

**THE USE OF SELF-MONITORING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE  
STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN RECOUNT  
TEXT**

**AN ARTICLE**



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# **SELF-MONITORING STRATEGY IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN RECOUNT TEXT**

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## **Abstract**

The research was conducted in order to know how the implementation of the Self-Monitoring Strategy (SMS) improved students' ability in using simple past tense in recount text to the 10th-grade students of SMAN 1 Pontianak in academic year 2018/2019. This research had been done through Classroom Action Research (CAR) in three cycles. The subjects of this research were the tenth grade English teacher and 36 students of year-10 Science Program 9 of SMAN 1 Pontianak. In collecting the data, the researcher used field notes, observation checklist, and students' individual assessments. The result showed that the implementation of the SMS step 1 (selecting target behavior), step 2 (knowing what is easy and difficult), and step 5 (evaluation) improve students' motivation, activeness, and self-awareness of their own learning. Furthermore, the implementation of SMS step 3 (recognition about the mistake they make) and 4 (adjusting the work) improve students' ability in using verbal-nominal sentences and active-passive voice in the simple past tense.

**Keywords:** Self-Monitoring Strategy, Simple Past Tense, Self-awareness

## **INTRODUCTION**

Senior High School number 1 Pontianak is one of the most favorite school in the West Kalimantan Province, with many achievements that the school has. Despite all of the academic achievements, English was still one of the subjects that still had a lot of challenges that the students needed to conquer. Whereas, tenses in one of the important language features that the students had to learn and use it well. Based on the pre-observational research, these problems might occur because of the language differences in terms of sentence structures and the tenses that being used. Furthermore, the students were too dependent on the teacher which was not coherent with the idea of student-centered learning in Curriculum 2013. It showed that the students' self-awareness was low which led to students' learning motivation and passiveness.

Bahktiar (2003) states that one of the essential elements of metacognitive learning is self-awareness which fosters the student to do something, in this case, to change their

intellectual behavior in learning. The problems as mentioned before affected students' performance in English class especially in using simple past tense in recount text, both in verbal-nominal sentences and active-passive voice. These problems resulted in the number of students who passed the Minimum Standard Criteria (KKM) which is 80.

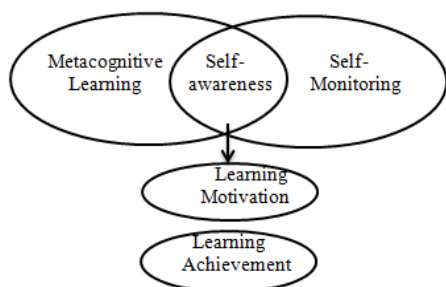
Based on the syllabus, grammar was not taught explicitly in school but integrated with the genre-based approach. Garrett (2003, p. 38) states "..., teaching grammar is derived mode of systematic functional linguistics, which emphasizes the social function and the purpose of language". This philosophy is coherent to the Indonesian National Curriculum 2013, which is integrated the learning strategy to the Genre-Based Approach.

Self-Monitoring Strategy was implemented as a learning strategy for the 10th-grade students of Science Program 9 of SMAN 1 Pontianak. Chang (2010) states that self-monitoring functions through self-

awareness and focuses on students' ability to monitor their progress towards learning goals. In addition, Rani (2014) states that teaching and learning strategy is a cognitive process, and it is a personal construction. Furthermore, Coleman (as cited in Bakhtiar, 2003) states that the self-monitoring strategy is not only to improve students' academic performances but also to improve students' learning behavior.

### The Self-Monitoring Strategy as Metacognitive Learning

According to Bahtiar (2003), Metacognitive is a term which refers to self-monitoring and uses the self-awareness into the learning strategy. Metacognitive is the individual monitoring of learning behavior to decide the target of learning and what is needed. Furthermore, Ertmer and Newby (2013, p. 51) state that "Cognitive theories focus on the conceptualization of students' learning processes and address the issues of how information is received, organized, stored, and retrieved by the mind." Self-Monitoring in metacognitive learning should be done by the learners' individual will to change their learning behavior and achieve the targets of the learning itself. Referring to the explanation above, the relationship of the self-monitoring and metacognitive can be described as follows:



**Figure 1. The Illustration of the Relationship of the Self-Monitoring and Metacognitive Learning (from Bahtiar, 2003 p.5)**

Based on the statements of the experts, there are some important points which need to be further discussed in self-monitoring which are:

1. There should be an individual will to observe and record inappropriate learning behavior.
2. It must be done with self-awareness.
3. It aims to change to more positive and effective the learning behavior.

