# Students' Difficulties in Converting Active Sentences into Passive Sentences in Simple Tense at MAN 3 Solok Students

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**A B S T R A C T**

This research was motivated by the minimal score of students got when did quiz about passive voice in simple tense. That was why the research about analysis of students' difficulties in changing active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense was crucial to done. The aim of this research was to find out the students difficulties in changing active sentence become passive sentence in simple tense form on social student's one of elevent grade of MAN 3 Solok. There were thirty four students but twenty students only choosen as informant of this research. This research used descriptive qualitative method and the source of the data was paper of students' original answer about passive voice in simple tense. The miles and Hubermans' model was technic of analysis data used in this research. There were several difficulties got on students in changing active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense as result. The first difficulty was students difficult to used correct auxalary verb (to be) in passive actually in simple past tense. Next difficulty was students difficult to analyze the subject in the sentence, students confused did the subject singular or plural.The other difficulty was students difficult to decide the object correctly. The last difficulty was students difficult to change verb one and verb two became verb three.

**Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh minimnya skor siswa ketika melakukan kuis tentang kalimat pasif dalam simple tense. Itulah mengapa penelitian tentang analisis kesulitan siswa dalam mengubah kalimat aktif menjadi kalimat pasif dalam simple tense sangat penting untuk dilakukan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswa dalam mengubah kalimat aktif menjadi kalimat pasif dalam bentuk simple tense pada salah satu kelas elevent siswa sosial MAN 3 Solok. Ada tiga puluh empat siswa tetapi dua puluh siswa hanya dipilih sebagai informan penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dan sumber datanya adalah paper jawaban asli mahasiswa tentang kalimat pasif dalam simple tense. Model miles dan Hubermans adalah teknis data analisis yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Ada beberapa kesulitan yang dialami siswa dalam mengubah kalimat aktif menjadi kalimat pasif dalam simple tense sebagai hasilnya. Kesulitan pertama adalah siswa sulit untuk menggunakan kata kerja pembantu yang benar (menjadi) dalam pasif sebenarnya dalam bentuk lampau sederhana. Kesulitan berikutnya adalah siswa sulit menganalisis subjek dalam kalimat, siswa bingung apakah subjek tunggal atau jamak. Kesulitan lainnya adalah siswa sulit untuk memutuskan objek dengan benar. Kesulitan terakhir adalah siswa sulit mengubah kata kerja satu dan kata kerja dua menjadi kata kerja tiga.*

## 1. Introduction

Language is the most crucial media in human communication. By language people can convey messages and share feelings to others. There are so many languages in the world because of each country have own national language(A. and M. 2016). Nowadays people not only use national language but also use foreign language. Each country establish a language or several languages as foreign language. In Indonesia english maintained as a foreign language which is taught at school. Refer to the newest Indonesia's curriculum english learning started at junior high school. Same with the other languages english have four language skills (Adiguzel, Kaya, and Cansu 2023). that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, each of these skills need three components that closely related to each other. These components are grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary (Ahmad and Ahmad 2024).

Grammar is one of aspects that influence the four language skills in english. Grammar help students to produce the language accurately and acceptability. For example when students speaking and writing by great grammar knowledge they will not difficult to make sentences that they want to share. Grammar also make students easier to comprehend the listening and reading material (Bahri and Firdaus 2024). said that grammar is the crucial lesson to teach due to grammar genualy influence students' performance in english skills.

Look at how important grammar in english that is why teaching grammar is crucial also. Reality grammar is not attractive for student. (Thornbury 1999) . A lot of students bored when learn about grammar. As a way to solve this problem some teachers try many kinds of methods. But in fact students still confuse and get difficulty in understanding grammar. For instance when learn about active sentence and passive sentence (Cellini et al. 2020).

Alexander (1998) said that when the subject (human or thing) do the action is called active voice while when the subject got the action called passive voice. ('L.G. Alexander - LONGMAN-English Grammar Practice for Intermediate Students-Longman (1998).Pdf', n.d.). Joshi (2014) in (Agustini 2017) argued that passive voice is the sentence that verb act to the subjec. (Agustini 2017). In other word Hadi stated that in passive voice object experiences an action but active voice is when the object do the job to subject.(Hadi 2021). Diaz (2018) also said that not of all sentences can be change became passive sentence. Just the sentence that have object and verbal sentence can be change became passive sentence. ( Diaz, 2018). Mustika(2017) in Fitria (2022) said that passive sentence is when the subject get the activities or treatment. Passive voice is use the formula be + $V^3$ that it is depends on the tenses. (Fitria 2022). At the end Fitria argued that " passive voice occur if the subject of the sentence is being acted on. In passive voice the object of the active sentence becomes subject of the passive sentence".(Fitria 2022).

