



University Students Ability of Using Simple Past Tense in Recount Text

Zulfa Hulopi¹, Megawati Basri², Jasmal Martora³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Pasifik Morotai

E-mail: zulfahulopi@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this research to find out to what extent students' ability to use Simple Past Tense in recount text writing. The utilized method of this research was qualitative method of data collection. Sample in this research was 21 students. This research using error analysis procedure for analyzed the data. The results showed the researcher examines flaws, meticulously investigating and identifying inaccuracies in student writing compositions. Furthermore, this study may assess the advancement of student learning, particularly in English writing proficiency. It is undeniable that errors are inevitable in the acquisition of languages, particularly foreign ones. Comprehending the language acquisition process in depth is achievable through mistake analysis. Regrettably, there are two students whose writing outcomes do not utilize simple past tense for recount text; instead, they employ expository writing sentences. Generally, both of kind of text is different, expository to explain or describe the topic while recount text to retelling the event.

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ABSTRACT

Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengetahui sejauh mana kemampuan siswa menggunakan Simple Past Tense dalam penulisan teks recount. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode pengumpulan data kualitatif. Sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah 21 siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan prosedur analisis kesalahan untuk menganalisis data. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa peneliti memeriksa kekurangan, menyelidiki dengan cermat dan mengidentifikasi ketidakakuratan dalam komposisi tulisan siswa. Lebih jauh lagi, penelitian ini dapat menilai kemajuan pembelajaran siswa, khususnya dalam kemahiran menulis bahasa Inggris. Tidak dapat disangkal bahwa kesalahan tidak dapat dihindari dalam perolehan bahasa, terutama bahasa asing. Memahami proses perolehan bahasa secara mendalam dapat dicapai melalui analisis kesalahan. Sayangnya, ada dua siswa yang hasil tulisannya tidak menggunakan simple past tense untuk teks recount; sebaliknya, mereka menggunakan kalimat-kalimat penulisan ekspositori. Secara umum, kedua jenis teks tersebut berbeda, ekspositori untuk menjelaskan atau mendeskripsikan topik sementara teks recount untuk menceritakan kembali peristiwa tersebut.

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Corresponding Author:

Zulfa Hulopi
Universitas Pasifik Morotai
E-mail: zulfahulopi@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Research

In English language learning, tenses are imperative as they reflect when an event or action occurred. Simple Past Tense is the most commonly used tense in written communication, especially in the form of narrative texts or experience stories. Recount text, which is a type of text that retells past events or experiences chronologically, often uses this tense.

Based on observations made on English education students during the learning process, it is found that there are still many students who do not seem to understand well about the tense in writing an event, especially in recount text. mastery of the tense is clearly found in students who do not understand the difference between regular and irregular tenses and the structure of verb change patterns in past tense sentences. This error results in the low quality of their writing, both in terms of structure and meaning conveyed.

Based on the aforementioned observations, the researchers are eager to investigate the issues that these students face and their proficiency with simple past tenses, particularly in recount texts. The findings of this study should give a general picture of the proficiency level of English language education students at the Pacific University of Morotai and can serve as a standard or assessment tool for instructors as they create or prepare more effective teaching resources and instructional strategies.

A. Statement of the problem

Based on the background of this research, the researcher formulates the research question as followed: What extent students' ability to use Simple Past Tense in recount text writing?

B. Formulation of the problem

Based on the statement of the research, the aim of this research is: To found out the extent students' ability to use Simple Past Tense in recount text writing.

C. Scope of the research

In this research, the researcher tries to limit the research focus in using simple past tenses in recount text.

D. Significances of the research

1. Students

This research is expected to be useful and well by student and knew above the proficiency of make a good sentence by using simple present tense especially in recount text.

2. Teacher

The results of the research are expected provide information for English teacher especially about the extent of students' ability in using simple past tense of recount text and expected the teacher will provide a good strategic or new method to teach.

3. The future

This research is expected as a reference and further research by researches further related of this research about University Students' Ability in Using Simple Past Tense of Recount Text.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Some Research Findings

Previous studies aimed to determine writing ability using the simple past tense. For example, Lionny and Kusumadewi (2022), Saluman, et al. (2019), and Rianti (2022) found that there were still many errors in the use of the simple past tense in writing recount texts.

