
THE STUDENTS' MISTAKES IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE FOR WRITING SHORT SENTENCES

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Abstract: Students' Mistakes in using simple past tense for writing short sentences at elementary teacher department of faculty of teachers' training and education of Achmad Yani University. The objective of this study is to analyze the students' mistakes in writing short sentences based on in simple past tense. The scope of the research is focused on one tenses namely simple past tense. Research method was used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. Based on the result of the research, the researcher could conclude that most of subject or sample of the research did mistakes in misinformation because they write wrong in grammatical form and made the sentences were incorrect.

Keywords: *Students' Mistakes; Short Sentences; Simple Past*

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The English language course is a compulsory subject for all study programs at the tertiary level. In its implementation, English lecturers have encountered many obstacles, one of which is the mastery of tenses or tenses in English grammar. According to Kachru (2006: 89), English has spread throughout the world. The distribution is divided into three circles, namely the first circle / inner circle, in which English is used as the native language and as the mother tongue. The outer circle, namely English is used as a second language. As for the expanding circle, that is, English is used as a foreign language and only for certain purposes.

Tenses are part of grammar that shows the time in an event; and indicated by the form of the verb (Greenbaum & Nelson, 1998: 55). Swan (2005: 140) says that tense plays a role in determining an event that occurs in the present, past, or future. There are sixteen tenses in English, one of which is the simple past tense. This tense is used to describe an event or something that happens in the past time. The structure of the simple past tense itself consists of (subject + verb form 2 + object). As for learning, students in Indonesia still have some difficulties learning English. As stated by Warouw (2014), this is due to their diverse cultural backgrounds, thus affecting the use of English, including producing errors or mistakes. Errors and mistakes are two different

things. According to Ellis (2003: 17) an error is an error caused by limited student knowledge and not knowing the real answer. While mistakes are mistakes that occur because students cannot convey their knowledge properly and correctly. Therefore, the authors are interested in analyzing student mistakes in using the simple past tense in the faculty of teacher training and education, especially for elementary teacher department. To find out the types of mistakes made by students in using the simple past tense, so that the results of the study can be used by students to find out the types of mistakes made and easily understand how to use them properly, so that students can master the English tense properly and correctly.

B. Statements of the problems

What are the students' mistakes in writing short sentences based on simple past tense?

C. Objective of the Research

The objective of the research are to know the students' mistakes in writing short sentences based on simple past tense and to solve the problems.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

A. Students' Mistakes

English is a compulsory subject for all study programs at universities in Indonesia. This course has been taught since the students sit in elementary school to high school. Because English is a foreign language, most students still don't master it either orally or in writing. Researchers have several times

found errors in using English both in terms of grammar, vocabulary writing, or the form of time. There are so many opinions and definitions regarding errors and mistakes.

Based on the definition of Handayani (2011) in Meisa (2014:14) error is a systematic deviation, a deviation that occurs repeatedly and the learner does not realize that what he is doing is a deviation. A mistake is something like a cross of the tongue, i.e. a one-time event, and the speaker is aware of it and corrects it if necessary. Meanwhile, according to Ellis (1994: 5) states "An error is a lack of competence and mistake is a performance deviant", which means that an error is an error caused by a lack of knowledge, while a mistake is caused by deviations in speech. James (1998:78) states "error as being an instance of language that is unintentionally" deviant and is not self-correctible by is author", and "mistake is either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and self-correctible", which means that error occurs when an error occurs beyond knowledge or not have a knowledge, while a mistake is a mistake that occurs because of deviations from his speech.

B. Simple Past Tense

Tenses is a form of time in English which is not the same as Indonesian. Actually there are 16 tenses in English, but in this study only discusses the students' mistakes in writing the simple past tense. Simple past

tense is a form of tense that describes an event that occurred at a specific time in the past. The verb used in this tense must be a second verb (verb 2). Similar to the simple present tense, this form is one of the most basic tenses and is often used when writing or speaking in English.

Table 2.1 : Simple Past Tense Form

Form	Simple Past Tense Form	Example
Positive (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Subject + verb 2 + object · Subject + to be (was/were) + <u>adjective/adverb</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We <u>at-</u>tended the festival last week · She <u>was</u> absent yesterday
Negative (-)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Subject + did not + infinitive verb + object · Subject + was/were + not + adjective/adverb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We <u>did not attend</u> the festival last week · She <u>was not</u> absent yesterday
Interrogative (?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Did + subject + infinitive verb + object? · Was/were + subject + adjective/adverb? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Did</u> they attend the festival last week? · Was she absent yesterday?

