FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE FOR WRITING RECOUNT TEXT

SKRIPSI

Presented to
IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:
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ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO
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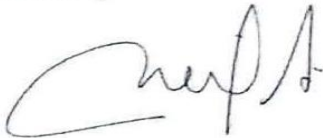
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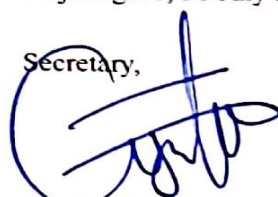
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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

MOTTO

"Tidak mungkin Allah membawa kamu sejauh ini hanya untuk gagal, take time. Allah knows best"

"Hidup bukan saling mendahului, bermimpilah sendiri-sendiri"
(Baskara putra)

DEDICATION

There is no page more special in this thesis than this this dedication page. Bismillahirrohmanirrohim, with deep gratitude and emotion, I dedicate this work to:

1. Allah SWT, for his endless guidance and mercy throughout this journey.
2. My beloved parents, mr. marzuki and mrs. unzilah whose prayers and love have been my greatest strength.
3. My self, thank you for staying strong and never giving up, thank you for believing in yourself that you could.
4. My advisors thank you for the invaluable knowledge you have shared throughout the completion of this skripsi
5. My friends, your presence has added meaning to this journey.

Thank you for all the time, energy, and support you have given. May this skripsi serve as a source of insight and benefit for others. Aamiin.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

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In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without any coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the skripsi entitled:

Factors Affecting Students' Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense for Writing Recount Text.

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the issue of students' limited ability in using English grammar, particularly in applying tenses correctly when writing recount texts. Many students face challenges in using the simple past tense appropriately. This research analyzes the common errors and identifies the factors contributing to these mistakes. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study involved eighth grade students of English at SMP Islamiyah Balen, Bojonegoro. Data were collected through recount writing tasks, which were then analyzed to identify errors in the use of the simple past tense, as well as through interviews to explore the factors affecting students' learning difficulties. The findings revealed that the most frequent errors were Misinformation: 67 errors or (36 %), followed by Miserdering: 52 errors or (28%), Omission: 39 errors or (21%), Addition: 28 errors or (15%). The factors influencing students' difficulties stem not only from internal factor, such as psychological aspect and Physiological aspect, but also from external factors such as teacher, classmate support, and family support. These factors collectively affect students' ability to comprehend and accurately use the simple past tense.

ABSTRAK

Ilmiyah, Aisyah. 2025. Factors Affecting Students' Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense for Writing Recount Text. Skripsi, English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Advisor (1) Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., (II) Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.

Keywords: Simple Past Tense, Teks Recount, Faktor Internal, Faktor External, Kesalahan Grammar.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengatasi fenomena rendahnya kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan tata bahasa Inggris, khususnya dalam penggunaan tenses yang tepat saat menulis teks recount. Banyak siswa yang kesulitan dalam menerapkan simple past tense. Penelitian ini menganalisis jenis kesalahan yang terjadi dan mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kesalahan tersebut. Menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan siswa kelas delapan bahasa di SMP Islamiyah Balen, Bojonegoro. Data diperoleh melalui tugas menulis teks recount, yang kemudian dianalisis untuk mengidentifikasi kesalahan dalam penggunaan simple past tense dan wawancara untuk mengetahui faktor yang mempengaruhi siswa kesulitan dalam belajar . Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan yang paling sering ditemukan adalah kesalahan informasi 67 kesalahan (36%) diikuti oleh kesalahan urutan kata 52 kesalahan (28 %), lalu penghilangan unsur penting 39 kesalahan(21%), dan yang terakhir penambahan unsur yang tidak diperlukan 28 instances (15%) Faktor yang mempengaruhi kesulitan siswa tidak hanya berasal dari internal, seperti aspek psikologis dan aspek Fisiologi, tetapi juga dari faktor eksternal seperti metode guru, dukungan teman sekelas, dan dukungan dari orang tua dalam proses belajar. Faktor-faktor ini turut memengaruhi kemampuan siswa dalam memahami dan menggunakan simple past tense.