### The Implementation of The Self-Monitoring Strategy in Learning

Zimmerman (as cited in Chang, 2010) states that there are three forms of self-monitoring: monitoring associated with (1) self-evaluation, (2) strategy implementation, and (3) efforts to adapt the strategy from outcomes. The strategy does not mean to make a new knowledge or behavior, however, "....., it will change the frequency, intensity, and duration of the behavior that students have already been able to perform" (Mason, Reid, & Hagaman, 2012, p. 15). By figuring out the difficulties as well as easiness in students' learning, it can encourage them to put effort and try to solve the problem they encounter. According to Mels (2007), and Ylvisaker et al. (2008), the procedure in conducting self-monitoring strategy are:

1. Selecting target behavior
2. Knowing what is easy and difficult
3. Recognition of the mistake they make
4. Adjusting the work
5. Evaluation

### Implementing Self-Monitoring Strategy with Discovery Learning Method

In implementing the self-monitoring strategy, the method used should be coherent with the national curriculum 2013, namely discovery learning method. According to Feriyanti (2013), discovery learning gives students' opportunity to construct new knowledge based on what they have experienced in the learning process. This learning method is currently used in curriculum 2013 and it is coherent with the self-monitoring strategy theory which believes that students are individual processors in their own learning. Based on the point above, the researcher integrated the implementation of self-monitoring strategy with the discovery learning method. There are some steps that

should be implemented in the teaching and learning process which are adapted from Shah (2004). The procedures can be seen as follows:

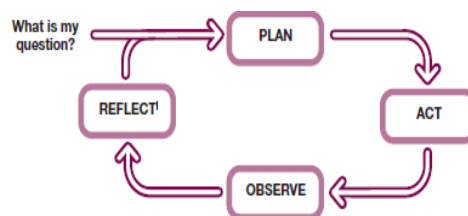
1. Pre-Activity: The self-monitoring step 1 (*selecting target behavior*)
2. Main Activity
  - 1.1 Simulation
  - 1.2 Problem Statement: Self-Monitoring Step 2 (*knowing what is easy and difficult*)
  - 1.3 Data collection
  - 1.4 Validation: Self-Monitoring Step 3 and 4 (*recognition about the mistakes they make and adjusting the work*)
3. Post-Activity: Self-Monitoring Step 5 (*evaluation*)

The students' sensitivity to their mistakes and the ability to revise or edit the mistakes is important in the self-monitoring strategy. To be precise, the self-monitoring strategy can be described as: *think* (about what you were supposed to do) + *check* (what you have done) + *adjust* = *Self-monitoring*. Self-monitoring gives the learners personal control which has been proven as the major intrinsic motivation that gives them a chance to have a learning of their own.

## METHOD

In accordance with the purpose of the research to change students' learning behavior in order to have better achievement in learning simple past tense in recount text, the method used in this research was a Classroom Action research (CAR). The main focus of classroom action research (CAR) is an introspective process that presumes to solve a particular teaching and learning problem which has been identified. In addition, Kemmis and McTaggart (2007) state that often time, classroom action research used qualitative interpretive modes in data collection. CAR purposes to change particular learning and teaching behavior of the students and the teacher. Furthermore, Burns (2010, p. 2) points out, "the central idea of the action part of action research is to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation in

order to bring about changes and, even better, improvements in practice". The Classroom Action Research process could be seen below:



**Figure 2. The Cycle of Classroom Action Research (from, Coats, 2005, p.5)**

In CAR, there are four steps that should be implemented, plan, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the researcher identified the current problems in the teaching and learning process and did preparations for the class, such as lesson plans, self-monitoring sheets, field notes, observation checklist, and assessment. The action stage was the implementation of the learning strategy in the lesson plan. Meanwhile, in the observation stage, the researcher systematically observing the effect of the SMS on the students' learning process. Evaluation and description of the strategy implementation and its effects on the students were done in order to identify and analyze which had been explored.

