

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING QUESTION TAGS IN SIMPLE PAST TENSE AT SMP NEGERI 9 LUBUKLINGGAU

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to describe the second grade students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau. The design of this research was descriptive research. The population of this research was the second grade students of SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau. The researcher used cluster random sampling to choose the sample, the sample was class VIII-A. The total members of sample were 32 students. The instrument was grammar test in the form of completion test. The researcher had tried out the instrument. The result showed that 25 students (78.13%) had moderate ability in using question tags in simple past tense. In detail showed that 25 students (78.13%) had moderate ability in using question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 26 students (81.25%) had moderate ability in using question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 28 students (87.50%) had moderate ability in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense, and 26 students (81.25%) had moderate ability in using question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense. Thus, the students are expected to learn more question tags in simple past tense. The teachers are also expected to explain more question tags in simple past tense. The next researcher is expected to conduct another research to know the students' ability in using question tags in another tenses.

Key words: question tag, simple past tense.

Introduction

English is used almost exclusively as the international language of science. In Indonesia, English is one of the subjects that is stated in curriculum. In addition, English is also as foreign language that is used to communicate with people who have

different language background most countries.

In studying English, there are four skills that should be learned by the students. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They are related to each other. The students have to learn about all of skills to master English well.

In addition, having those skills, the students should have knowledge of language components. The components are vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Grammar is the system of a language. In addition, grammar is also important language components in teaching and learning English.

A grammar is a description of certain organizing aspects of a particular language (Hall, 1993:1). In addition, he says that grammar has its own system of organization. In brief, its major parts are arranged according to the most important parts of English sentences, subject, verb, object, and so on.

One of the grammar topics is tag question. Tag questions are formed by adding a “tag” to a statement (Byrd and Benson, 2001:191). It means that a question is added in statement or sentence and usually it is added at the end. Primarily, tag questions are used to seek confirmation or agreement in a statement or sentence. In addition, Question tag is a statement that is made in the sentence to a confirmation (Hermawan, 2003:141). There are two forms of question tag is affirmative and negative form. When a statement is positive, the tag is negative (Soengeng, 2005:30).

Question tag is the grammar topic given to students in SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau. Based on researcher’s

interview with English teacher of SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau, question tag is not stated explicitly in the syllabus, but question tag is taught by the teacher in a story of recount text. Recount text is stated in syllabus. Language features of recount text uses simple past tense. When the teacher taught recount text, the students studied simple past tense. In recount text, there is a question tag in the story. Although the teacher explained the materials clearly, the ability of students at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau in using question tag in simple past tense in simple sentence was still not good. The English teacher told that there were several reasons. First, the students did not master about grammar. It makes them lack of knowledge about grammar. Second, the students have lack of vocabulary. Last, they cannot match form between affirmative statement and negative statement in the form of question tag.

In addition, the researcher had an experience when doing practice teaching (PLK). The researcher gave assignments to students, then asked them to do assignments. The students cannot match to be or verb in the sentence when the students use “were”, “was”, and “did” in simple past tense and cannot use punctuation appropriately.

The main purpose of this study is to describe the ability of the second grade students in using question tag in simple past tense. The specific goals of this study are to describe the ability of the second grade students in using question tags in the affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau, to describe the ability of the second grade students in using question tags in the negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau, to describe the ability of the second grade students in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau, to describe the ability of the second grade students in using question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive research. Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions

concerning the current status of the subject of the study (Gay, 1987:189). This research used descriptive research to describe the students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense. Specifically, the researcher describes the second grade students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau.

The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable (Gay, 1987:102). The population of this research was the second grade students of SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau because they have studied about simple past tense and question tags at the second grade. The number of population at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau was 216 students who are grouped into seven classes. They are VIII-A, VIII-B, VIII-C, VIII-D, VIII-E, VIII-F, and VIII-G. It is shown in the Table 3.1.

