

## THE ABILITY IN WRITING SIMPLE PAST TENSE OF VIII A SMP ANGKASA KUTA'S STUDENT

Si Putu Agung Ayu Pertiwi Dewi  
STIKES BINA USADA BALI

### ABSTRACT

This writing discusses about the phenomenon that mostly happen during English session at VIII A class in SMP Angkasa Kuta. The problems occurred when the students tried to write the sentence. They found the difficulties in using regular and irregular verb form, using of copula be, using of adverb of time and using of negative form in past tense.

This study was classroom action research that collected descriptive data. The data collected by taking the sample of student sentences and analyzed the student ability in writing simple past tense.

Based on the observation, there were two kinds of factors influences the student ability in writing simple past tense of VIII A SMP Angkasa Kuta's student. First, The internal factors were made by the student itself. It impeded learning process in class during the English session. Second, the external factor came from the monotone teaching style and the situation.

Keywords: *ability, simple past tense, writing,*

### I. Introduction

Preliminary observations showed that students were misunderstanding in the verb changing. Simple present tense used VI that indicated the present time and VII indicated simple past tense. The error could be seen based on the preliminary observation. This phenomenon could be seen on the misunderstanding of student in differentiate a form of tenses used to convey it needs. For example, in sentence, "*I go to kintamani yesterday*". /Go/ is VI / present (verb I should be changed into went ( VII ). According to leech ( 2006:80 ), simple past tense is a form of adjective verb phrase having a second form of verb in the a statement sentence as well as it changed into VI in negative and interrogative sentence. The misunderstanding of students could be seen from the students class VIII A SMP Angkasa Kutas' score. Only 5 from 31 students in that class were able to get score above 78 as the minimum score criteria.

After observed that students' ability in this school had capability of being low in writing English. It caused by less concentration of student when the teacher gave them some tasks in writing English sentences. This could be seen from the number of empty paper in a long time when they were doing the task that was given by the teacher, lack of idea in writing and others, so that students divert their activities with playing games, mobile phone, having snack in class and talk each other. Based on those issues encouraged that this study conducted in order to increase the ability of student writing in this school.

Referred for the previous research, The first research was done by Milati (2011) entitled The Increasing of The Passive Simple Present Tense Writing Skill SMPN 1 Tegallang Students' by chain and chard games approach. The study was done by classroom action research and done in four steps in every cycle applied. The advantage of Milati research was the analysis of quantitative data showed that the approach used chain and card games could improving the passive simple present tense ability of writing skill of SMPN 1 Tegallalang Students'. However the disadvantage was the approach of chain and chard the game used was not described in detail so that it difficult to readers to understand in the techniques in that game. The relevancy related to this topic examined the improving of student ability in writing English. Solely that study preferred to analyze in writing passive simple present tense sentence and it could be used as a reference of this research.

The second reference was done by Astika (2012) entitled, "*Improving The Ability To Use verbs In Paragraph Writing Through Grammar Transformational Teaching Method*". That was kind of classroom action research used qualitative and quantitative method. Grammar transformational technique succeeded done because that analysis was choosing the incorrect verb by using error analysis which was used to decrease the error in writing sentence by the student. The disadvantage of

this research by used that technique was needed a long time to analyze the mistake that made by the student in class. Both researcher and student didn't have enough time duration in class considering the limited of English time duration. The relevancy of that research was analyzed the error in writing English sentence in order to improving students' ability in English. Based on those phenomenons above the problem could be solved as follows:

1. How did the understanding of student about writing simple past tense sentence?
2. What kind of the error that made by student of SMP Angkasa Kuta in writing simple past tense sentence?
3. What were the factors influenced the error in writing simple past tense by student of SMP Angkasa Kuta?

## II. Materials and Method

### 2.1 The Definition of Simple Past Tense

Writing activities in teaching a second language usually regarded as secondary skill with the importance value of it is under listening, speaking, and reading capabilities. Writing is used as a way to practice as linguistic elements or to express the things that are personal for students and the election (Ghazali, 2012: 295).

According to Harmer ( 2007: 325 ) there are various steps in the process of writing namely the preparation, review, rewrite and the last is writing conducted in recursive so at the editing maybe it is necessary to return to phase of pre-writing and re-think. A piece of writing can be edited as previous structure. The steps of writing are (a) check the use of language, (b) check punctuation and the layout, (c) check the spelling, (d) check the sentence to needless repetition, (e) specify information, (f) write various idea, (g) select best ideas, (h) write a clean copy from version that is corrected, and (i) write rough version.