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c. Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd., Head of the English Education Study Program, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

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May all the kindness and support given be rewarded with the best blessings by Allah SWT. With all humility, the writer remains open to any constructive suggestions and criticisms for the improvement and refinement of this work in the future. Finally, the writer extends deepest gratitude to beloved parents for their endless prayers, love, guidance, and both moral and financial support. The writer

also extends thanks to all family members, friends, and everyone who has contributed to the completion of this thesis, whose names cannot all be mentioned individually. It is the writer's hope that this thesis may bring benefit, not only for the writer personally but also for readers and all concerned parties. The writer fully entrusts all results and expectations of this work to Allah SWT.

Bojonegoro, 9 Juli 2025

The Researcher

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the general account of the study. It consists of the background of the study, research questions, the research's objective, the study's significance, and the definition of key terms.

A. Research Background

Grammar is a crucial skill for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to master, as it serves as a foundational key for effective communication, both in speaking and writing. According to Halijah et al.(2019), grammar refers to the collection of structural rules that govern how clauses, phrases, and words are organized and used in a language. Mastery of grammar offers several benefits, such as making sentences and paragraphs clearer, improving the flow of communication, overcoming challenges in formal contexts, and making both written and spoken language more engaging.

Additionally, understanding grammar allows us to grasp the logic of the English language more effectively. This is supported by Tomakin (2014), who states that mastering a language is impossible without understanding its grammar, as grammar plays a crucial role in forming meaningful words and sentences. One of the key components of grammar is tenses, which consist of 12 categories. According to Zhu (2024), English tenses in secondary school consist of three kinds of "tenses" (time) and four kinds of "states", which cross-constituting a total of 12 common kinds of tenses. Tenses refer to changes in the form of verbs that indicate the time of an event or state, such as the present (something happening now), future (something that will happen), and past

(something that happened earlier). However, grammar is often considered one of the most challenging aspects of learning English due to its complex and highly specific structures. Among the most critical yet difficult areas for students is the simple past tense, which is used to describe past events or actions, narrate experiences or stories, and convey historical facts. According to Anwar (2014), the simple past tense shows that an action or event started and finished at a specific point in the past.

The simple past tense plays a crucial role in various types of texts, one of which is recount text. According to Mustafa (2021), recount text narrates past events or experiences, and the verbs commonly used in this type of text are in the simple past tense. A recount text is a form of writing that focuses on describing past events or experiences in the order they occurred. This text type is also a part of the English language curriculum at the secondary education level. The simple past tense is a fundamental component in writing recount texts. In addition, many students also make misinformation errors, which involve the use of incorrect forms or rules. For example, students might use the incorrect verb form, such as saying goed instead of went, or confuse the past tense with the present tense due to a misunderstanding of the correct rule. This misinformation shows that while students may grasp the general context, they often lack a clear understanding of specific grammar details, leading to more frequent mistakes.

Based on various classroom studies, according to Gayatri et al., (2021), the results show that the most common error made by eighth-grade students of SMP Mardisiswa Semarang in writing recount texts is misinformation,

accounting for 66%, followed by addition at 19%, while misordering and omission errors were nearly equal. Errors commonly found are related to error analysis, which involves the examination of grammatical mistakes. These errors include incorrect use of verb forms, confusion between regular and irregular verbs, and difficulties in constructing grammatically accurate sentences. Many students use the correct verb form but misapply it, such as choosing the wrong past tense form or using the base form (base form) of the verb where the past tense is required. As a result, despite their correct intention, the application does not adhere to the grammatical rules. Difficulties in mastering this aspect of grammar often impact students' ability to use English accurately and effectively.

These difficulties in mastering the simple past tense often affect students' ability to use English accurately. The factors contributing to these challenges can be categorized into internal and external factors. Several factors contribute to learning difficulties. These difficulties in mastering the simple past tense often affect students' ability to use English accurately. The factors contributing to these challenges can be categorized into internal and external factors Internal factors originate from within the students themselves, while external factors come from influences outside the students. Batubara & Mahardhika (2020), explain that both external and internal factors influence students' learning difficulties. External factors include teachers, classmates, and administrative personnel. On the other hand, internal factors consist of physiological and psychological aspects. Physiological aspects relate to the physical condition of the students, where those who frequently fall ill may

struggle to absorb lessons, have difficulty concentrating, and are less active in class. Psychological aspects include intelligence, talent, interest, and motivation.