Table 1
The Total Number of Population

No	Class	Number of Students
1	VIII-A	32
2	VIII-B	30
3	VIII-C	30
4	VIII-D	29
5	VIII-E	32
6	VIII-F	29
7	VIII-G	34
Total of Population		216 Students

The researcher chose them as the population because they had studied about

simple past tense and question tags. Because the members of population were very large, so in this research, the researcher needs the sample of the population. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected (Gay, 1987:101).

In this research, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique to take the sample because the population was grouped into classes and these classes were homogeneous. Cluster sampling is sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected (Gay, 1987:110). In addition, she says that all the members of selected groups have similar characteristics. They got the same teaching materials, syllabus and some period of time in learning English subject. It means that their characteristics were same.

To choose the sample, the researcher wrote the names of the class on seven pieces of paper. They are rolled and mixed up in a box. Then, the researcher took one paper from the box. Therefore, one class selected as the sample. Finally, class VIII-A was as sample of this research. It consisted of 32 students as her sample.

The instrument that was used in this research was grammar test in the form of completion test. In this instrument, the students were asked to complete the

question tags of simple past tense in affirmative form of nominal sentence, negative form of nominal sentence, affirmative form of verbal sentence, and negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense. The test consisted of 48 items; there were 12 items for question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 12 items for question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 12 items for question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense, and 12 items for question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense. The time allocation was 60 minutes to do the test. Below are the item specification of the test:

Table 2
Item Specification of Try Out Test

No	Question Tags	The Total Number of Items	Item Specification
1	Question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense	12	1,3,5,7,9, 11,13,15, 17,19,41, 43
2	Question tags in negative form of nominal sentence	12	2,4,6,8,1 0,12,14,1 6,18,20,4 2,44

	in simple past tense		
3	Question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense	12	21,23,25, 27,29,31, 33,35,37, 39,45,47
4	Question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense	12	22,24,26, 28,30,32, 34,36,38, 40,46,48
	Total of Items	48	

Before giving the real test, the researcher gave a try out test to the students out of VIII-B class as the sample in try out test to know whether the students understand or not about the instrument of the test, to see the test is reliable or not, to know the allocation of time is sufficient or not, to know whether the students understand the instruction of the test, and to find out item difficulties and item discrimination to select good items as test items of the real test.

The researcher analyzed the item difficulty of the test to find out the index of item difficulty. The researcher used the following formula suggested by Arikunto.

Item difficulties:

$$P = \frac{B}{JS}$$

Where:

P= Item difficulties

B= Sum of the students who answer correctly

JS= Sum of the students who follow the test

The item difficulty ranges between 0.00 – 1.00 and it is symbolized as “P” that refers to “Proportion” in the evaluation term. The researcher used the following classification of item difficulties suggested by Arikunto (2013:225) as follow:

P= 0.00 – 0.30 = Difficult

P= 0.31 – 0.70 = Moderate

P= 0.71 – 1.00 = Easy

Item discrimination:

Item discrimination of the test is a test power that can differentiate between smart students (high capability) and poor students (low capability) (Arikunto, 2013:226). A test item that cannot be answered correctly by both smart and poor students are considered as a bad item because it does not have item discrimination. To find out item

discrimination, the researcher used the formula suggested by Arikunto.

$$D = \frac{BA}{JA} - \frac{BB}{JB}$$

Where:

D = Item discrimination

JA = Sum of students in the high group

JB = Sum of students in the low group

BA = Sum of students in the high group who answer correctly

BB = Sum of students in the low group who answer correctly

In the evaluation item, item discrimination is symbolized as “D” that refers to “Discrimination”. The result of the item discrimination is classified into the following (Arikunto, 2013:232):

D = 0.00 – 0.20 = Poor

D = 0.21 – 0.40 = Satisfactory

D = 0.41 – 0.70 = Good

D = 0.71 – 1.00 = Excellent

The researcher chose the item that has D between 0.21 – 0.40 and P= 0.30 – 0.70 to find a good test item for the real test.

