INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' ABILITY ON LEARNING TENSES BY APPLYING ONLINE LEARNING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

This research aimed to know students' ability on learning tenses by applying online learning at Timor University during Covid-19 Pandemic. This research focused on the student's ability on learning tenses: simple present tense and past tense. This research was categorized as descriptive qualitative research method. The population of the research was the second semester students majoring government sciences at Timor University which consists of four classes. The sample of the research was taken by clustering sampling and the students of Class D were chosen as the sample in this research. This research used test to know the students' ability on learning tenses and also used interview as the instruments of data collection. The finding of this research showed that the students' ability on learning simple present tense was fair. It was shown by the average score in the form of the simple present tense is 64, meanwhile the students' ability on learning simple past tense was good, it was shown by the average score in the form of the simple past tense is75. The students got many difficulties on learning simple present tense. In conclusion, the result of the test showed that the students' ability in using simple present tense was on fair level. From the data got it showed that the average score on learning tenses: simple present tense and past tense was 69..

1. INTRODUCTION

Human and language cannot be separated from communication because language has an important role in our society. People use language for communicating in their life. Through language, people gain a better insight into human relation. People can also use the language to express their ideas (Nurhidayati. 2012). There are so many languages used by the people in this world such as English, Japanese, Indonesian, Mandarin, etc. English is one of international language which is spoken by the people in this world. Nowadays, English has crucial roles in all aspects such as in education, economics, politics, social, science and technology, etc. In education, English is applied for all of the students not only at schools but also universities. Grammar is needed for the students on learning English. There are language skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. The students will get difficulties without learning grammar to master four language skills. Grammar should be learned by the students as primary elements to understand the way the students have communication in English. Having good ability on grammar of a language, the students can organized their ability on delivering ideas and messages to the other people.

Speaking and writing are the most important of these skills for the students especially the government sciences students to help the students have better skills in communication in the society. In mastering the language, the students of government sciences must have to know the fundamental grammatical patterns of a language. Grammar is the rule of a language, concerning the way in which you can put words together in order to make sentences. People can memorize all the words even parts of speech, and yet be unable to speak or write the sentence of language. It is very important to know about vocabulary and also grammar. The function of grammar of a language according to the Bulton

(1998) is is to specify which word sequences are and which are not, in the infinite set of its sentences. Talking about grammar, it is considered that tenses play an important role.

According to Hornby (1957), "tenses are any forms of verb that may be used to show the time of the action or state expressed by the verb". There are sixteen tenses in English. But in this case, the writer focuses on simple present and simple past tenses, because it often used in daily activities. Present tense is a tense which is used to express habitual, everyday activities or general statement of fact and also timeless truths (Azzar, 1992). Simple past tense is tense that is used to finalize events, states, or actions in a finished time period. Supporting this idea stating that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past is indicated by simple past tense.

Tenses are different form of verb and change their forms depending upon the time at the event. Tenses are the verb shows the time when the action takes place, took place, and will take place in English sentence. It shows that in English, the basic tenses are categorized into three parts, they are present tense, past tense and future tense. Each of them is used different time. Therefore rules in English language are principal. As a speaker of language we cannot ignore them, otherwise we could not be able to put words together in the meaningful way. But, in this research, the researcher will use simple present and simple past tenses to analyze the students' ability.During COVID-19, online learning has changed the way is taught and learned. It from face-to-face in the classroom became a virtual meeting by using digital platforms. The use of digital platforms contributes significantly to education, including achieving online learning goals. Various digital platforms can also support online learning implementation. For example, virtual classes using services like Google Classroom, Edmodo, Zoom, etc (Iftakhar, 2016) and instant messaging applications like WhatsApp. Online learning helps the students to learn at homes during the COVID-19 pandemic and the students use applications such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and also Google meet. In this study, the researcher focused on utilizing Google Classroom, WhatsApp, and Zoom in teaching and learning.

