

An Analysis on Students' Ability in Using Simple Past Tense at Universitas Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai

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ABSTRACT

This research is purposed to know about students' ability at the second grade in using simple past tense. This research used qualitative descriptive analysis. The instrument of this research is a test. This research has only one variable. The variable is students' ability in using simple past tense. The researcher chose the second grade students at Universitas Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai. The respondent of the research consist of 32 students. The result of the test was analyzed to know the students' ability in using the simple past tense. The finding of this research that the students' ability in using simple past tense at the second grade students of Universitas Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai is in the less category with an average value of 30.16. There are 2 students (6.25%) were good, 6 students (18.75%) were medium, 11 students (34.37%) in the poor category, 13 students (40.63%) in the low category. The researcher hope the teacher should give more attention to the material of simple past tense and the teacher should give the suitable strategy to improve the students' ability in using simple past tense.

Keywords: *Keyword : Student Ability, Simple Past tense.*

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INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language in Indonesia. It is crucial because it helps us in understanding the language. According to (Kurniawan, 2016) language is a set of rules used by human as a tool of their communication. Every language has its own grammar. Learning tenses and grammar is not easy for student. Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of language that also becomes one of the more difficult aspects of language to teach as well as to learn well. (Sihombing, 2013) states that grammar often taught isolate, unconnected sentences that give a fragmented, unrealistic picture of English and make it difficult for students to apply what they learned in actual situations. (Hewings & Rodesma, 2022) defines grammar as the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in the language. According to (Apriliani, 2017) grammar is a theory of a language, how language put together and how it works. In addition grammar is important, especially when the learners communicate with others.

According to (Bowers and Brumfit) cites in (Maisaraoh, 2013) says that grammar is a language. It means if students learn a language, they will also learn the grammar of the

language. Thus, learning grammar becomes an inseparable part of language and becomes an important aspect if the students want to speak and write English well. Grammar or structure is one of the components in learning English. It can be called the foundation for producing sentences. Having knowledge of grammar makes it easier for students to generate sentences and catch the ideas from the sentences they read and hear. One of the important components in grammar is tenses. It can be said that making good sentences is the most important thing.

In addition, by mastering English grammar, learners will understand how to transfer and receive messages in both written and oral communication without misunderstanding. When English learners hear the word about grammar, they immediately associate it with the study of tenses, because tenses are the basis of grammatical studies in English. Many Indonesian students are struggle learning tenses because they are not in accordance with the structure and rules of the language in Indonesian. They do not have to change the form of the verb to reflect the timing of an event. However, in English most verbs can show the difference between the present and the past by changing the form of the verb.

There are 16 kinds of tense, namely Simple Present Tense, Present Continuous Tense, Present Perfect Tense, Present Perfect Continuous Tense, Simple Past Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Tense, Past Perfect Continuous Tense, Simple Future Tense, Future Continuous Tense, Future Perfect Tense, Future Perfect Continuous Tense, Simple Past Future Tense, Past Future Continuous Tense, Past Future Perfect Tense, and Past Future Perfect Continuous Tense. In this research, the researcher will focus on Simple Past Tense.

The simple past is one of tenses which students learn in the school but it sometimes makes students confused and lots of them make mistakes in several exercises. Student difficult are in learning, remembering, and applying the formula within the sentence. (Hardi, 2022) found some grammatical errors produced by the students in writing class. In solving these problems, the English teachers should to resolve the problem; they should increase student's ability in using simple past.

According to Marcel Danes in Grammar for English language Teachers stated that Learners often have difficulty mastering the types of the past tense. Particularly, they often need opportunities to study and practice; (1) question and negative forms, (2) irregular past tense forms (3) the spelling of regular past forms. Usually, the students' confused in implementing the simple past tense in write a sentences.

Simple past tense is a verb tense that is used to talk about things that happened or existed before now. Simple past tense is the most common tenses in English. Simple past tense indicated action that occurred in the past and did not extent to the present. It started in the past and ended in the past. The simple past tense is formed by using the simple past form of the verb. Firstly, for the regular verb, the past form is formed by add-ED to the verb. The examples are played, opened. Secondly, for irregular verb is formed by irregular ways, for example eat/ate, buy/bought, sit/sat etc. And non-verb using to be was or to be were. According to (Aditya, 2022) the simple past tense means that the action ended in the past. Simple past can be used for most past actions; we can use it for actions that happens quickly, actions that happened over time, or actions that were habits in the past. According to Green Baum and Quirk (2003) Simple past tense is used to express an event in the past time. It is also can be used to express an

activity which is a habitual activity in the past time. In addition, they mentioned that the stated past is used to refer a single unbroken state of affairs in the past: I once liked reading novels. However, simple past tense also can be used for special uses, as Green Baum and Quirk (2003) said, the simple past tense are used to indirect and direct thought, attitudinal past and hypothetical past. Moreover, according to (Maleong, 2013) states that Tense is used to show the relation between the actions or state described by the verb and the time, which is reflected in the form of the verb, and used to locate an event or state to a point of time.