This research was conducted to the X-9 of science program class of SMAN 1 Pontianak which consists of 37 students in the academic year 2018/2019. The researcher collaborated with the English teacher of SMAN 1 Pontianak. The teacher has been teaching in the school for about 3 years. She also graduated from the English Study Program of Teaching English Language and Education Faculty of Tanjungpura University.

In data collection, the researcher used the observation technique for qualitative data and students' mean scores for quantitative data. In the observation technique, the tools used were observation checklist and field-note. The researcher also conducted an informal interview with the teacher and the students. For the measurement technique, the researcher used the students' individual assessment in each cycle, in order to monitor

the students' achievement of using simple past tense in recount text.

The qualitative data were analyzed by using the coding technique. Burns (2010) explains that data coding is identifying the main concepts that lighten the research questions, patterns, and problems. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were analyzed by the mean score of students' individual achievements in each cycle.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

This research was conducted in three cycles by implementing the learning strategy which is self-monitoring. The overall steps of SMS generally contributed to improving students' self-awareness and the target learnings which were the ability in using simple past tense (verbal-nominal sentences and active-passive voices) and students learning behaviors which were students' motivation and activeness. The finding of steps and strategy implementation in this research will be further discussed in the following explanations:

### **The Self-Monitoring Strategy step three (recognition about the mistake they make) improved students' ability in using Simple Past Tense in verbal and nominal sentences in recount text**

Students' ability in using verbal and nominal sentences improved by implementing the SMS step three which is recognition about the mistake they make. This learning target improved specifically by implementing Brainstorming activity and giving the common grammatical mistakes in using the simple past tense. These two activities which were used in improving students' ability in using verbal and nominal sentences will be further discussed in the following points below.

### **Doing Brainstorming Activity and Giving List of Common Grammatical Mistakes Activated Students' Prior Knowledge About Using Simple Past Tense**

This activity presumed to activate the students' prior knowledge of using the simple

past tense. The teacher gave the students a stimulation by showing two short recount paragraphs that contained grammatical mistakes in verbal and nominal sentences. The students were given limited time to analyze the mistakes. They were asked to identify and to change the verbs (regular and irregular) and the to be into past form. The students identify the paragraphs and together changed the mistakes into the correct ones. This activity effectively eased the students' attention in mapping their ability and knowledge of verbal and nominal sentences. After giving the students which was the Brainstorming Activity to stimulate students' prior knowledge, the teacher showed a list of common grammatical mistakes in using the simple past tense. The list of common grammatical mistakes enhanced the stimulation and the information that the students had.

### **Doing Group Presentation strengthen students ability in the verbal and nominal sentence**

Students' ability in verbal and nominal sentences improved by implementing this activity. Based on the field note and teacher's feedbacks, this activity strengthened and attracted the students by collaborative learning especially in cycles two and three. Most of the students were engaged in the discussion and were able to deliver a good explanation. One example was when one group told that the other groups made mistake in changing the verb lay into 'laid' which should be changed into 'laid' instead, and other examples of the use of was and were. The students could apply their knowledge that they got after analyzing the sentence pattern of verbal and nominal sentences in the simple past tense

### **The Self-Monitoring Strategy step three (recognition about the mistake they make) improved students' ability changing active to passive voice in recount text**

The students' ability in changing active into passive voice in recount text improved by implementing the SMS step three. There were two activities which were used to improve the

students' ability in changing active to passive voice in the SMS step 3 which can be seen as follows:

### **Analyzing the Changes of Active and Passive voices by Implementing the Grammar Games**

Based on the field note, the Grammar Casino Game increased students' ability in the passive and active voice. The game was fun and competitive. This activity helped the students to analyze the grammatical mistakes and how to change the active into passive voice in a fun way. In this game, the students were divided into groups and given bitcoins for them to bet on the answers. The teacher showed a sentence which could be good or no good sentence, and if the sentence was grammatically wrong, the groups need to change it into the correct one. The group who gave the wrong answer or explanation, their bet would be taken. So the winner was the group with the most number of bitcoins. Furthermore, this game was also strengthened their memory of the verb changes which holds one of the essential parts in changing active into passive voice.