There are two applications used by the students of government sciences on learning. First, Google Classroom is a learning platform that can be dedicated to any educational field that is designed to help find a way out of the difficulties experienced in making paperless assignments. *Second,* Zoom is a cloud-based service offering meetings and webinars and the ability to share content and video conferencing. Difficulties with the tenses are often reinforced by faulty teaching. The learning of tenses is probably one of the most, problematic tenses for the second semester students of Government Sciences Study Program at Timor University even during Pandemic Covid-19. It is not easy to learn the tenses correctly and to be able to use it appropriately. The students must be able to learn by applying Google classroom and zoom as the means of learning at home.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was designed by using descriptive qualitative research and this research focused on the students' ability on learning English by applying Google Classroom and zoom application. Data provided about English grammar about Simple Present Tense and Simple Past Tense. Data was analyzed based on instruments of data collection.In conducting this research, the method of this research is a case study in the form qualitative research method. According to Moleong (2006:3) states the descriptive qualitative method is a procedure that generates the data in the form of descriptive words in written or spoken from people and observed behavior. The population of this research was the second semester students majoring government Sciences at Timor University who are learning English which consist of four classes: Class A until Class D. The sample of the research was class D which consists of 45 students. The sample was chosen by using cluster sampling. This research was conducted as action research because it deals with the students' ability.

The researcher used the result of test, and interview as the instruments of data collection. Data was analyzed comprehensively. Although this research more focusing on descriptive qualitative method, but serving numerical data in order to get valid and countable data was needed. So, the quantitative method will be conducted in this research to see the percentage and frequencies for supporting the research. Data analysis means systematically arranging the results of interviews and observations, interpreting them and producing a new thought, opinion, theory or idea. The researcher collect the test and analyzed the data based on the answers test and put the data into percentage.

The formula of percentage:

$$N = \frac{X}{Y} \ x \ 100 \ \%$$

N = Scores of each student
X = Number of correct answers
Y = Number of items

The data was analyzed from students score. Furthermore, the level of the student's score would be classified into five levels of mastery. The classification could be seen in this following table:

Table 1: The Classification of Students' Score

No	Scores	Category
1	80-100	Excellent
2	70-79	Good
3	60-69	Fair
4	41-59	Poor
5	0-40	Very Poor

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this research was presented by showing the percentage of the students' scores and the classification scores of the students' ability on learning tenses. The data was analyzed based on students' score on learning simple present tense and simple past tense.

Table 2: The students' scores

No.	Initial Name	Simple Present Tense	Simple Past Tense	Average
1	AKT	60	75	68
2	PARN	70	100	85
3	GES	85	95	90
4	YST	60	70	65
5	PAA	60	75	68
6	RBA	70	85	78
7	MK	65	70	68
8	GT	60	80	70
9	KT	60	70	65
10	JAT	50	55	53
11	IDN	60	75	68
12	AS	60	70	65
13	YAPU	50	70	60
14	GKLL	70	80	75
15	SPN	60	75	68
16	NSDLA	60	70	65
17	HAM	60	75	68
18	MAM	80	90	85
19	MHH	65	80	73
20	DA	65	70	68

| 21 | FH | 60 | 75 | 68 |
22	DSN	65	75	70
23	DYA	55	70	63
24	AML	65	70	68
25	ERB	60	75	68
26	MAKB	50	65	58
27	KB	85	85	85
28	AN	70	75	73
29	YP	65	70	68
30	RI	60	75	68
31	YDM	60	75	68
32	TBVO	55	70	63
33	ABVO	80	100	90
34	MGN	70	70	70
35	OSB	75	75	75
36	MS	60	70	65
37	AYN	50	65	58
38	PDT	60	85	73
39	MFS	65	70	68
40	YST	50	55	53
41	KN	75	80	78
42	ESBL	70	75	73
43	YRNT	65	60	63
44	FJL	60	70	65
45	FS	75	80	77.5
Total		2875	3365	**Average Score**
Average		64	75	**69**

After analyzing all data, the student's ability on learning tenses by applying online learning is in fair level. The average score on learning simple present tense was 64 and the average score on learning simple past tense was 75. The average of all score on learning simple present tense and simple past tense was 69. It was shown by the result of the test which has been done by applying Google Classroom. Based on the results above, the researcher made a classification relates to students' ability on learning tenses by applying online learning. It is presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3: The classification score on learning Simple present tense

No.	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	4	9 %	Excellent
2	70-79	9	20%	Good
3	60-69	25	56%	Fair
4	41-59	7	16%	Poor
5	0-40	0	0%	Very Poor

