

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN NARRATIVE TEXT AT SMAN 7 PADANG

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to describe the students' ability in using *simple past tense in narrative text* at SMAN 7 Padang. This research design was a descriptive one, using a quantitative method. The population of this research was the eleventh grade students at SMA N 7 Padang. Convenience sampling technique was used in this research to collect the data and the sample was class F.11 which consisted of 35 students. The instrument for collecting the data in this research was a completion test. To make the test reliable the researcher used the split-half technique and the result of analysis showed that the test was reliable. It was supported by the fact that the coefficient correlation was 0.79. Then the test was valid because it covered the material that the students had learned (syllabus covering). The result showed that there were 15 students (42.85 %) had very good ability to use *simple past tense in narrative text*. Based on data analysis, the students had poor to use *simple past tense* of nominal sentences in *narrative text*. This was supported by the fact that 15 (42.85%) students had poor ability. While the students had excellent ability to use *simple past tense* of verbal sentences in *narrative text*. This was supported by the fact that 15 (42.85%) students had excellent ability. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the students' ability to use simple past tense in narrative was very good. It is expected that teachers pay more attention to providing students with opportunities to practice, especially for those who are still struggling with using the simple past tense in narrative texts.

Keywords: Ability, Simple Past Tense, Nominal Sentence, Verbal Sentence, Narrative Text

INTRODUCTION

Simple past tense has been used to describe or show an event that happened in the past. George (2003) stated *simple past tense* as an event that has occurred in the past and is defined as a repeated action or habit that has occurred in the past [1].

Peter *et al* (2012) state that the *simple past tense* is used to describe a condition or state that has been completed. In addition, the *simple past tense* shows action in the past at a certain time, even though the time is stated by Kusumawardhani (2020) [2].

In schools, writing *narrative texts* involves understanding their structure and the use of the simple past tense, which describes past events. Grace and Sudarwati (2007) highlight that *narrative texts* aim to amuse, entertain, and address experiences, both real and imagined. *Narrative texts* can be fictional, such as short stories, fairy tales, fantasy, legend, and fabel [3].

The researcher found several previous studies from Setti (2018) About an "*Error Analysis on the Use of Simple Past Tense in Narrative Text Made by the Third Semester of English Department Students at the Muhammadiyah University of Makassar*". The result of the study is the students had many errors in writing *narrative text*, especially in using *simple past tense*. The students need more practice in using *simple past tense* to make them familiar with it and they can compose a good *narrative text* [4]. Second, a by Rianti *et al* (2023) about

an "*Analysis of the students' ability in writing simple past tense at Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai University*". This study found that the student's ability to use *simple past tense* is low. [5].

For these reasons, The researcher decided to conduct research on *simple past tense in narrative text*. the researcher concluded that there are some problems faced by students ability to use *simple past tense in narrative text*. First, the students are not able to use to be (was and were) in making nominal sentences in simple past tense. They are still hesitant in adjusting to be with the right subject. Second, some students often have difficulties in distinguishing regular and irregular verbs when making verbal sentences in *simple past tense*.

For example, some students have written "*She Goes to School Yesterday*" while the correct form is "*She went to school yesterday.*" Second, students have not consistently used the correct positive, negative, and interrogative forms in simple past-tense sentences. For instance, they have written "*I do not to school yesterday,*" instead of the correct "*I did not go to school yesterday.*" Finally, students have struggled to correctly use "to be" in forming *simple past tense* sentences. For example, they have written "*Did you there yesterday?*" while the correct sentence should be "*Were you there yesterday?*"

Because of these problems, the researcher conducted a study on the eleventh grade students in using *simple past tense* in *narrative text* focusing on simple past tense in the form of nominal sentences, and verbal sentences at SMA N 7 Padang. This tense has been studied by the students in the class.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study has been descriptive quantitative. The purpose of the research is to describe the students' ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. This study is designed to collect and analyze data appropriate to this research to get information about the students' ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. The population of this study was the eleventh grade students at SMAN 7 Padang where the researcher took class F.11 as suggested by the teaching teacher. The total number of the class F.11 was 35 students.