Following an initial observation at MTS Islamiyah Unggulan Balen, the researcher identified several challenges faced by students in understanding English material. The teacher reported that many students still struggle with comprehending English in general, especially grammar. According to the teacher, there is a significant difference between the cognitive abilities of today's students and those of students in the past. Modern students tend to be more disengaged, requiring additional effort to keep them engaged in lessons. The challenges students face are not due to the material itself but rather a lack of motivation to learn and understand. As a result, despite participating in exercises and receiving explanations, they continue to struggle with understanding and using the simple past tense, both in written and spoken contexts. For example, the use of the past tense (second form of verbs). Many students there are still unfamiliar with the second form of verbs, which leads them to frequently use simple present verbs instead.

This situation led the researcher to choose MTS Islamiyah Unggulan Balen as the research site because many students face difficulties in mastering the simple past tense in recount texts. Mastery of the simple past tense is crucial for writing recount texts, as these texts are meant to narrate past events or experiences in chronological order. A solid understanding of tenses is essential to create clear and accurate recounts. This study aims to explore the factors causing students' difficulties with using the simple past tense in recount texts.

By identifying these factors, the research hopes to provide practical recommendations for teachers to enhance their teaching methods. The results are expected to offer useful insights for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially in addressing grammar learning challenges. Ultimately, this study aims to help teachers develop more effective methods to support students in improving their grammar and writing skills. For this reason, the researcher intends to conduct a study titled **" Factors Affecting Student's Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense for Writing Recount Text "** in the 8th grade language class at MTS Islamiyah Unggulan Balen.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the study's background, the researcher presents the following research questions:

1. What are common errors of students in using simple past tense for writing recount texts?

2. What are the internal and external factors contributing to students' difficulties in using the simple past tense for writing recount texts?

C. Objectives of the Study

As stated in the research question above, This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the common errors made by students in using the simple past tense for writing recount texts.

2. To analyze the internal and external factors contributing to students' difficulties in using the simple past tense for writing recount texts.

D. Significance of the Study

The expected outcomes of this research include several benefits, both theoretical and practical:

1. **Theoretical Significance**

This study aims to contribute to academic discussions on grammar teaching, specifically regarding the factors that influence students' difficulties in mastering the simple past tense. It focuses on eighth-grade students at MTS Islamiyah Unggulan Balen, Bojonegoro.

2. **Practical Significance**

a. For teacher

1. This study can help teachers gain a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to students' struggles with the simple past tense.

2. Teachers can use the findings to design more tailored teaching strategies and learning methods that address students' needs, making grammar lessons more effective.

b. For researcher

The findings of this study can serve as a reference for future research. Particularly those focusing on effective grammar teaching strategies or methods to help students better understand grammatical concepts, especially the simple past tense.

E. Definition of Terminologies

1. Simple Past Tense

According to Wafda (2014), explains the simple past is a tense that describes a state or situation that occurred and ended in the past, regardless of whether time markers are present or not.. While Pebriyanto (2022), mention that the simple past is defined as a tense used to express an action that was completed before the time of speaking, often marked by time signal such as ago, then, yesterday, and so on.

From the definition above, a Simple past is usually used to express an event that occurred in the past and ended in the past and is accompanied by a time statement. This study focuses on how well students understand and apply the simple past tense when writing recount texts, as using this tense correctly is crucial for telling past events in a clear and orderly manner.

2. Writing

According to Sinaga (2020), writing is a process that includes organizing and creating ideas, expressing them in written form, and refining the work through revision. It is the act of translating what we observe, think, and feel into written words. While Wafda (2014), states that writing is a means of expressing unspoken thoughts or feelings on paper, where components like grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation work together to create meaningful writing and achieve its intended purpose.

Based on the definitions above, writing is a process where ideas are arranged and communicated through written words, with the correct use of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation to make the message clear

and meaningful. In this study, the understanding of writing aligns with the exploration of the difficulties students encounter in using the simple past tense for writing recount texts.

3. Recount Texts

According to Yulianawati (2018), the definition of recount text is a form of text that narrates past events in chronological order, aiming to describe what happened and when serving as a reconstruction of past experiences. With regard to Salawazo et al. (2020), also offers a definition. According to him, recount text is a kind of text that shares and narrates previous occurrences to readers or listeners by presenting them in chronological order.

From the definition above Recount text is type of text that tells past events in the order they happened, focusing on describing what took place and the sequence in which it occurred. This study focuses on examining how students' grasp the impact of the simple past tense on their skill in write recount texts clearly and accurately.