

## Error Analysis of Simple Past Tense in Recount Text

Dwi Megista Putri<sup>1</sup>, Asma Alhusna<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang

e-mail: [dwimegista18@gmail.com](mailto:dwimegista18@gmail.com)

### Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesalahan penggunaan simple past tense yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris UPI YPTK Padang saat menulis teks recount dalam bahasa Inggris. Desain yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris semester III 2024/2025. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan yang dilakukan siswa dalam menulis teks recount meliputi kesalahan bentuk omission sebesar 52,17%, kesalahan mekanik sebesar 26,09%, dan kesalahan mis-ordering sebesar 21,17%. Kesalahan yang paling sering dilakukan adalah error of omission, dimana siswa melakukan kesalahan dalam memilih kosakata, kata kerja dan juga to be yang tepat.

**Kata kunci:** *Analisis Kesalahan, Simple Past Tense, Teks Recount*

### Abstract

The aim of this research was to find out errors using simple past tense which were made by students of English Department of UPI YPTK Padang while writing recount text in English. The design used was descriptive method. Subjects of this study were students of English Department at third semester 2024/2025. Results showed that errors made by students in writing recount text included the form of omission errors at 52,17%, errors of mechanics were 26,09%, and error of mis-ordering was at 21,17%. The most common mistakes made are errors of omission, where students make mistakes in choosing the right vocabulary, verbs and also to be.

**Keywords:** *Error Analysis, Simple Past Tense, Recount Text*

### INTRODUCTION

Language is an arbitrary system of vocalization symbols that allows people to communicate and interact. Wibowo (2021) states that language is a system of meaningful sound symbols and is produced through arbitrary and conventional means of speech and is used by a group of people as a communication tool to express feelings and thoughts. It means that language is used for almost all activities, whether for communicating between individuals or groups, knowing oneself, expressing ideas and feelings, and for interacting.

When someone want to interact and communicate with others (individual or group), English is as international language that need system of rules to construct and connect every word in communication". Crystal (2003) states grammar and pronunciation of the two important things are also different.

Writing is one of the important parts in learning English because someone can express feelings, ideas, and put things into words to characters. According to Tarigan (2008) a productive and expressive language skill that is used for indirect communication, which means not meeting other people face to face is called writing. This is also reinforced by Nunan (2003) that writing is defined as a combination of process and final result. Process refers to the act of collecting ideas and processing them until the ideas can be presented well and easily understood by readers.

In learning English, it is common thing that students make errors or mistakes in writing. Errors are typically made by the students who do not yet command some instruction in language system. In other words, errors happen to the imperfect competence of the target language. Mostly, students did not understand about language system so it caused many errors in their learning English.

Grammatical errors in writing arise when choosing inappropriate words, constructing sentences using the wrong sentence pattern, using incorrect tenses or verb forms based on time and several other elements. Mastery of English grammar is very necessary for the correct selection and use of words such as verbs, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives, so that they become sentences that are meaningful and match what is intended.

The simple past tense is often found in the recount text which contains past tense in the writing process. The simple past tense expresses actions carried out prior to the time of speaking and frequently occurs with expressions that indicate a specific point in time, such as yesterday, a week ago, last Monday, at four o'clock, in the morning, on Tuesday and so on (Betty, 2011). In English, past tense had different functions and different uses. It often makes students confused and ended up making mistakes.

The student's disability in using the tenses to communicate is the problem found by the students because time and tense in English are not the same as in Indonesia. With the problem that exists, if the more students have a good mastery in the grammar which included the tenses, the more opportunity the students will be able to check their errors while writing. The statement above, also in line with previous related researches. The research which was conducted by Oktavia Murdani and Mukhaiyar (2020) from Padang with the title "The Correlation between Students' Mastery in Simple Past Tense with the Ability of Writing Recount Text". Hanani (2013) shows that students still made errors in the use of tenses. The problems were students did not know how to recognize the form of verb. Widiatmoko (2011) used surface strategy to analyse the grammatical errors such as omission, addition, misinformation and mis-ordering. Therefore, the researcher wanted to know whether factors affected students' errors in writing recount text at third semester students of English department of UPI YPTK Padang.

## **METHOD**

Qualitative research approach is data or information presented in the form of statements that cannot be measured with statistical values. According to Moleong (2017), qualitative aims to understand various kinds of ideas or phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behaviour, habits, perceptions, motivation, etc. and then presented in the form of descriptions of words and language in a special context with a natural aim. This opinion is also supported by Basrowi (2008) who states that qualitative research is based on people's ideas, perceptions, behaviour, opinions or beliefs by means of research, all of which cannot be measured with numbers or statistical data.