According Milda Broukal cites in (Maisaraoh, 2013) the formulates form of simplepast tense into three types, they are affirmative, negative and interrogative.

a. Affirmative or Positive

All regular verbs take an –end ending in the past tense. This form is used for all subjects, both singular and plural.

The verb other than be:

S + V2 + Complement

Note: S = Subject, V2 = Verb 2, or Past Verb

Example:

- He bought a car.
- Your cat ate fish

The verb of be:

S + was/were + Complement

Example:

- She was hungry.
- He was sick yesterday

They were here last night some auxiliaries verb are used in the simple past tense consist of two kinds:

- Was, the use of “was” is only used for the singular noun and the uses of “were” is only for the plural noun.
- Did, the use of did are not only used as part of the sentence structure for questions but also part of the sentence structure for negative statement. It is followed by verb 1 (V1). The use of did is used for all pronouns. It means used for singular noun and plural noun.

b. Negative

For negative part tense verbs, use did not before the simple past form of the main verb. The contraction for did not is “did not”, the contraction for was not is “was not” and the contraction for were not is “were not”.

The verb other than be:

S + did + not + Verb 1 + Complement

Example:

- He did not buy a car.
- Your cat did not eat fish.

The verb of be:

S + was/were + not + Complement

Example:

- She was not hungry.
- He was not sick yesterday
- They were not here last night

c. Interrogative

- a.) Yes/no questions when forming a question, one must place the auxiliary or the verb **be** before the subject of the sentence. There is no final –ed ending in the question form.

The positive form of verb other than **be**:

Did + S + Verb 1 + Complement

Example:

- Did he buy a phone?
- Did Rudy and Fred watch movie last moon?
- Did your bird eat worm?

b.) The negative form of verb other than be:

Did + not + S + Verb 1 + Complement

Example:

- Did not he buy a phone?
- Did not Rudy and Fred watch movie last moon?
- Did not your bird eat worm?

c.) The positive form of be:

Was/were + S + Complement

Example:

- Was she angry?
- Was he sick yesterday?
- Were they here last week?

d.) The negative form of be:

Was not/were not + S + Complement

Example:

- Was not she angry?
- Was not he sick yesterday?
- Were they here last week?

Based on the explanation about the form of simple past tense above, it can conclude that, the formula of simple past tense as follow:

Table 2.1

The Concluded Form of Simple Past Tense

Form	Formula		Example
Positive	Verbal	S + V2 + Complement	She bought a new book yesterday
	Nominal	S + was/were + Complement	The case was hard to solve

Negative	Verbal	S + did + not + Verb 1 + Complement	She did not buy a book yesterday
	Nominal	Did + not + S + Verb 1 + Complement	The case was not hard to solve
Interrogative	Verbal	did + S + V1 + complement	Did she buy a new book yesterday?
	Nominal	Was + S + V1 + complement	Was the case hard to solve?

METHOD

This study uses descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is used to describe the student's point from the tables to some sentences. (Maleong, 2013) cites in (Aminah, 2016) states that descriptive qualitative method is a procedure that generates the data in the form of descriptive words in written or spoken from people and observed behavior. According to (Creswell 2009:2) cites in (Septiarika et al., 2017) says that research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. This plan involves several decisions, and they need not be taken in the order in which they make sense to me and the order of their presentation here. The overall decision involves which design should be used to study a topic

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research is conducted in the second grade students' of Universities Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai. In conducting this research, the researcher takes one class with consisted of 32 students'. After conducting the test, the researcher presents the finding of the students' score in doing the test to show the students' ability in using past tense. The researcher was checked the students' answers and gives the score for the students' work

In this research there are 32 students' who participate in the research. Every student's was given name code each other.

Based on the table above there are 3 students' have the 2 correct answer. There are 7 students' have the 3 correct answered. There are 3 students' have 4 correct answered. There are 4 students' have 5 correct answered. There are 3 students' have 6 correct answered. There are 3 students' have 7 correct answered. There is 1 students' has 8 correct answer. There are 3 students' have 9 correct answered. There are 2 students' have 10 correct answered. There is 1 students' has 11, 14, 15 correct answer.

The researcher stated that the highest score is 75, the lowest score is 10, and the average score is 30.16. From the data above, the researcher can classify the score of the students' by the standard degree of ability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the scores obtained by students from the multiple-choice test results, the researchers concluded that the students' ability in the use of simple past tense at the second grade students of Universities Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai is in the low category with an average value of 30.16. There are 2 students (6.25%) good category, 6 students (18.75%) medium category, 11 students (34.37%) in the poor category, 13 students (40.63%) in the low category and not a single student in the very good category.

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