Research Theories

1. Concept of Recount Text

a. Definition of Recount Text

Ramdani (2019:8) states that Recount Text is one of the English text types that recounts events or experiences in the past. The purpose of a recount text is to provide information or to entertain the reader.

b. Generic Structure

According to Ramdani (2019:9) recount text narrates the events that have occurred over a specific timeframe. Regarding occurrences that have taken place in

- 1) Orientation and introduction that offers details regarding who, where, and when the event or activity took place in the past Occurrences or actions that took place previously.
- 2) Events: This is a documentation of occurrences that took place, typically presented in chronological sequence, for example, "On the first day, I Then, on the next day Finally, on the last day" The Events section typically features personal remarks regarding the event or events being described.
- 3) Reorientation: In the Reorientation section, there is a reiteration of the introduction found in the Orientation, a reiteration that encapsulates the

sequence of events, activities, or occurrences that are recounted.

c. Types of Recount Text

Tampubolon and Rahman (2021:4) said that recount text have fourth types, namely:

- 1) Personal Recount: share the author's individual experience.
- 2) Factual Recount: provides an account of events that truly occurred.
- 3) Biographical Recount: narrates an individual's life story in the format of a biography.
- 4) Imaginative Recount: narrating creative tales inspired by real-life events.

d. Language features of recount text

According to Zulfah (2020:8) states that the first sentences that are declarative and interrogative in simple past, past continuous, present perfect, and additional forms as required, and then time-bridging adverbs: first, then, after that, before, when, at last, finally, etc. and line with those singular and plural nouns, whether accompanied by a, the, this, those, my, or their; encompassing aspects such as speech, word stress, intonation, spelling, and punctuation.

2. Concept of Simple Past Tense

a. Definition of Simple Past Tense

According to Najamuddin (2022:34) explains the simple past tense denotes an action or occurrence that occurred and concluded in the past. The past tense discusses events that occurred in the past.

b. Formula of Simple Past Tense

According to Asiza (2017:45) said that simple past tense have both of form of sentences, namely:



1) Verbal Sentences

Table 1. Formula of Verbal Sentence

(+) S + V2 + O + (ANA)

(-) S + Did + V1 + O + ANA

(?) Did + S + V1 + O + ANA?

(-?) Did + S + Not + V1 + O + ANA?

Statement:

S = Subject

V = Verb

O = Object

ANA = Adjective, Noun, Adverb

For example:

Table 2. The Example of Verbal Sentence

(+) The Doctor went to the hospital yesterday

(-) The Doctor did not go to the hospital yesterday

(?) Did the Doctor go to the hospital yesterday?

(-?) Did the Doctor not go to the hospital yesterday?

2) Nominal Sentences

Table 3. Formula of Nominal Sentence

(+ S + Was/Were + ANA

(-) S + Was/Were + Not + ANA

(?) Was/Were + S + ANA?

(-?) Was/Were + S + Not + ANA?

Statement:

S = Subject

Was/Were = Auxiliary verb

ANA = Adjective, Noun, Adverb

For example:

Table 4. The Example of Nominal Sentence

(+) She was a lecture

(-) She was not a lecture

(?) Was She a lecture?

(-?) Was She not a lecture?

c. Word Form in Recount text

Najamuddin (2022:37) said that Furthermore, it is important to recognize a number of verbs both regular and irregular. For example:

- 1) Regular Verbs are verbs that have regular changes which are generally when in the past tense and past participle form then the base form or infinitive is added with -ed or -d. ed or -d.

Table 5. Regular Verb Vocabulary

Infinitive	Past tense	Past Participle	Meanings
Advise	Advised	Advised	Menasehati
Close	Closed	Closed	Menutup
Try	Tried	Tried	Mencoba
Value	Valued	Valued	Menilai
Play	Played	Played	Bermain
Talk	Talked	Talked	Berbicara
Stop	Stopped	Stopped	Berhenti
Tie	Tied	Tied	Mengetik
Update	Updated	Updated	Memperbaharui
Use	Used	Used	Menggunakan
Underline	Underlined	Underlined	Menggarisbawahi

2) Irregular Verb

Table 6. Irregular Verb Vocabulary

Infinitive	Past tense	Past Participle	Meanings
Begin	Began	Begun	Memulai
Beat	Beat	Beaten	Memukul
Bid	bade	Bidden	Menawar
Bless	Blessed	Blessed	Memberkati
Build	Built	Built	Membangun
Choose	Chose	Chosen	Memilih
Come	Came	Come	Datang
Catch	Caught	Caught	Tangkap
Draw	Drew	Drawn	Menggambar
Drink	Drank	Drunk	Minum
Dream	Dreamt	Dreamt	Bermimpi

d. Time Signal

Time signal is word or phrase that used to indicate the time of the event in a sentence or conversation, time signal also assist to explanation the time sequence of events and make task or conversation more easily. Asiza (2016:46) said that simple past tense used the general time signal,:

- 1) Once: Pernah
- 2) This Morning: Tadi Pagi
- 3) Yesterday: Kemarin
- 4) Last Week: Minggu Lalu
- 5) The other day: Dulu / beberapa hari yang lalu
- 6) In 1945: Pada Tahun 1945
- 7) In 1990: Pada Tahun 1990
- 8) A few minutes ago: Beberapa menit yang lalu
- 9) The day before Yesterday: Kemarin dulu / 2 hari yang lalu
- 10) 2 days before yesterday: 3 Hari yang lalu
- 11) On Sunday Morning: Pada hari minggu



- 12) Every day last summer: Setiap hari musim panas yang lalu

with certain considerations and for the sample was 21 active students.