From explanation above can be conclude that active voice is when the subject do the activities actively while passive voice is when the subject do not activities actively or passive voice occur when the subject receive the action from object (Christensen et al. 2022).

There were so many research about students' difficulties in changing active sentence became passive sentence done (Gilakjani and Sabouri 2016). For instance first, Muhammad Hasyimah Batubara done the qualitative research titled "An Analysis On Students' Difficulties In Changing Active To Passive Voice". Researcher got the results that student difficult to decide the subject, student difficult in using auxalary verb, students difficult to use verb 3 and common difficulty of the student is difficult to change past continuous in active became passive. (As-salam, No, and Juni 2020). Second research done by Muziatun with titled Analyzing Students' Passive Voice Difficulties". Researcher used quantitave method and got the results as follow (Weisberg 2007). There were 67,18 percent of students got difficulty in use auxalary verb. Then 48,83 percent of students got difficulty in changing main verb into verb 3. Last there were 43.75 percent of students got difficult to change object became subject. From this research can be conclude that the most difficulty in changing active sentence became passive sentence on students in english Departments' of Class 2017at Universitas Negri Gorontalo was difficulty in using auxalary verb (Malabar and Mustapa 2022).

The last research done by Dini Puji Agustini (2017) with titled "The Difficulties Of Learning Passive Voice". This research found that there were two common difficulties in learning passive voice (Elgendy et al. 2024). One of difficulty was caused by passive voice is un general rather than active voice in fact. Other difficulty was due to in passive voice students have to pas attention to tenses in sentence. (Agustini 2017).

This study aims to analyze and identify the difficulties experienced by students at MAN 3 Solok in transforming active sentences into passive sentences in the simple tense. The research seeks to uncover the linguistic challenges students face, such as understanding sentence structure, correctly applying verb forms, and selecting appropriate auxiliary verbs. Additionally, it examines non-linguistic factors, including vocabulary mastery, motivation, and contextual comprehension, that influence students' ability to use passive sentences effectively. Furthermore, this study evaluates the instructional methods employed in the classroom to determine their effectiveness in facilitating students' understanding of passive voice and to identify potential areas for improvement. The findings of this research are expected to have significant implications for both educators and students. For teachers, the study provides insights into the specific difficulties students encounter, allowing for the development of more effective teaching strategies that emphasize conceptual understanding, contextual exercises, and interactive learning approaches. By incorporating more engaging and communicative methods, such as real-life applications and multimedia resources, teachers can enhance students' comprehension and retention of passive voice rules.

## 2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative research approach, as it is best suited for exploring complex and previously unknown variables related to students' difficulties in transforming active sentences into passive sentences in the simple tense. According to Creswell (Gilakjani and Sabouri 2016), qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of issues that are not easily quantifiable, making it a suitable method for analyzing students' grammatical challenges. Given the nature of this research, which focuses on understanding the specific obstacles students face in learning passive voice, qualitative methods provide a comprehensive framework for data collection and interpretation. The primary data source for this study was students' written English tests on passive voice in the simple tense (Cai et al. 2017). These test papers were analyzed to identify common patterns of errors and difficulties in sentence transformation. Additionally, classroom observations and interviews with students were conducted to gain further insights into their learning experiences, misconceptions, and strategies in understanding passive sentence structures. By combining multiple data sources, the study aimed to provide a holistic view of the difficulties encountered by students at MAN 3 Solok and the underlying factors contributing to these challenges.

For data analysis, this study employed the Miles and Huberman model, a well-established framework in qualitative research. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, 2013), qualitative data analysis consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, the researcher identified and selected crucial information from students' test papers and interview transcripts, eliminating irrelevant data while organizing key findings. This step ensured that only significant errors and patterns relevant to the research objectives were analyzed in depth. In the data display stage, the reduced data were presented in tables, charts, and descriptive narratives to illustrate the findings clearly. The researcher explained the types of errors students made, categorized them based on linguistic and non-linguistic factors, and provided supporting examples from the test results. Finally, in the conclusion-drawing stage, the researcher interpreted the displayed data to identify recurring patterns and formulate key findings regarding students' difficulties in transforming active sentences into passive voice. These conclusions were then contextualized within existing literature to highlight their significance in English language learning. Through this systematic

approach, the study aimed to provide meaningful insights that could inform future teaching strategies and enhance students' understanding of passive sentence structures.