### **Group Presentation**

This activity was not only also used in improving the students' ability in verbal and nominal sentences but also to strengthen the second proposed learning target which is the active and passive voice. The idea and the implementation of this activity were no different from the previous point. After giving the group worksheets, each of the groups did a presentation of their discussion. The observation from the field note of students' interaction in the classroom showed that by giving the students a chance to recall and deliver an explanation of what they have learned optimized the information and strengthen their knowledge. The feedback either from the fellow students or the teacher also gave a positive impact on students' ability in using passive and active voice.

### **The Self-monitoring Strategy Step Two (knowing what is easy and difficult) and**

### **Five (evaluation) Improved Students' Self-awareness in Learning Simple Past Tense**

This step caused a change in students' learning behavior, specifically in students' self-awareness. Step two of SMS which was knowing what is easy and difficult helped the students to do an early reflection of their own learning, mapping their strengths and weaknesses in learning. Based on the field note, for the first cycle, only 10 out of 35 students were able to deliver their difficulties and easiness in learning, in using nominal-verbal sentences and changing active into passive voice. In the first cycle, the students delivered their experience in learning simple past tense verbally, what they needed and how to overcome the difficulties they had. However, the activity was not effective because not all the students got a chance to share their experience due to the duration of the activity and only 10 out of 35 students were confident enough to do it.

The teacher acted as facilitator and moderator in the classroom. It happened to optimize students' independent learning on how they should know themselves as individual learners. It had been applied in the SMS step 5 which was Evaluation. This also promoted that the students were the center of learning itself.

### **The Self-Monitoring Strategy Step One (selecting target behavior) Improve Students' Motivation in Learning Simple Past Tense**

Students' motivation improved by implementing the self-monitoring strategy. Based on the field note that had been taken during the class, it was shown when the students had continued the effort to achieve the objective of learning for the following activities in the classroom. Even though the first cycle was not conducive in the beginning, but most of the students kept being participated and active for the following activities. One of the examples of persistence was to be able to decide the correct answer in the game and tried to explain to their fellow group members in group discussion. Furthermore, the students did not hesitate to

ask for a teacher's help and clarification about the learning material and activity.

Based on the field note and the teacher's feedback, the excitement of the students was different. The female students were more motivated than males. It showed that the female students were more likely to include in the discussion. But in this case, it did not mean that the male students were not engaged with the discussion, it was only some of them who had already had better prior knowledge in English. On the other hand, the male students were particularly being participated in the other activity which was the game.

### **The Self-Monitoring Strategy Improve Students' Activeness in Learning Simple Past Tense**

Students' activeness improved by implementing the self-monitoring strategy. It could be seen when the students were engaged when they were told to analyze the pattern and mistakes in the simple past tense. According to the field note and the teacher's feedback, most of the students were being participated in the discussion. There were seven groups and the students from each of the groups tried to legitimize their answers in the game and group discussion by asking the teacher.

Three groups were arguing about their friends' work in analyzing the mistake of simple past tense pattern, whether the verb after to should be changed into the past form or not. The other groups then joined the discussion by giving their opinion and one student from group three gave an example according to the case which was being discussed. Furthermore, all of the groups were collaborating in finding, analyzing, and discussing the material which proved that the strategy and the activities used were effective to improve their activeness in learning simple past tense.

### **Discussion**

According to the data collection, the implementation of the self-monitoring strategy had caused behavioral changes in students learning which led the improvements to their learning ability in using simple past tense in recount text. This result was coherent

with Coleman (as cited in Bakhtiar, 2003) who states that the self-monitoring strategy is not only to improve students' academic performance but also to improve students' learning behavior. This was primarily caused by improving their self-awareness in the Self-monitoring strategy step two, to know their own strength and weakness, so that by mapping themselves toward the learning, it helped them to be able to face and solve their own difficulties. Furthermore, the self-monitoring evaluation sheets which are the SMS step five were also essential in giving students a chance to monitor and finally evaluate their own performance and achievements at the end of the meeting.