As the result of the try out the researcher got items number 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,31,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40, 46, and 48 as good items. The test consisted of 40 items; there were 10 items for question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 10 items for question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense, 10 items for question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense, and 10 items for question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense. It can be seen in the table specifications below:

Table 3
Item Specification of the Test

No	Question Tags	The Total Number of Items	Item Specification
1	Question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense	10	1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15,17,19
2	Question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense	10	2,4,6,8,10,12,14,16,18,20
3	Question tags in	10	21,23,25,27,29

	affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense		,31,33,35,37,39
4	Question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense	10	22,24,26,28,30,32,34,36,38,40
	Total of Items	40	

A good test should be valid and reliable (Arikunto, 2013:72). To see the validity, the researcher used the content validity. Content validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area (Gay, 1987:129). Furthermore, one of characteristics of a good test is content validity in which the test materials are constructed based on the curriculum (Arikunto, 2013:82). The test that the researcher gave to the students based on the syllabus and teaching materials that had been taught by the teacher to students. It means that the test was valid.

To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used split-half method. Split-half method is a method that divides the items of the test into odd and even items (Arikunto, 2013:107). It means that the test is grouped into odd items and even items and they are correlated. Their coefficient correlation is calculated by using Person

Product Moment formula (Arikunto, 2013:87) as follow:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} = The coefficient correlation between variable x and y

X = The odd number test

Y = The even number test

N = The number of students who take the test

\sum_{xy} = The total scores of x and y

Furthermore, to know the index reliability of the test, the researcher analyzed the result by using Spearman-Brown (Arikunto, 2013:107) as follow:

$$r_{11} = \frac{2r_{1/2 1/2}}{1 + r_{1/2 1/2}}$$

Where:

r_{11} = The coefficient reliability for the total test

$r_{1/2 1/2}$ = r_{xy} , the coefficient correlation between variable x and y

The researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation of the test based on Arikunto's idea (2013: 89) as follow:

0.80 – 1.00 = very high

0.60 – 0.80 = high

0.40 - 0.60 = enough

0.20 – 0.40 = low

0.00 – 0.20 = very low

As the result of the try out, the researcher got the degree of coefficient correlation of the test was 0.79 and the coefficient correlation of reliability for total test was 0.88. It means that the degree of coefficient correlation of the test was very high and the test was reliable.

In gathering data, the researcher used grammar test in the form of completion test. The researcher gave the score in question tag in simple past tense. Specifically, affirmative question tags in nominal sentence in simple past tense, negative question tag in nominal sentence in simple past tense, affirmative question tag in verbal sentence in simple past tense, and negative question tag in verbal sentence in simple past tense. The researcher gathered the data by following procedures as follows:

1. The researcher distributed the test to the students.
2. The researcher asked the students to do the test and gives them for 60 minutes to do the test.

3. The researcher collected the students' answer sheet.

4. The researcher read the students' answer sheet one by one.

5. The researcher analyzed students' answer sheet one by one by giving the score. There are some criteria to give the score:

1. The students use the tag form (affirmative/negative) tag from the statement in nominal and verbal sentence correctly.

2. The students use the tag form *was/were* in nominal sentence in affirmative/negative form with statement form correctly.

3. The students use the tag form in verbal sentence in affirmative/negative form with statement form correctly.

4. The students using correct pronoun in the tag part.

6. The researcher gave 1 for each correct answer.

7. The researcher gave 0 for each wrong answer.

In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzed the data of the students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense. To analyze the data, the researcher did the procedures that is suggested by (Arikunto, 2013:299) as follow:

1. Presenting the raw scores

2. Calculating Mean and Standard

Deviation as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

M = Mean

$\sum x$ = Total score of the students

N = Number of the sample

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{N} - \left[\frac{\sum x}{N}\right]^2}$$

Where:

SD = Standard Deviation

3. Classifying the students' ability based on their group (Arikunto, 2013:299):

High ability = $> M + 1 SD$

Moderate ability = between
(M - 1SD) and (M + 1SD)

Low ability = $< M - 1SD$

4. Calculating the percentage of students who get high, moderate, and low ability, by using the formula (Arikunto, 2013:298):

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of the students' ability

R = The sum of the students who get high, moderate, or low ability

T = The sum of the students

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Findings

1.1 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Simple Past Tense

In measuring the students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense, the students' scores were counted (see Appendix F). After the researcher checked and gave the scores for each the students' answer sheet, the researcher found that the highest score got by the students in using question tags in simple past tense was 40 and the lowest score was 9 (see Appendix G). Then, the researcher calculated score for mean and standard deviation. And the researcher got 33.78 for mean and 8.29 for standard deviation (see Appendix H).

