INVESTIGATING SIMPLE PAST TENSE SENTENCE ERRORS OF GRADE VIII STUDENTS AT SMP NEGERI 2 TINOMBO SELATAN

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research are to investigate and describe the students level of simple past tense and dificullties faced by Grade VIII Students SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan in Simple Past Tense. The research was conducted throught descriptive qualitative research design. Data analysis of the students Simple Past Tense on Regular and Iregular verb, It is found that the students level in Simple Past Tense is poor level since thay have limited knowledge english**.** In line with it, most of them understood the question, yet some of them found of dificcult to respomd to the questions immediatly. Furthermore, the problem faced by the students regarding simple past tense are lack vocabulary and regular Irregular verb. Problem of vocabulary was signified by the fact the students difficult answer the questions, and Regular Irregular verb problem in simple past tense was signified by the students difficult differences regular and irregular verb

Keywords: Investigating; Simple Past Tense; Error Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Grammar is one of importants to form words into grammatical sentences. By mastering grammar, students get eisier to contruct correct sentences. Furthemore, grammar as a language component is inportant aspect for the students to inprove their ability to suport communication process. Grammar determines how words are arranged to form meaningful units.' Grammar is the most important aspect to communicate with other people because it is contains meaning so that other people can understand the conveyed message. Learning language component especially grammar is needed to support the mastery of language skills. It includes the teaching of English sentences. It is impossible for someone to express his or her idea in well-arranged sentences if he or she does not have good English grammar knowledge. Therefore, English grammar must be mastered by students to support them interact in English in both spoken and written properly.

Tense is a form of verb in English. The verb may be changed based on time and certain characteristic on the context of sentences. One kind of tenses the researcher investigated is simple past tense. Simple past tense is a part of structure that is given to the students of junior high school. For some Indonesian students learning tenses in English is difficult because there is no tense in Indonesia. For example in English to make a sentence with simple present tense the students have to put –d or –ed in verb for the third person singular, while in Indonesia there is no rule for verb if a subject is third person singular or others. Although has been taught since junior high school the students cannot apply tense rules. Because when the students make a sentence they are influenced by the mother tongue it causes most of them did errors on it. The researcher took one example from the student's exercises about the error that students did, here are the example of wrong sentences which are often made by students in using tenses. It is example of Simple Past Tense "Tomy readed the novel yesterday". It is false because in simple past tense the must use past form in the sentence. Most students cannot change the base into past form because Indonesian has only one form. The word *Read is* bare infinitive so they must change into regular form but English has two past forms; Regular and Irregular verb. Regular verb is made by adding –d/ -ed and to make irregular verb, they must memorize it. *Read* is irregular verb and the past form is *Read*. The right sentence is *Tommy read novel yesterday*. That errors are still influenced by the structure of mother tongue. In our mother tongue's structure there is no changing in verb. It is normal if the students confused when they have to use –d or –ed in simple past tense. Then, change verb bare infinitive into preterit in past tense especially regular and irregular verb.

In line with the use of sentence errors to identify the students simple past tense. There are two studies found to be related to this current one. The first study was conducted by Raihanah (2017) entitled "An Error Analysis' of the Use of Past Tense in the Students Recount Text Writing made by the Second Grade Students of SMAN 7 Mataram in Academic Year 2015/2016.The objectives are first, to know types of error made by the students in recount text writing. Second, to know the most dominant error made by the students in recount text writing The second study referred to in this

current one was conducted by Herlina (2011) entitled 'Analysis of students' errors in writing sentence (*A case at Eighth Grade Students of Even Semester of Cendrawasih 1 Junior High School*)". The objective of her research is s to find out the most errors did by the students in writing sentences, why many students made the error by the using those tenses ad how to solve the problem based on the writer's experience. Second she focuses on the problem such as the errors on using simple present, simple past, present progressive in writing sentence. Then, she analyze them by classifying their errors and getting to know why they make error by analyzing from the questionnaires given.

In English grammar, the simple past is a verb tense (the second principal part of verb) indicating action that occurred in the past and which does not extend into the present (Nordquist). The simple past tense (also known as the past simple or preterite) or regular verbs are marked by the ending –d, -ed, or –t. Irregular verbs have a variety of endings. The simple past is not accompanied by helping verb. The simple past form is 'Subject + Verb-2 + Object'

According to Palmer and Greenbaum (2004), the simple past can use in some action as follow" May not actually mention to specific time, but they do have one specific time in mind. Use the simple past to list a sseries of completed action in the past. These action Use the simple past to express the idea that an action started and finished at specific time in the past. Sometimes, the speakers/writers happen 1st, 2nd, 3nd, 4th, and so on. Simple past can used with a duration which start and stops in the past. A duration is a imager action after indicated by expression such as for two years, for five minutes, all day all year, etc. The simple pas can be used to describe a habit which in the past. It speakers/writers are talking about habit, they often add expression such as always, often, usually, never, when I was child, when I was young, etc. The simple past can be used to describe past fact or generalization which are no longer true. As in the point four above, this use of the simple pas is quite and similar to the expression.