## 3. Results And Discussion

### 3.1. Results

The difficulties experienced by students at MAN 3 Solok in converting active sentences into passive sentences in the simple tense. Based on interviews, written tests, and classroom observations, it was found that the primary difficulties students faced stemmed from both linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistically, students struggled to grasp the structural differences between active and passive sentences, particularly in rearranging the subject and object and using the appropriate *to be* form with the past participle (V3) verb. For instance, in an active sentence like *She writes a letter*, many students failed to understand that converting it into the passive form not only required switching the subject and object positions but also modifying the verb to *is written*. A common mistake was that students continued using the base verb (*She is write a letter*), or they incorrectly selected the *to be* form based on the new subject of the sentence. Additionally, they were often unaware that not all transitive verbs could be directly converted into passive form, leading to confusion in identifying which sentences could be changed and which could not. From a non-linguistic perspective, a lack of understanding of the fundamental concept of active and passive sentences in communication also became a barrier. Students tended to memorize rules without truly understanding their purpose in broader language use, making it difficult for them to apply these changes in more complex sentences.

Vocabulary mastery was also a significant factor contributing to students' difficulties in converting active sentences into passive form. In the simple tense, using the correct past participle (V3) is crucial, but many students had not yet mastered the list of irregular verbs, making it difficult for them to determine the correct form when transforming sentences. Common errors found in the written test included incorrect verb forms, such as *The book is write by the author* instead of *The book is written by the author*. This indicates that many students at MAN 3 Solok were still unfamiliar with the irregular verb patterns in English, leading them to incorrectly apply general rules to all verbs they encountered. Additionally, some students struggled with distinguishing when to use *is/am/are* for simple present tense or *was/were* for simple past tense, resulting in errors in choosing the appropriate auxiliary verb in passive sentences. For example, they often wrote *The cake are made by my mother yesterday*, which shows that they had not yet understood that *are* should be replaced with *was* to indicate the past tense. This issue was further exacerbated by a lack of contextual practice, where students were often given transformation exercises without a deep understanding of how and when this structure is used in everyday communication.

Besides grammar and vocabulary aspects, pedagogical factors also played a role in the difficulties faced by students at MAN 3 Solok in changing active sentences to passive form in the simple tense. Observations during the learning process indicated that the teaching methods employed were still heavily focused on memorizing formulas rather than developing a deeper conceptual understanding. Teachers tended to provide exercises in the form of simple sentence transformations without explaining in detail the reasons behind these changes within a broader communicative context. As a result, students perceived the transformation from active to passive as merely following a pattern rather than understanding the function and purpose of this sentence structure in English. Moreover, the limited availability of interactive learning media was also a challenge in improving students' comprehension. Most of the materials provided were text-based, without the integration of visual or hands-on communication-based approaches, making it difficult for students to internalize the concepts being taught. The lack of variety in teaching methods also affected students' motivation to deepen their understanding of the material. Some students admitted that they merely tried to complete exercises without truly grasping why a sentence was changed in a certain way. Consequently, the same mistakes

continued to occur across different exercises, indicating that their comprehension was not yet deep or applicable in practical contexts.

Psychological factors such as self-confidence and anxiety in learning English also influenced the difficulties experienced by students at MAN 3 Solok in converting active sentences into passive ones. Some students were afraid of making mistakes, making them reluctant to attempt forming passive sentences independently without relying on examples provided by the teacher or textbook. When faced with exercises requiring them to think independently about structural changes, they tended to hesitate and preferred to copy patterns from given examples without truly understanding the concept behind them. Additionally, anxiety about speaking and writing in English became a hindrance, as students felt overwhelmed by grammar rules they perceived as complicated. The fear of making structural errors led them to avoid using passive sentences in everyday communication, ultimately slowing their progress in understanding this material. Therefore, a more communicative approach based on conceptual understanding is needed to help students overcome these difficulties. By providing more contextual exercises, utilizing interactive learning media, and creating a supportive and non-intimidating learning environment, students' comprehension of converting active sentences into passive form in the simple tense can be improved more effectively.

### 3.2. Discussion

The goal of this research was to find out the students' difficulties in changing active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense (Gilson et al. 2023). The source of the data used in this research relates to the paper of students' original answer in quiz about passive voice in simple tense. There was a type of question only in quiz (Md Yunus, Salehi, and Chenzi 2012). It was change active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense. There were twenty students' papers and this follow the data reduction of the students' original answer of the quiz.