METHODOLOGY

A. Method of Research

The method of this study is descriptive qualitative because the researcher would like to analysis the students' mistakes in writing short sentences based simple past tense.

B. Research Location

The location of the research is at faculty of teachers’ training and education especially for elementary teacher department of achmad yani university.

C. Data Collection

Researcher gave a test to of simple past tense for all of the

students and then analyzed the result of the test.

D. Data Analysis

Mistakes in using verb two is a type of error when students use other grammatical forms that do not comply with grammatical terms.

FINDINGS

The First Respondent (Rima Juwita)		
Number	The Correct Answers	Students’ Answers
1	Andi did his homework last night	Andi did his homework last night
2	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday	My wife cooking fried rice yesterday
3	Surya completed his project last month	Mr. Surya complete project last month
4	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday
5	Nani made a cake last week	Nani make cake last week
6	My daughter took a holiday to the beach last weekend	My daughter holiday to the beach last weekend
7	My parent bought a car last month	My parent buy car last month
8	Mr. Ali build a drugstore last year	Mr ali build shop drug last years
9	I drove a car yesterday	I drive car yesterday

Based on the table above researcher concluded that the first respondent’s errors in writing simple past tense is on using of verb two and writing a name of place.

The Second Respondent (Hijjah Lailani)		
Number	The Correct Answers	Students’ Answers
1	Andi did his homework last night	Andi did the home work last night.
2	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday	My wife cooked the fried rice yesterday.
3	Surya completed his project last month	Mr. Surya completed his project last month.
4	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday	I rode the motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday.
5	Nani made a cake last week	Nani made the cake last week.

6	My daughter took a holiday to the beach last weekend	My girl holiday to beach last weekend.
7	My parent bought a car last month	My parent bought the car last month.
8	Mr. Ali build a drugstore last year	Mr. Ali built the shop medicine last year.
9	I drove a car yesterday	I drove the car yesterday.

Based on the table above researcher concluded that the second

respondent's errors in using subject and object for the sentences based on simple past tense form.

The Third Respondent (Nurhayati)		
Number	The Correct Answers	Students' Answers
1	Andi did his homework last night	Andi did his homework last night.
2	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday.
3	Surya completed his project last month	Mr. Surya completed his project last month.
4	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday	I rode a motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday.
5	Nani made a cake last week	Nani made cake last week.
6	My daughter took a holiday to the beach last weekend	My daughter went to the beach last weekend.
7	My parent bought a car last month	My parents bought a car last month.
8	Mr. Ali build a drugstore last year	Mr. Ali built a drugstore last year.
9	I drove a car yesterday	I drove the car yesterday.

Based on the table above researcher concluded that the third re-

spondent is perfect in writing simple past tense form of some sentences.

The Fourth Respondent (Saidah)		
Number	The Correct Answers	Students' Answers
1	Andi did his homework last night	Andi did home work last night.
2	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday.
3	Surya completed his project last month	Mr. Surya finished his project last month.
4	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday	I rode a motor bike to Banjarmasin yesterday.
5	Nani made a cake last week	Nani made cake last week.
6	My daughter took a holiday to the beach last weekend	My daughter went to the beach last weekend.
7	My parent bought a car last	My parents bought a car last month.

	month	
8	Mr. Ali build a drug store last year	-
9	I drove a car yesterday	Driving the car yesterday

Based on the table above researcher concluded that the fourth respondent's errors in writing simple past tense is on using of verb two.

The Fifth Respondent (M. Faisal Bakeri)		
Number	The Correct Answers	Students' Mistakes
1	Andi did his homework last night	Andi make home work last night.
2	My wife cooked fried rice yesterday	My wife cooking fried rice yesterday.
3	Surya completed his project last month	-
4	I rode motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday	I am riding motorcycle to Banjarmasin yesterday
5	Nani made a cake last week	Nani make cake last week.
6	My daughter took a holiday to the beach last weekend	My children holiday to beach last weekend.
7	My parent bought a car last month	My parent buy car last month.
8	Mr. Ali build a drug store last year	Mr. Ali build a drugstore last year.
9	I drove a car yesterday	I am drive car yesterday.

Based on the table above researcher concluded that the fifth respondent's errors in writing simple past tense is on using of verb two.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the result of the research, the researcher could take the conclusion that the most of the students' mistakes was on the using of verb two to put in the sentences. So the English lecturer should often give opportunity to the students in practicing the students' skill to write and speak in using simple past tense especially in using grammatical rules for each sentences.

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