Then, simple past tense is used to express an action, event or activity that happen in the past. Azar (1992:32) states; "simple past tense indicates that an activity began and ended at a particular time in the past". There several past time expessions in the simple past. They are *yesterday, two days ago, last week, last year,* and *etc.*
The use of simple past tense is to make the information particulary for the time or when activity is done. It can be put in the first of the sentence and at the end of the sentence. For instance: She made a cake yesterday, Last year, Budi visited Bali.

Simple past tense is used to express an action or activity what happens in the past. They are some expression about simple past tense: To show something that happen in past, He told a story yesterday, we went to Singapore last year. To express an action wholly complete in the past
We sang and danced all night. To speak polite; could you help me, please? (Instead of can you....?), did you wish to speak to me? (Instead of di you....?) To express past habit; *Gina always got up late last Month, He looked here and there and tried many time excape.*
Forms and Spelling of Simple Past Tense

The form of simple past tense can be affirmative, negative, and interrogative (Azar, 1992).These forms are explained bellow:

Affirmative means to positive statement. The pattern is: S + past form + O/C**.** For example: I studied English last night, Rani wore pink shirt yesterday*.*

Negative we use "did" plus nut as auxiliary in construct negative sentence. Pattern is: S + did + not + infinitive + O/C. For example: I did not study English last night, Rani did not wear pink shirt yesterday.

Interrogative the form is: Did + S + Infinitive? Some examples are in the following sentences: Did you study last night?, Did she watch television yesterday?

The important thing is that students have to consider about spelling of the verb in the past forms. Both regular and irregular have rules for forming them. The spelling of verbs in the simple past forms ends in *ed* as proposed by Azar (1992:29) in the following ways:

A regular verb in English form past and past participle by ending *ed or d* on present form. The spelling of simple past forms ends d in *ed* as proposed by Azar (1992:29) in the following ways: When the verb end in *e* add only *d* such as change-changed, When the verb ends in two consonants just add *ed*, for example help-helped, When the verb ends in one vowel and one consonant, double the consonant to make the *ed* form, such as stop-stopped. When the verbs ends in vowel +y, add only *ed such* as play-played. When the verbs ends in conbsonant +y, change *y* to *i* then add ed such as hurry-hurried.

Irregular verb

The change of irregular verbs are more complicated than the regular verbs. So, for the irregular verbs, we have to memorize them. Murphy (1998:274) defines 'irregular verbs are verbs in which the past simple and past participle do not end in ed"

Murphy divides irregular verbs into three kinds of formation, such as:

The infinitive, past simple, and past participle have the same form.

For example: hit ⟶ hit ⟶ hit

Do not hit me (infinitive)

The past simple and past past participle are same. For example:tell ⟶ told ⟶told

The infinitive, past simple and past participle are different. For example:wake ⟶ woke ⟶ woken

The study of learners' errors and analysis are called error analysis According to Brown, "The fact that learners do make errors and that these errors can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something of the system operating within the learner, led to a surge of study of learners' errors, called error analysis". Because of that, we can observe something, analyze the data that we get from the observation and make the classification of them, so, our researcher can be proved empirically by doing error analysis. Error cannot always be easily identified and analyzed, it is important to know more about error analysis. So, in this chapter, the writer will explain about definition of error, differences between error and mistakes and cause of error.

Learning a target language as different from learning one's mother tongue. According to Harmer, "when second language learners make error, they are demonstrating part of natural process of language". In the process of learning a target language, it is possible that learners make some error. Error can be a good part of learning when the teacher correct it and the students know their errors because they can learn from their errors.

According to Harmer "errors are part of the Students interlanguage that is the version of the language which a learner has at any one stage of development, and which in continually re-shaped as he or she aims towards full mastery". So, it is natural process of language learning that students make error when writing in English. The students hopefully can develop their knowledge from their errors. When the learner made error, the teacher helped to correct them. It can help teacher to give information whether the language learning the language learning process is successful or not .James said "Let's provisionally define a language error as unsuccessful bit of language". So, error could happen if the students are less in understanding and usage of the target language.

Most people think error and mistake are same, but that is not true. Larsen noted some Corder's statement that made a distinction between mistake and error (1991:59):

> "A mistake is a random performance slip caused by fatigue, excitement, etc. And therefore can be readily self-corrected, an error is a systematic deviation made by learners who have not yet mastered the rule of the second language. A learner cannot self-corrected an error because it is a product reflective of his or her current stage of second language development, or underlying competence"

From the statement, we can differentiate between mistake and error. If the students can self-corrected it means he made a mistake. But if they cannot self-corrected it means he made an error.