METHOD

Research Design

A. Research Design

1. Research design

This research used qualitative method. This the produce has two steps, it can be started from to problem identification and next formulate the problem, the next step is review literature, choosing the population and sample, next step is collecting data was test. After that data processing then analysis data, after that conclusion and suggestion, for the last the end.

B. Population and Sample

A. Population

The population in this research involving students of English Department at Univesitas Pasifik Morotai for the academic year 2024/2025, which would be taken from both of semesters, namely: fourth semester has 12 students, sixth semester has 12 students. The total number of populations in this research is 24 students.

B. Sample

The sample of this research is all both of semesters, namely: fourth semester, sixth semester totalling 24 students, and uses the non-probability sampling is purposive sampling from the population due to base on observation the researcher found out the students have learned about recount text especially used simple past tense. Furthermore, Sugiyono (2010:218) said that a technique to define a research sample for certain aspects with the aim of making the data obtained later more representative. Therefore, this sampling technique is sample taking on certain characteristics

C. Instrument of the Research

In this part, provide instruments of the research:

1. Test

The researcher gave the test and students written of experience as long as study in campus, interpret it, and then systematically analyse it used simple past tense in recount tex.

D. Procedure of Data Collecting

The researcher must prepare steps or procedures in collecting data. The research procedure as follows:

1. Writing Test

Using a test as a data collecting method, the researcher performed a study on students and asked them to respond to written the story about them experience. This means that research can find out how extent students' ability to use Simple Past Tense as well as the types of error found in writing composition in past tense domains Verb, Auxiliary verb, and time signal.

E. Data Analysis

In analysing data, Ellis (1997:57) delineates many procedures in error analysis, encompassing mistake identification, categorization, description, explanation, and subsequent tabulation. Ultimately, the data were aggregated to ascertain the frequency with which students engage in errors. The subsequent is the description. Error analysis is understanding and correcting mistakes in the learning process by identifying and explaining errors in writing



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. Verb

A verb is a term that denotes an occurrence, action, or state of being inside a sentence's structure. It is a crucial component of a sentence as it conveys the actions performed by the subject or the events that occurred. Both verbs are classified as regular and irregular verbs.

a. Regular Verb

A regular verb creates its past tense and past participle by adding "-ed" (or just -d if the verb concludes with "e") to its base form. Consequently, the written recount text necessitates mastery of verbs, particularly for students, to produce an effective recount text. Based on the student's responses, it was determined that a small number of students did not employ the V2 form of the verb in accordance with the formula or recommendations for constructing the simple past tense.

S1: *Hallo everyone I into talk about my experiences, as long as I was a student in Universitas Pasifik Morotai.* It should be **Hallo everyone, I into talked about my experiences, as long as I was a student in Universitas Pasifik Morotai.**

S10: *We need to look at the university role in providing quality education.* It should be **we needed to looking the university role in provided quality education.**

S15: *...that I consider truly memorable.* It should be **that I considered truly memorable**

Besides that, the other students were already good in used it.

S12: *after we finished the exam, our lecture asked to us to playing a game. We exchanged paper with the person sitting next to us.*

S16: *I joined a lot of valuable experience, especially in developing academics and personal skills.*

S18: *when, I first entered the English department at collage.*

It was undeniable, regular verbs could be said to be an easy form of words because students only added -ed or -d at the end of the word but in findings only a small number of students was still not correct in their used. But most of students are correct and certainly knew the placement of the word, even thought in this case students were rarely used a regular verb.

b. Irregular verb

It differed from regular verbs. An irregular verb is a verb that does not conform to the standard norms for transforming into the past tense or past participle in English.

S1: *Thank God, Cause in university in Morotai free, and I know the other university always pay the administration.* It should be **Thanks God, cause in university in Morotai is free, and I knew the other university always paid the cost of tuition fee.**

S6: *I Become more confident and adept at adapting to new students.* It should be **I became more confident and adept in adapting to new students.**

S3: *Even Before in 2022 a moment that I can't forget.* It should be **Even before in 2022 a moment that I couldn't Forgot.**

S7: *I Look Forward to makings more memories and continuing to grow at this campus.* It should be **I looked forward to makings more memory and continuing to grow up at this campus.**

S15: *During that time, I have had many experiences some good, some not so good.* It Should be **During that time, I had many experiences some good or not good.**



Besides that, there was student who was already good in used irregulars verb in the sentences.