The percentage of the students' score classification above can be presented in a graph, as follow:
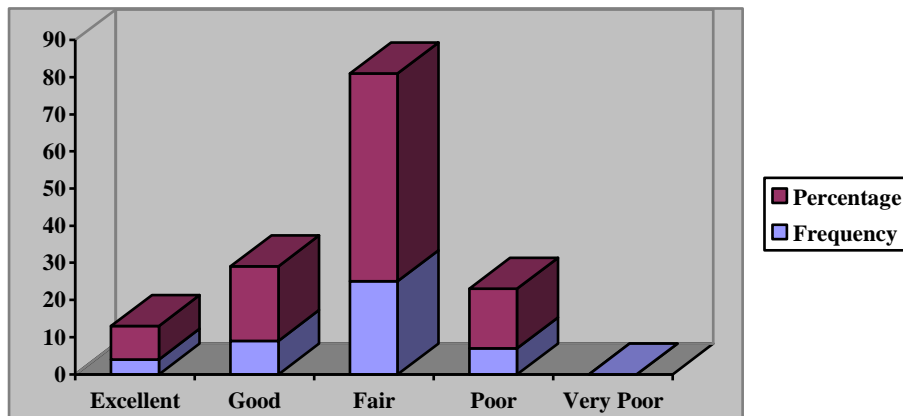
Based on the table above, there were 9% students who got excellent ability, 20% students who got good ability, 56 % who got fair ability and 16% who got poor ability. The highest score on learning simple Present Tense was 85 and the lowest one on learning Simple Present Tense was 50. There were 4 students who got excellent ability, there were 9 students who obtained good ability, 25 students who got fair ability and 7 students who got poor ability.

Table 4: The classification score on learning Simple Past Tense

No.	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	12	27	Excellent
2	70-79	28	62	Good
3	60-69	3	7	Fair
4	41-59	2	4	Poor
5	0-40	0	0	Very Poor

The percentage of the students' score classification above can be presented in a graph, as follow:
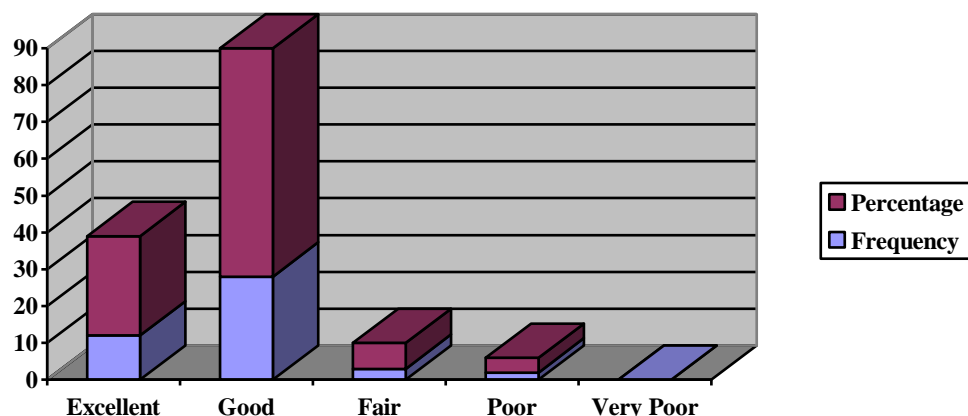
Based on the table of classification score on learning Simple Past Tense, there were 27% students got excellent ability, 62% obtained good ability, 7 % obtained fair ability, 4 % obtained poor ability. Meanwhile, the students' highest score on learning Simple Past Tense was 100 and the lowest score on learning Simple Past Tense was 55. There were 12 students who got excellent ability, there were 28 students who obtained good ability, 3 students who got fair ability and 2 students who got poor ability.

4.   CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and results above, it can be concluded that the ability of the students of government sciences at Timor University on learning tenses by online learning during pandemic Covid-19 were fair with the average score 69 which was shown based on the result of the test conducted. The students' ability on learning simple past tense is higher than the students' ability on learning simple present tense. The students found difficulties when they had to applied the verb in simple present tense based on the subjects in a sentence. Meanwhile, the students got some difficulties on learning simple past tense because the students could memorize the verb in simple past. In order to help the students to face difficulties on learning simple present tense, it is necessary for the lecturers to give the students more exercise at home and ask the students to practice at home. Therefore, the students' ability on learning tenses can be improved well.

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