Because the researcher used approach in qualitative method, the results were analysed in the form of phenomena, not numbers. The researcher analysed students of English Department of UPI YPTK Padang in writing recount text to find out the types of errors that were most often made, and described them in the form of a recapitulation of error tables. Meanwhile, the data in the form of recount text in English written by students and then analyse the data based on categories of types of errors related to simple past tense, count these errors, and draw a conclusion.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

The data of this research was obtained by the researcher from the results of an English recount text written by students of UPI YPTK Padang through direct observation. The collected data was analysed and categorized into types of errors based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy theory which is described in errors of omission (removal of elements), mechanics (punctuation, capital letter, etc), mis-ordering (arrangement errors). The errors in the recount text made by students were then described by the researcher through reconstructed text and the types of errors were explained. Based on research conducted by the researcher, several errors were found using of the simple past tense structure, including errors of omission (removal of elements), mechanics elements, and mis-ordering (arrangement errors).

From data taken from 10 students, there were 3 types of errors, namely errors of omission, errors of mechanics and errors of mis-ordering. The following was the description of the errors made along with explanations.

1. Sentence number 1 was wrong because there was no ending "ed" in the action verbs, the word that should be 'crowded'.
2. Sentence number 2 was wrong because to be was added to sentence that already had verb.
3. Sentence number 3 was incorrect because the subject and the verb did not match. The subjects She, He, It should use to be "was/were".
4. Sentence number 4 was incorrect because there were not correct order of noun phrase or verb phrase.
5. Sentence number 5 was wrong because the beginning word did not use capital letter.
6. Sentence number 6 was wrong because there was no complete sentence.
7. Sentence number 7 was wrong because the error came when the student did not correct verb (it should used irregular verb) 'take- took' .
8. Sentence number 8 was incorrect because the used of object pronoun did not match. The subjects we should use "us".
9. Sentence number 9 was incorrect because there were not correct order of noun phrase or verb phrase.
10. Sentence number 10 was wrong because the word did not use capital letter for the name of city.

## Discussion

The researcher displayed the recapitulation of errors based on the type of error:

Table 1 Error Category				
Type of errors				
Students	Error of omission	Error of mechanics	Error of mis-ordering	total
St1	5	1	3	9
St2	3	2	1	6
St3	-	2	-	2
St4	4	1	1	6
St5	2	1	1	4
St6	5	1	2	8
St7	2	-	-	2
St8	-	1	1	2
St9	3	1	1	5
St10	-	2	-	2
<b>total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>46</b>

Next, the researcher's analysis results were expressed in the form of percentages and tables with the following formula:

$$P = \frac{X}{N}$$

$$N \times 100\%$$

Information :

P: Percentage

X: Number of errors based on type

N : Total number of errors (Creswell: 2009)

Table 2 Percentage of frequency of Each Error in Recount Text			
No.	Types of error	Total	percentage
1	Error of Omission	24	52,17%
2	Error of Mechanics	12	26,09%
3	Error of Mis-ordering	10	21,17%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Based on this data, the researcher found three types of error in the use of simple past tense in recount text of English made by students of English department, namely errors of omission, errors of mechanics, and errors of mis-ordering. The type of error using the simple past tense that was most frequently made was error of omission at 52,17%. This error reached 24 errors out of a total of 46 errors. Meanwhile, the type of error that was made the least was error of mis-ordering at 21,17%, this error only reached 10 errors out of a total of 46 errors. Another type of error in using the simple present tense that was made was error of mechanics amounting to 26.09%, this error reached 12 errors out of a total of 46 errors.

## CONCLUSION

Based on this research, the author found 46 errors. From the description of the data presented in the table, it can be said that students of English department made more mistakes in omission errors, namely 52,17% of these errors reached a total of 24 errors out of a total of 46 errors, followed by mechanics errors of 26,09%, these errors reached 12 errors from a total of 46 errors, and last was error of mis-ordering amounting to 21,17%, this error only reached 10 errors from a total of 46 errors. Students of English department made the most mistakes in omission errors which were lack of understanding in the use of simple past tense, where students chose the wrong vocabulary, the incorrect verb, the use of regular and irregular verbs and the right to be in the context of the sentence.

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