Referred to understanding grammar according to Yule (2010: 83) grammar is a process to describe the structure phrase and sentences of all the elements in grammar and arranged in non-grammar. In English grammar contained tense which serves to determine when the activity happen. Related to this research provide the past tense writing by student referred to the past tense explanation (Baehaqi, 2009:35). Past tense is used to declare events or activity the past. The past can be concluded time implied in the phrase as follows:

- *When did your grandmother pass away?*
- *When did you park your car?*

Without using information of time, two sentences above are not in accordance with the English grammar. Those sentences should use past tense structure because it asked the accident happened in the past. But, sometimes necessary information of time clarify that an event happened in the past such as; just now, yesterday, last night, last week, two days ago and other expressed in the sentence "it rained heavily **yesterday**".

*Used to* or *would to + verb* is used to express the habitual activities in the past as the sentences below:

- *when I was a child, I **used to fly** a kite.*
- *Every time she **heard** a particular song, she **would cry**.*

*Used to* have different from with *be used to*, *become used to*, or *get used to*. Two expressions above showed the habitual someone activities. Three of them can be followed by *pronoun* or *present participle (ing form)* and the tense used is based on the context of the sentence, as in the sentence "John doesn't mind getting up at 04:00 a.m. because he is **used to it**". *Did + present verb* can be used to give emphasized in the sentence as "**I did pass** the examination even though I didn't study hard." (Baehaqi, 2009:37)

### 2.2 Method

This study was a kind of fieldwork research that collected descriptive data used Classroom Action Research. Classroom action research conducted in a cycle and a research to handling problems

than can be completed. According to Arikunto (2012:3) there are three definitions (1) research- pointed at on activity examined an object by using process and particular methodology to obtained beneficial data and information in order to improve the quality research interested and important to the researcher; (2) the action- pointed on motion activities deliberately practiced with particular purpose. The research form is a cycle series of student activities; (3) Class- a group of students at the same time receiving lessons from the same teacher as well. Therefore, the classroom action research is a learning activity in form of an act presented deliberately in a class simultaneously.

The source of class room action research was 31 students of VIII A SMP Angkasa Kuta. The data collected by pre-test and post-test in writing 10 of simple past tense sentences given to students. The collected data was analyzed by the standard criteria assessment. The data had been analyzed then interpreted, conclusion and suggestion were made.

The method of collecting data that was used in this research was direct observation method. The researcher conducted direct observation in order to obtain the data. According to Sudaryanto (1993:30), there were some steps of collecting data based on observation research as follows:

1. observing the selected class and teaching staff during a month
2. observing and noted the teaching method and the activity of student in classroom.
3. give the answer sheet to the student
4. ask the difficulty experienced by students

### III. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 The Students' Understanding of Simple Present Tense

Based on the 10 sentences that were given to student of VIII A SMP Angkasa Kuta on a pre-test, there were found four types of errors.

- a. the error in using the regular / irregular verbs
- b. the error in using copula be
- c. the error in using of the adverb of time
- d. the error of negative sentence form

On the preliminary test the error of regular /irregular verbs form in used were done by 16 students. The error sentence could be found in the sentence *#I thought of my examination so I could not sleep#*. The word *thought* should be changed into the correct form VII of think "thought" because that sentence was the form of affirmative simple past tense. Then, the errors of to be in used were done by 18 students in an example *#They are running to the forest last morning#*. To be *are* was a form of VI (present) and it should be changed into VII *were*, and the correct sentence become *#They were running to the forest last morning#*. Next, the error of adverb of time in used was done by 7 students on the sentence example *#My sister and I were eating at café today#*. The word *today* was an adverb of time of present tense. It should be changed by using some simple past tense adverbs such as last day, yesterday, last night, etc. So the correct sentence was *#My sister and I were eating at café yesterday#*. Besides, the error of negative simple past tense form in used were done by 20 students as the one of some examples taken *#They didn't went to school because it was rain yesterday#*. */Went/* could not used in this form because there were *did + not*. *Did* was an auxiliary that indicate the past tense and it followed by *not* as negative form. The form of simple past tense was S + *did + not + VI + O*. Then the verb *went* should be changed into *go* (VI) and the correct sentence was *#They did not go to school because it was rain yesterday#*. Afterward, based on the post-test the errors decreased. Kind of error in using regular/irregular verb form decreased into 4 students from 16 students at last. Then, the error of copula *be* in used at last were done by 18 students and it decreased into 7 students. Besides, there were not found of the error of adverb of time in used but there were 9 students still doing the error of negative simple past tense in used.