Hubbard distinguished between an error and a mistake in his book, "errors caused by lack of knowledge about the target language (English) or by incorrect hypotheses about it and unfortunate mistakes caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, slips of the tongue and so on. So, lack of knowledge about the target language can caused error, whereas mistake caused by the students cannot memorize well, slip of the tongue, slip of fingers or confusion between the language learner and the target language.

In order to analyze learners errors properly, it is necesssary to make distinction between error and mistake. According to Brown (1978:165), an errors in noticiable deviation from the adult grammar of native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage compotence of the learner. Error consistently by learner. Meanwhile, a mistake as stated by Brown (1978:165) refer to inconsistence deviation. A learner is said to make a mistake when he has noticed the correct from and then he inconsistently gets it wrong. Accordingly, when committing a mistake, he is normaly capable of recognizing and correcting.

From definition above, it can be said that errors are something to do with unacceptable and inappropriate forms of the grammar of the target language that have imprinted on learner's mind. So, it cannot be self-corrected by the learner.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative research design. It is intended to identify a particular phenomenon (Ary, et al., 2010) and also provide the results in numbers. Gay *et al* (2012) explain that descriptive research determines and describes the ways things occur in the field. They also add that there are two reasons of using this research design. They are, first, the percentages of reported research studies are descriptive in nature. Second, when the researcher cannot get access to primary data source freely, then the descriptive method that is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems is used.

Time and location of the research are needed in providing and serving the data. They are purposed to give specific information of when and where the researchconducted. In line with that, this research was conducted in February 17th, 2022. Then, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This research conducted to grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan

In conducting the research, the researcher need a population to be object of the research. According to Creswell (2005:145) "a population is any group of individuals who have the same characteristic".The population of the researcher is the Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan. The number of students was sixty, which was devided into three classes VIII A, VII B and C. First Grade VIII A consisted of Twenty students, second Grade VIII B consisted of Twenty students, and the last Grade VIII C consisted of Twenty students.

A sample is the selected participants that's taken population for the research study. Sample is representative population of the research. Creswell (2012) states the sample is a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population. The samples of the research is a Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan

In collecting the data of the research, the researcher applied the following procedures: (1) first, before give a questionnaire the students, it is importance for the students to know the general information of simple past, (2) next, in order to give a testing atmosphere, some instructions were told to the participants that this test are include in their academic report. Therefore they are for bidden to cheat or nor pay attention, (3) then, prepare the questionnaire to give students, (4) after the students answer the questionnaire were rate and transcribe.

Table 1- Criteria of Scoring

No.	Criteria of scoring	Score
1.	Right answer, good structure, good spelling	**5**
2.	Right anwer, good structure, misspelling	**4**
3.	Wrong answer, good structure, good spelling	**3**
4.	Wrong answer, wrong structure, good spelling	**2**
5.	Wrong answer, wrong structure, misspelling	**1**
6.	No answer	**0**

(Adopted from Djiw Andono, 2008:25)

To find out the effectiveness of analysis on the student' errors in using tenses in writing, the researcher uses distribution frequency relative or descriptive analysis techniques (percentage) formula. This is adapted from sudijono (sudijono, 2007:43) and describe in the table percentage. In the table percentage the writer uses the formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \ X \ 100$$

P = Percentage

F= frequency of error occur

N= number of sample which is observed

After getting the frequency and percentage of difficult the writer analyzed the everage score by using the formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N X 10} \ X \ 100$$

P = Percentage

F =frequency

N = number of students

10 = number of item test

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

The researcher presented and analyzed the data of the students investigated result. Either, it was explained that data of the research were collected through a test. Moreover, the test consists of ten items/questions. The total number of the students who examined in this research was 20 of the grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan. In line with, it, the test was conducted

on February 17th, 2022. Further, the result of the students" test and component analysis are provided in the next following explanation.