| Students' Answer Passive Voice In Simple Past Tense | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active Sentence | Passive Sentence | Students's Answer | Score Of Students Answer |
| I bought this book | this book was bought by me | this book is bought by me | 15 |
| | | this book was bought by me | 5 |

| Students' Answer Passive Voice In Simple Present Tense | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active Sentence | Passive Sentence | Students's Answer | Score |
| Randi miss his dad so much | His dad is missed by randi so much | His dad is missed by randi so much | 12 |
| | | Dad Randi are missed by him so much | 1 |
| | | Randi is missed by | 1 |

| | | his dad so much | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Randi miss his dad so much | 5 |

| Students' Answer Passive Voice In Simple Future Tense | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active Sentence | Passive Sentence | Students's Answer | Score |
| we will cook 5 cakes | 5 cakes will be cooked by us | 5 cakes will be cooked by us | 1 |
| | | 5 cakes will cooked by us | 12 |
| | | we will be cooked 5 cakes | 6 |
| | | 5 cakes will cook by us | 1 |

Summarize of students' answer of simple tense in passive form

| Active Sentence | Passive Sentence | Uncorrect Answer | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | S | Be | V³ | O |
| Randi miss his dad so much | His dad is missed by randi so much | 9 | 8 | 5 | 9 |
| I bought this book | this book was bought by me | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| we will cook 5 cakes | 5 cakes will be cooked by us | 8 | 9 | 8 | 8 |

**Source**: students' paper of quiz

From the table above can be seen that; first, in simple present tense in passive form there were nine of students difficult in using subject and object correctly in passive of simple present tense form (Mukhtar et al. 2020). Also eight of students got difficulty in using right be. While there were five students got difficulty in using best verb (O'Connor et al. 2017). Second, in simple past tense in passive form there were fiveteen students got difficulty on decide perfect be only. last in simple future tense in passive form found eight of students difficult to use subject and object correctly and guess the verb ³ then there were nine of students difficult to use be perfectly.

This research found that the commonest difficulty made by the students is the difficult to analyze the tense so students difficult to use auxalary verb (Oliveira et al. 2021). It can be said that based on the students result in changing simple tense in active sentence became simple tense in passive. 15 from 20 students can not use correct auxalary verb of passive sentence in simple past tense. That means 75 % students difficult to use auxalary verb correctly. Then, it is followed by difficulty in analyze the subject correctly. The other research at analysis of students' difficulties in guessing subject and object correctly was there were 40 % students get difficult in each of simple tense. The other found was there were 65 %

students did not able to change verb one and verb two became verb three (Soliman, Wahba, and Tarrad 2021).

Based on explanation above researcher can conclude that the most difficulty of students in changing active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense was difficulty to use correctly be in simple past tense in passive form (Zhang et al. 2020). Next difficulty followed by difficulty of students in analyzing what the subject or object corrrectly. And last difficulty in changing active sentence became passive sentence in simple tense was students difficult to change verb 1 and verb 2 became verb 3.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the explanation and description in the previous chapter, the writer concluded that the primary difficulties faced by the eleventh-grade social students at MAN 3 Solok in transforming active sentences into passive sentences in simple tenses varied in complexity, with some aspects posing more significant challenges than others. The most prominent difficulty was the correct use of auxiliary verbs in passive sentences, particularly in the simple past tense, where students struggled to determine whether to use "was" or "were" and how to place them correctly in the sentence structure. This was followed by challenges in identifying the subject accurately, as many students were unable to determine which noun or pronoun should be the subject in the passive form. Additionally, difficulties arose in the correct use of the object, where students often misplaced or altered it incorrectly when transitioning from active to passive voice. The final, yet still noteworthy, challenge was the proper use of the past participle (Verb 3), as students frequently confused regular and irregular verb forms, leading to errors in sentence transformation. These difficulties indicate that students still lack a strong grasp of the fundamental rules governing passive voice construction, particularly in simple tenses.

The writer believed that these challenges stemmed from students' limited understanding of active voice sentence structures, which led to confusion when attempting to convert them into passive voice. This issue was exacerbated by difficulties in recognizing sentence components such as subjects, verbs, and objects, which are crucial in correctly restructuring passive sentences. Furthermore, the lack of consistent practice in grammar application contributed to errors in verb tense agreement, auxiliary verb selection, and sentence organization. The complexity of English sentence structures, particularly for non-native speakers, further hindered students' ability to internalize the rules governing passive voice. Additionally, the lack of exposure to passive voice usage in both written and spoken contexts may have contributed to their struggles. To address these issues, educators should implement structured learning activities focusing on the fundamental differences between active and passive voice, reinforce verb conjugation patterns, and encourage students to engage in frequent exercises involving sentence transformation in different tenses. Future researchers are encouraged to explore more effective instructional methods to improve students' understanding of passive voice, such as incorporating interactive learning techniques, contextual-based exercises, and digital learning tools. Additionally, further research could investigate the role of students' first language interference in their difficulties with English grammar and explore the effectiveness of contrastive analysis in teaching passive voice to Indonesian learners.

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