#### 3.2 Kinds of Error were Done by VIII A SMP Angkasa Kuta's Student

The basic form of simple past tense could be seen on the table below

	Be past (was/were)	Verb
+	S + be past + O	S + VII + O

-	S + not + be past + O	S + did + not + VI + O
?	be past + S + o ?	did + S + VI + O ?

Based on the basic form of simple past tense there were found four of the errors that were done by the student. Four kinds of errors were (1) the error in using regular/irregular verb form; (2) the error of copula be in used; (3) the error of adverb of time in used; and (4) the error of negative simple past tense in used. All of those errors explained below.

### 3.2.1 The Using of Regular/Irregular Verb Form

The first error were done by the student was they had not been able to distinguish between regular and irregular verbs. According to Leech (2006:119), Verbs derived from Latin *verbum* which meant "word" in term do or to have. Verbs could be divided into two types of regular and irregular verbs. Most of verb was regular verb that have four forms, such as; //help// (infinitive, helps (present)) in accordance with the third singular person, //helped// (past form) and //helping// (continuous). Irregular verb belonged in the form of general verbs and auxiliary verbs. The function of both verbs divided into finite and non-finite verbs.

Finite and non-finite that meant incomplete because they didn't have subject or noun to take an action. Non-finite verb was not showed time also. Finite verb had subject for example # I hope (present) John hoped (past) #. The most common form could be recognized of non finite was to infinitive as the example //to drink, to be, to laugh// (Dykes, 2007:42). The errors of past regular and irregular verbs in used that made by the student could be seen on the table below:

Student Name	The error sentence
S11	I eated fried chicken yesterday.
S23	She wotch movie at cinema Mall Bali Galeria last night
S09	My teacher teached me in the classroom

Student Name	Correction
S11	I ate fried chicken yesterday
S23	She watched movie at cinema Mall Bali Galeria last night.
S09	My teacher touch me in the classroom.

The error that was done by student S11, there was in the usage of irregular verb / past irregular verb. He wrote //eated// but it should be written in correct form of VII //ate// that come from infinite //eat//. Then, the error that was made by S23 was the error in writing regular verb. Verb //wotch// should be written in correct form //watched// as the past regular form (VII). Next, the student S09 wrote //teached// by added suffix [-ed] in his sentence and it should be changed into //touch//.

### 3.2.2 The Using of Copula be Past Form

According to Leech (2006:15), an auxiliary be couldn't be shown in the sentence without followed by copula be grammatically. The auxiliary, *have* and *do* is used to be an auxiliary. As an auxiliary, those verb is followed by nonfinite of the verb such as: #*is help* (passive)#, #*is helping* (progressive)#, #*has helped* (perfect)#.

The errors of copula be in used that made by the student could be seen on the table below:

Student Name	The error sentences
S05	I am born in Denpasar
S29	They were went to Kuta last week
S10	My sister is born at 1 November 1995

Student Name	Correction
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S05	I was born in Denpasar
S29	They went to Kuta last week.
S10	My sister was born on November, 1 <sup>st</sup> 1995

The error that was done by student S05 in the sentence above was the error of copula be //am// in used. That should be changed into past form as a sentence of affirmative simple past tense. Copula be //am// change into //was// and it appropriate with the subject I. Then, student S29 put //were// at the sentence besides, that sentence content verb so it didn't need it. The error in writing simple past tense sentence was the transformation of copula be //is// and it should n=be changed into past //was//.

There was preposition error seen in the sentence of S10. According to Leech (2006:9), Preposition was the word placed in before noun phrase purposely. Two important categories of preposition were adverb of place and adverb of time, i.e. *of, in, of milk, in the building, at the beginning*. Based on the error was made by S10 in the sentence "My sister is born **at** 1 November 1995", preposition //at// should be changed to //on// as the preposition of date. Then the correct sentence is #My sister was born on November, 1<sup>st</sup> 1995#

### 3.2.3 The Using of Adverb of Time

The error in using adverb of time could be seen on the table below.

