors of errors made by the students in terms of misordering in changing affirmative sentence to WH-question

affirmative sentences to negative sentences.

It was proved by the fact that the percentage of omission error was 50.42%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of addition in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences.

It was proved by the fact that the percentage of addition error was 27.94%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of misinformation in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences.

It was proved by the fact that the percentage of misinformation error was 17.38%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of misordering in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences.

It was proved by the fact that the percentage of misordering error was 4.26%.

## Conclusion

The researcher drew that the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made four types of errors in transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences. They are omission, addition, misinformation and misordering.

There were 32.48% errors made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to negative sentences. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of omission in transforming

There were 30% errors made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/no questions. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of omission in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/no questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of omission error was 23.98%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of addition in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/no questions. It was proved by the fact that

the percentage of addition error was 31.55%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of misinformation in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/no questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of misinformation error was 42.44%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of misordering in transforming affirmative sentences to yes/no questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of misordering error was 2.03%.

There were 37.52% errors made by the second grade students at SMPN 2 Padang in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of omission in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of omission error was 36.73%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of addition in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of addition error was 27.43%. The second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang made errors of misinformation in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions. It was proved by the fact that the percentage of misinformation error was 35.84%.

The most serious grammatical errors made by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang were in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-questions, especially in the types of omission. Most of the students omitted the auxiliary. It indicated that the student have not mastered the way to transform the sentence of affirmative sentences to WH-questions. The less serious grammatical errors by the second grade students of SMPN 2 Padang were misordering in transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense. It indicated that the students had no problem to transform the sentences.

### **Suggestion**

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher proposes several suggestions as follows:

1. Relying on the result of analyzing data, the most serious grammatical errors made the second grade were in transforming affirmative sentences to WH-question so that the teachers are suggested to pay attention to the grammar when they teach about transforming affirmative to negative to interrogative form and find appropriate strategy to minimize the

students' errors. Based on the researcher's teaching experience at SMPN 2 Padang, the teacher should be creative a teacher and give motivation to the students in learning English. The teachers should also give more exercises to the student by giving varieties task about simple present tense in transforming the sentences. So, the students are able to transform the correct form of sentences.

2. The students should study the rules on transforming affirmative sentence to negative and interrogative sentences of simple present tense in the correct form and practice more about it.
3. The researcher suggests other researchers to find out the causes and sources of errors made by the students in transforming the sentences.

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