S2: *I **felt** quite comfortable because I **had** kind and supportive friends.*

S4: I started interacting with friends from the same major and we **began** spending our days sharing stories about campus life and our **chosen** the major.

Constructing sentences using irregular verb requires mastery of past tense and past particular verbs in order to create correct sentences. Indeed, mastery of irregular verbs was still a problem for many students who avoid this word form. It was found that only small of number of students could correctly use irregular verb even the students not used it.

2. Auxiliary verb

Auxiliary verb is a verb that helps the main verb in a sentence to show tense, voice, mood, or to form question and negatives.

S8: *I **was** interested in joining the English camp activities held by the campus.*

S9: *During my English camp, I **was** happy.*

S11: *I **was** nervous at first, but I made new friends quickly.*

S17: *I remember my first lecture in a large class, feeling a bit nervous because I **didn't** know many people*

From some of the student results above, it could be seen that students have been able to used auxiliary word in the preparation of recount text sentences using simple past tense, but the problem that arises was that structure of the sentences was still very messy and even movement to next was very lacking. For the example for “was” should followed the adjective, adverb or noun but in fact the students not used the it.

3. Time Signal

Time signal is a word or phrases that indicates when something happened. Time signal are especially common in narrative or recount texts. Below the student result, but just small of number of students that used it was.

S3: ***One year ago**, the learning experience during the Pacific University of Morotai campus.*

S5: ***Last year**, I had an experience that I never imagined.*

S7: ***Two year ago**, I began my journey as a university student at Universitas Pasifik Morotai.*

S11: ***In semester 2 and 3** I joined a campus organization GMKI and participated in several events.*

S12: ***After** we finished the exam, our lecture asked us to play a game.*

S15: ***Two Years have passed** since I began my studies at Unipas Morotai.*

S18: *When I **first** entered the English department at collage.*

The use of time signals was very important in the composition of complete recount text sentences using the simple past tense which aims to show the time of the event. In the results of students who did not use time signal as time makers so this showed lack of interesting sentence elaboration.

Discussion

Following the study analysis, it was shown that pupils exhibit deficiencies in the use of the simple past tense. Deficiencies in sentence form or composition in the simple past tense remain significant. The employment of verbs, specifically irregular and regular verbs, auxiliary verbs, and temporal indicators as essential components in writing recount texts in the



simple past tense is infrequently observed, resulting in a deficiency of elaboration in words or sentences, thereby rendering the paragraphs unrefined and unengaging to read. The three fundamental components for achieving writing skill are spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Comprehending the principles for employing the simple past tense might facilitate writing. Regrettably, there are two students whose writing outcomes do not utilize simple past tense for recount text; instead, they employ expository writing sentences.

Based on the data above, the same thing was also found by previous researchers, namely Saluman, et al. (2019:25) stated that the results showed that students' skills in compiling recount texts were considered inadequate in this case there were five problems in writing related to grammar, diction, spelling, idea development, and text structure. In line with that, Lionny and Kusumadewi (2022:37) found that there were 4 types of errors made by students, namely misinformation errors, omissions, addition errors, and mis-ordering errors. In addition, Rianti (2022) also found that students' writing ability using simple past tense was relatively low, with 2 students in the good category, 6 students in the moderate category, 11 students in the less category, and 13 students in the low category. With the findings of previous researchers, there are similarities in this case, both aim to measure students' abilities in writing recount texts using simple past tense. However, the components in measuring errors in the use of simple past tense vary as explained above

CONCLUSION

Students exhibit significant lack of their English language skills, particularly in writing with the simple past tense. These shortcomings encompass inadequate mastery of word forms and temporal indicators, essential elements of the past tense, which adversely impact grammatical accuracy and overall coherence. Furthermore, the lack of engaging elaboration in students' recount texts diminishes the reading interest of potential audiences.

It is regrettable that two students' writing outcomes do not utilize simple past tense for recount texts; instead, they employ expository writing sentences. Generally, both of kind of text is different, expository to explain or describe the topic while recount text to retelling the event. This necessitates focused attention for pupils to comprehend the various sentence structures or text kinds utilizing the appropriate tense accurately. Moreover, educators must devise appropriate methods or strategies to enhance the quality of student writing, so fostering the continuous development of autonomous skills.

Suggestion

1. Students

This study can provide an overview or insight into students' writing abilities so that they can improve and enhance their writing skills, especially in the use of the simple past tense.

2. Lectures

The results of this study provide hope that lecturers can find new strategies or methods for students and provide encouragement to motivate students to improve their writing skills.



3. The Researcher

The results of this study provide references for future researchers regarding the use of the simple past tense in writing recount texts and hoped this research could be basic hint to more deeply and contribute in science development in the future especially in recount text written to found out new strategy or method to teach the student more effective.

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