Student Name	The error sentences
S06	<i>My father went to sanur beach in the morning.</i>
S07	He washed my motorcycle <b>two days</b>
S08	She was angry with me since three days.

Student Name	Correction
S06	My father went to sanur beach <b>yesterday morning.</b>
S07	He washed my motorcycle <b>two days ago</b>
S08	She was angry with me since three days ago.

Adverb of time ("when" adverb) was an adverb that explain the time of event happen. The error that made by S06 was the error in using adverb of time in the past. The student aimed that his father went to Sanur beach yesterday morning. Verb past //went// should be followed by #*yesterday morning*#. Then, the error in writing sentence of S07 and S08 were same. There sentence were not complete yet. Those sentences should be added with the word //ago// as the signal of past tense sentence. VII //washed// and to be past + adjective was correct. Their correct sentences became #*He washed my motorcycle two days ago*# and #*She was angry with me since three days ago*#.

### 3.2.4 The Using of Negative Simple Past Tense

The error in using adverb of time could be seen on the table below.

Student Name	The error sentence
S18	<i>She did not took your pencil</i>
S25	<i>I not went yesterday because I was sick.</i>
S13	<i>I am not studied English yesterday.</i>

Student Name	Correction
S18	<i>She did not take your pencil</i>
S25	<i>I did not go to school yesterday because I was sick.</i>
S13	<i>I did not study English yesterday.</i>

S10 wrote #She did not took your pencil#. The error was in using the verb of past tense sentence. //took// was VII, it should be changed to VI //take// because there was //did//, so it did not need to be changed. It can be seen according to the pattern of negative simple past tense S+did+not+VI. and the correct sentence became #She did not take your pencil#. Furthermore, the sentences of S25 and S13#I not went yesterday because I was sick# and #I am not studied English yesterday# had the similarities in error. Based on the error in the sentence of S25 #I not went# before //not// should be added //did// because there was verb //went// in that sentence. Then, based on the sentence of S13 # I am not# be //am// had to changed wit //did//, VII //went// and //study// must be changed into VI //go// and //go// so the correct sentence became #I did not go to school yesterday because I was sick# and #I did not study English yesterday#.

### 3.3 The Factor Influence the Occurrence of Error in Writing Simple Past Tense of VIII A SMP Angkasa Kutas' student

Based on the observation that was done, there were internal and external factors were found. It would be explained as follows:

#### 3.3.1 Internal Factors:

- a. There were 16 of 31 students did not bring dictionaries during the English session. It caused that they were not understand the changes of Verb, to be and the adverb of time in simple past.
- b. Furthermore the other factor was they were not active when the learning process in the class.
- c. They were lazy in answering some exercises book or homework
- d. They didn't want to memorize the changes of regular/irregular verb also.

#### 3.3.2 External Factors:

- a. Based on the research that were not caused by the student only but the teacher also had to be active in improving some writing technique in learning process.
- b. The class situation was not sustained, there was dirty, hot and crowded class.
- c. The teaching and learning process of VIII A class started in the afternoon so some student felt sleepy.

## IV. Conclusion

The low level of understanding English in writing simple past tense sentence could be shown based on the preliminary test. There were four errors in writing; (1) the error in using regular/irregular verb form were done by 16 students i.e. #I *thinked* of my examination so I could not sleep# it should be change into #I *thought* of my examination so I could not sleep#; (2) the error of to be in used were done by 18 students in the sentence #They *are* running to the forest# it should be #they were running to the forest#; (3) the error of adverb of time in used were done by 7 student in the sentence #My sister and I were eating at café today# it should be change into #My sister and I were eating at café yesterday# and (4) the error of negative simple past tense in used were done by 20 student in the sentence #They didn't went to school because it was rain yesterday# should be changed #They didn't go to school because it was rain yesterday#. After the teaching and learning done by giving the same in preliminary test and post test obtained that the error that done by student decreased. The error in using regular/irregular verb decreased into 4, the error of to be decreased into 7, there is no error in adverb of time in used and the error of negative simple past tense in used decreased into 9.

There were two kinds of factors influence the occurrence of error in writing simple past tense of VIII A SMP Angkasa Kutas' student those are Internal and external factors. Majority the internal factors were possible in influenced the student ability in writing simple past tense.

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