Result of the Observation

The researcher discussed about result of the observation. Observation was used to find out the problem is about the errors in writing English. Hence, the researcher was investigating the sentences error of grade eight students at SMP Negeri 2 Tinombo Selatan. The researcher are provided three of the best and three of least based on categories provided in chapter 3. Below are the transcript of the students in observation with the errors of the simple past tense achievements have been elaborated. Also, the results are based on the ones in "enough category" and "poor category." Enough category means that the score obtained is in range of 70-88 and the poor category means that the score obtained is in range of 40-68

After doing an observation, the researcher continued to do an investigation. First of all, the researcher explained to the students about general information of simple past tense. Next, she prepared the sentences error. Then, she gave a text to the students via online. Last, she gave a score on the result text. The result is as follows:

Table 2- The Students Score

No	Name	Number of Item										scores		category	qualification
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	obtained (0-50)	Final score (0-100)		
1	ASR	5	2	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	2	38	76	Enough	Good
2	A	5	2	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	2	38	76	Enough	Good
3	D	5	2	5	5	4	2	5	5	2	2	37	74	Enough	Good
4	DA	2	5	5	2	5	2	5	5	2	2	35	70	Enough	Good
5	DN	2	2	5	5	2	2	5	5	2	2	32	64	Poor	Failed
6	HL	5	2	5	5	4	2	5	5	2	2	37	74	Enough	Good
7	HA	5	2	5	5	2	2	5	5	2	2	35	70	Enough	Good
8	I	2	2	5	5	2	2	5	5	2	2	32	64	Poor	Failed
9	KH	2	2	5	5	2	2	5	4	2	2	31	62	Poor	Failed
10	KM	5	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	41	82	Good	Successful
11	MS	5	2	5	2	5	2	5	5	5	2	38	76	Enough	Good
12	M	5	2	5	2	5	2	5	5	2	2	35	70	Enough	Good
13	MF	5	5	2	5	2	5	5	5	5	2	41	82	Good	Successful
14	NK	5	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	2	5	44	88	Good	Successful
15	N	5	2	5	5	4	2	5	5	2	2	37	74	Enough	Good
16	O	5	2	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	2	38	76	Enough	Good
17	RYB	5	2	5	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	43	86	Good	Successful
18	SW	5	2	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	2	38	76	Enough	Good
19	S	2	5	5	2	5	2	5	4	2	2	34	68	Poor	Failed
20	Y	2	5	2	5	4	2	5	5	2	2	34	68	Poor	Failed
total score												738	1476		
mean score													86,82		

DISCUSSION

The results of the investigation have been elaborated in the following explanations. Additionally, in Table 4.1 is the abbreviations of simple past sentence error. Then, referring to Table 4.1, shows that the students got final score 88 for the highest and 62 for the lowest, while the total score is 1476. There were 4 from 20 students passed the test and the rest were enough. The mean score is 86,82. It can be concluded that most of the students were made sentences error in simple past tense. As the passing grade is ≥ 70, only 4 students passed the test. Moreover, the student's level of errors belongs to two categories. There are only 11 students belong to "enough category" as they obtained final scores in range of 70-88.and there are "good category" 4 students. Additionally, there are 5 belong to "poor category". In conclusion, 4 students are qualified "successful" and 16 others are qualified "enough" and "failed".

The highest achievement of errors in using simple past tense (verb 2) the students in scale is 80 and the lowest achievement in scale is 20. As the passing criteria is ≥70, 4 students passed the errors component and 16 students did not pass the error component. In addition, the students" achievement on error of the simple past tense is more varied than their overall achievement in Table 4.1. First, there are 4 students belong to "good category". Second, there are 11 students belong to "enough category". Third, there are 5 students belong to "poor category". To sum up, 4 students are qualified "successful" and 16 others are qualified "failed". Moreover, the highest achievement of the students of errors in using to be (was/were) in scale the lowest achievement in scale is 90. Due to ≥70 passing criteria, 18 of the students passed the component. Additionally, the variations of the students" scores explained that the 20 students belong 18 to "poor category". To conclude, all students 90% are qualified "failed" due to the low achievement.

According to Harmer (2007), "errors are part of the students' interlanguage that is the version of the language which a learner has at any one stage of development, and which is continually re-shaped as he or she aims towards full mastery". So, it is a natural process of language learning that students make error when writing in English. The students hopefully can develop their knowledge from their errors. When the students made errors, the researcher helped to correct them. It can help the researcher to give information about the students' knowledge.

There were many factors that influenced errors in their writing. Based on the collecting data of the investigation by the researcher, the students felt confused when they translated between Indonesia to English or rather. Not only that, the students confused about tenses in past tense. They have lack of vocabulary about verb 1 to verb 2. Moreover, some of the students did not pay attention with the researcher's explanation.

CONCLUCIONS

The students level of grammar in simple past tense in on poor level they have limited knowledge simple past tense about regular or irregular verbs. In line with it, lack of knowledge of English learning process.the students are only able to use basic to during answer the questionnaire.

Most of the them understood the questionnaire, yet some of them found it difficult to answer the questionnaire immediatelly. Furthermore,the problem face by the students in simple past tense. The students confused about tenses in past tense. They have lack of vocabulary about verb 1 to preterit. The result of the students that most of the students still made sentnce errors in simple past tense.

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