The students were more motivated and active in the learning process. The idea of student-centered learning had also been achieved by implementing this learning strategy. Furthermore, according to Wehmeyer, Argan, and Hughes (as cited in Hughes, Copeland, Mayer, Argan, Rodi & Presley, 2002 p. 262-263), "... self-monitoring strategy may allow students to manage their own behavior rather than rely on others (e.g., teacher, educational assistants, peers) to direct and monitor their performance".

The idea of self-monitoring strategy which is learning from the mistake and adjust it which are the SMS steps three and four, resulted in an improvement of students' focus or conscientiousness in learning grammar. Moreover, the addition of showing the list of the common grammatical mistakes in grammar used, simple past tense to be precise, strengthened students' grammatical knowledge of verbal and nominal sentences. Thus, being able to monitor their own learning and know themselves as individual learners had been proven giving a positive impact on the learning itself. The self-monitoring strategy is not only focused on students' ability or knowledge, but also a further concern to cause a change in students' learning behavior as well.

Moreover, the interaction between student-student and teacher-student had shown better improvement. Unlike the before the implementation of the learning strategy



which it was more about one-way learning, this strategy implementation led to a more dynamic teaching and learning process.

In the process of the Classroom Action Research, the finding shows a very satisfying improvement in students' achievement scores from cycle to cycle. In the first cycle of the research, the students' mean score was only 55.2 which was categorized poor to average. The second cycle, it improved to 79.8 which was average to good, but it was still below the Minimum Accomplishment Criteria (MCC) (80). Finally, in the third cycle, the mean score reached 88.4 which categorized good to excellent. The improvement also could be seen from the students' individual work. In analyzing the mistakes of verbal and nominal sentences for the first, second and third cycle the students' mean scores were 56.8;77;87.6. Then, for the changing active into passive voice from the first, second and third cycle, the mean scores were 75;87.5;98. And the last was writing the core of the text by using simple past tense from the first, second and third cycle, the mean scores were 28.4;75.5;79.2.

Based on the data observation, the weakness in conducting this research was the first cycle which happened to be the first time of the learning strategy implementation. Both the teacher and the students were unfamiliarized with the strategy and inconducive situation the meeting at the beginning of the meeting which eventually resulted in lower achievement scores. The class could be also quite chaotic for the discussion activity. Furthermore, the class schedule was too close to the other subjects which happened to make more time to prepare the students and the other teaching media. However, the first problem had been solved in the second and the third cycle by actually doing reflection and further discussion with the teacher about the strategy and the class procedure as well as the time management.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the explanation of finding in the previous chapter about the learning strategy which had been applied to the 10th-

grade students of SMAN 1 Pontianak, it is concluded that self-monitoring strategy improved students' ability in using simple past tense in recount text. The progress has been proven by the students' mean scores which were gradually getting higher from cycle to cycle.

The self-monitoring strategy is a very useful learning strategy. This strategy is not only to improve students' academic aspects but also to cause positive changes to their learning behavior. It allows the students to improve their self-awareness about themselves, mapping their current ability to the target of learning, which happens to improve their motivation and activeness in the classroom activities. The students also have the opportunity to actually get involved in the class by giving feedbacks and suggestions. The teacher is no longer the only one big source but rather be as a facilitator and a moderator in the teaching and learning process. It has shown that the students enable to explore more in their own learning. Thus, the idea of student-centered learning which is promoted by the National Curriculum 2013 is achieved by implementing this strategy.

### **Suggestion**

It is recommended to implement Self-Monitoring Strategy not only for knowledge or language aspects, but also can be applied to improve students' language skills, like writing and speaking. This learning strategy should be intergrated with the discovery learning method. This method had been proven as a good combination to the strategy which contributed to the improvements of students' ability in using simple past tense. Even though self-monitoring is based on individual strategy learning, it is recommended to also apply some activity which promotes students' collaborative learning such as group discussion and group presentation. Finally, the idea of student-centered learning is one thing that the class should achieve. The teacher have to make sure that the students are free to explore their own learning with the teacher's roles as a moderator, a guidance, and a facilitator who is there to help, not to object or to dictate the students learning.

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