The instrument that the researcher used is a completion test. The test consisted of 30 items. To validate the test, researchers use content validity. The researcher constructed the test based on the curriculum, syllabus, and teaching materials that had been given to students. The researcher used split half technique to find out the reliability of the test. And thereliability index of the test was 0.79 which means thatthe test was reliable.

To collect the data, the researcher shared the test paper with the students. The researcher explained the instructions for the test that the students had to follow. The researcher asked the students to do the test in 90 minutes. The researcher collected the test paper. Then, the researcher gave a score for each item. The researcher gave 1 for the correct answer and 0 for the wrong answer. The researcher classified the students' ability based on the criteria for achieving the learning objectives of SMAN 7 Padang. SMAN 7 used the Merdeka Curriculum and did not have a minimum mastery level, so SMAN 7 set a minimum score requirement of 78 for students. Those who scored below 78 were deemed to have low ability, while students scoring 78 or above were classified as having high ability. The researcher calculated the percentage of the students who have high and low ability. Finally, the researcher described the result of the data analysis and concluded.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result of the research showed that generally, the eleventh grade students had very good ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. The result showed that there were 15 students (42.85 %) had very good ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. In details, 15 (42.85%) students who had poor ability. While the students had excellent ability to use *simple past tense* of verbal sentences in *narrative text*, 15 (42.85%) students had excellent ability. Those are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Research Findings

No	Aspects	The Number of Students		Ability
		Number	Percentage	
1	The Students' Ability to Use <i>Simple Past Tense</i> in <i>NarrativeText</i>	15	42.85 %	Very Good
2	The Students' Ability to Use <i>Simple Past Tense</i> in Nominal Sentences in <i>NarrativeText</i>	15	42.85 %	Poor
3	The Students' Ability to Use <i>Simple Past Tense</i> in Verbal Sentences in <i>NarrativeText</i>	15	42.85 %	Excellent

1. The Elventh Grade Students' Ability to use *Simple Past Tense* in *Narrative Text*

This study found the students had very good ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. Specifically, 15 out of 35, or 42.85%, were able to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text*. It means that the ability of the eleventh grade students at SMAN 7 Padang to use simple past tense was a good understanding of this learning. Similarly, a previous study which has been conducted by Gunday (2020) had a good ability to use simple past tense (75.15%) [6]. Zuhari (2020), also found that students grammar mastery (simple past tense) was categorized into moderate ability (70%) [7].

2. The Elventh Grade Students' Ability to use *Simple Past Tense* of *Nominal Sentences* in *Narrative Text*

Another finding of this study was that students had poor ability to use *simple past tens* of nominal sentences in *narrative text*. Specifically, 15 out of 35, or 42.85% of students, were able to use *simple past tens* of nominal sentences in *narrative text*. This means that there were still many students who did not understand how to distinguish between the use of 'was' with singular subjects and 'were' with plural subjects in *narrative texts*. It is not in line with the research findings of previous studies connected by Sari (2013), she found that students' to use simple past tense of nominal sentences was high ability (90%) [8].

3. The Elventh Grade Students' Ability to use *Simple Past Tense* of *Verbal Sentences* in *Narrative Text*

Another finding of this study was that students had an excellent ability to use *simple past tense* of *verbal sentences* in *narrative text*. Specifically, 15 out of 35, or 42.85% of students. were able to use *simple past tens* of verbal sentences in *narrative text*. this indicates that the students have mastered to use *simple past tense* of verbal sentences in *narrative text*, as evidenced by the high number of correct answers. It is not in line with the research findings of previous studies connected by Wahidah (2014) had a fair ability to use simple of verbal sentences (62.96%) [9].

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the eleventh grade students' ability to use *simple past tense* in *narrative text* at SMAN 7 Padang was very good. related to the study, the researcher proposed several suggestions. For the teachers, the researcher suggests to pay attention to the students' ability to simple past tense in *narrative text* and give more explanation and exercises to the students, especially about nominal sentences. For the students, the researcher suggests students should practice using the *simple past tense* in both verbal and written forms. engaging in additional exercises and seeking help from teachers or peers when facing difficulties can significantly improve their proficiency. For future researchers, the researcher suggests future researchers can expand this study by exploring different aspects of english grammar or by investigating the effectiveness of various teaching methods in improving students' understanding of the *simple past tense*.

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