Students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 42.07. Their abilities were categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range 25.49 and 42.07. And their abilities were categorized as low if their scores were lower than 25.49 (see Appendix H). And then, the students' ability was classified into three groups (high, moderate, and low). Finally, it can be seen in the table as follow:

Table 4

Question Tags in Simple Past Tense

The Ability	Question Tags in Simple Past Tense
High	0
	0%
Moderate	25
	78.13%
Low	7
	21.87%

The researcher can conclude that the students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense was moderate. It was based on the fact that the majority of the students (78.13%) had moderate ability.

1.2 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Nominal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

Based on the calculation, the researcher found the highest score of students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was 10 and the lowest score was 0 (see Appendix I). After that, the researcher calculated the scores for mean and standard deviation. As the result, the researcher got 8.22 for mean and 3.07 for standard deviation (see Appendix I). The students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 11.29. Their abilities were

categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 5.15 and 11.29. And their abilities were categorized as low if their scores were lower than 5.15 (see Appendix I). And then, the students' ability was classified into three groups (high, moderate, and low). It can be seen in the table as follow:

Table 5

Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Nominal Sentence Simple Past Tense

The Ability	Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Nominal Sentence Simple Past Tense
High	0
	0%
Moderate	25
	78.13%
Low	7
	21.87%

The researcher can conclude that the students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was based on the fact that majority of the students (78.13%) had moderate ability.

1.3 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Negative Form of Nominal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

Based on the calculation, the researcher found the highest score of

students' ability in using question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was 10 and the lowest score was 0 (see Appendix J). After the researcher got the highest and lowest score of students, the researcher calculated the scores for mean and standard deviation. As the result, the researcher got 8.44 for mean and 2.41 for standard deviation (see Appendix J). The students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 10.85. Their abilities were categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 6.03 and 10.85. And their abilities were categorized as low if their scores were lower than 6.03 (see Appendix J). And then, the students' ability was classified into three groups (high, moderate, and low). It can be seen in the table as follow:

Table 6

Question Tags in Negative Form of Nominal Sentence Simple Past Tense

The Ability	Question Tags in Negative Form of Nominal Sentence Simple Past Tense
High	0
	0%
Moderate	26
	81.25%
Low	6

	18.75%
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The researcher can conclude that the students' ability in using question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was based on the fact that the majority of the students (81.25%) had moderate ability.

1.4 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Verbal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

Based on the calculation, the researcher found the highest score of students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was 10 and the lowest score was 1 (see Appendix K). After the researcher got the highest and lowest score of students, the researcher calculated the scores for mean and standard deviation. As the result, the researcher got 8.22 for mean and 2.91 for standard deviation (see Appendix K). The students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 11.13. Their abilities were categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 5.31 and 11.13. And their abilities were categorized as low if their scores were lower than 5.31 (see Appendix K). And then, the students' ability was classified into three groups

(high, moderate, and low). As a result, it can be seen in the table as follow:

Table 7

Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Verbal Sentence Simple Past Tense

The Ability	Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Verbal Sentence Simple Past Tense
High	0
	0%
Moderate	28
	87.50%
Low	4
	12.50%

The researcher can conclude that the students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was based on the fact that the majority of the students (87.50%) had moderate ability.

1.5 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Negative Form of Verbal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

Based on the calculation, the researcher found the highest score of students' ability in using question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was 10 and the lowest score was 6 (see Appendix L). After the researcher got the highest and lowest score of students, the researcher

calculated the scores for mean and standard deviation. As the result, the researcher got 8.91 for mean and 1.09 for standard deviation (see Appendix L). The students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 10. Their abilities were categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 7.82 and 10. And their abilities were categorized as low if their scores were lower than 7.82 (see Appendix L). Then, the students' ability was classified into three groups (high, moderate, and low). It can be seen in the table as follow:

Table 8

Question Tags in Negative Form of Verbal Sentence Simple Past Tense

The Ability	Question Tags in Negative Form of Verbal Sentence Simple Past Tense
High	0
	0%
Moderate	26
	81.25%
Low	6
	18.75%

Finally, the researcher can conclude that the students' ability in using question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was based on the fact that

the majority of the students (81.25%) had moderate ability.

2. Discussion

As already discussed previously, the researcher found the second grade students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense at SMP Negeri 9 Lubuklinggau was moderate. It was based the fact that the majority of students (78.13%) had moderate ability (see Appendix H).

2.1 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Simple Past Tense

The students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense was moderate. It based on the fact that the majority of the students (78.13%) had moderate ability (see Appendix H). Based on the students' answer sheet, the students used affirmative form in affirmative statement, and used the tag form "were" in verbal sentence in simple past tense.

2.2 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Nominal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

The students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It based on the fact that

the majority of the students (78.13%) had moderate ability (see Appendix I).

Based on the students' answer sheet that the students used negative form of question tags in negative statement and used "did" in nominal sentence in simple past tense in the tag form.

2.3 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Negative Form of Nominal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

The students' ability in using question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It based on the fact that the majority of the students (81.25%) had moderate ability (see Appendix J). Based on the students' answer sheet that the students used affirmative form of question tags in affirmative statement and used "did" in the tag form of nominal sentence in simple past tense.

2.4 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Affirmative Form of Verbal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

The students' ability in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It based on the fact the majority of students (87.50%) had moderate ability (see Appendix K).

Based on the students' answer sheet that the students used negative form of question tags in negative statement in simple past tense and used "were" in the tag form of verbal sentence in simple past tense.

2.5 Students' Ability in Using Question Tags in Negative Form of Verbal Sentence in Simple Past Tense

The students' ability in using question tags negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It based on the fact that the majority of students (81.25%) had moderate ability (see Appendix L). Based on the students' answer sheet that the students used affirmative form of question tags in affirmative statement and used "weren't" in the tag form of verbal sentence in simple past tense.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Conclusions

Based on the results of findings and discussions in this research, the researcher can conclude that the second grade students' ability in using question tags in simple past tense was moderate. It was described by the fact that 25 students (78.13%) had moderate ability. Specifically, the results of this research are as follow:

1. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 9 Lubuklinggau in using question tags in affirmative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was described by the fact that 25 students (78.13%) had moderate ability (see Appendix I).
2. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 9 Lubuklinggau in using question tags in negative form of nominal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was described by the fact that 26 students (81.25%) had moderate ability (see Appendix J).
3. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 9 Lubuklinggau in using question tags in affirmative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was described by the fact that 28 students (87.50%) had moderate ability (see Appendix K).
4. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 9 Lubuklinggau in using question tags in negative form of verbal sentence in simple past tense was moderate. It was described by the fact that 26 students (81.25%) had

moderate ability (see Appendix L).

2. Suggestions

Based on the results of this research, the researcher would give the suggestions as follow:

1. For the teacher

The teacher is expected to give explanations the materials of question tags in simple past tense clearly. The teacher is expected to give the assignments to the students to know whether the students understand or not about the materials. And the teacher is expected to create the teaching strategy effectively so that the students can follow the lesson well in the class.

2. For the students

The students are suggested to study more the lesson of question tags in simple past tense. The students are expected to do the assignments well. The students are suggested to ask to the teacher if they do not understand the materials, so that it can be difficult for them to continue the next materials.

3. For the further researcher

The further researcher is suggested to do another research

especially in using question tags in other tense to know the students' ability in using question tags well.

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