an Error Analysis on the Use Of Simple Past Tense in Writing Narrative Text of 11th Grade High School Students at SMK Swasta YPK Medan Academic Year 2022/2023

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ABSTRACT

Simple past tense is an action or activity carried out by a subject in the past. Past tense refers to actions in the past and tells us all about their relationship with the present. The purpose of this research is to know types and causes of error on simple past tense. To know dominant error on the use of simple past tense in writing narrative text. To find out difficulties faced by students in comprehending simple past tense and narrative text. The researcher adopts a descriptive qualitative method. Carried out by gathering data from the natural environment without altering the situation. Data of this research is error made by students in written test of past tense. Data source is a writing test with the theme "My Holiday". It consists of 55 words or more. Tests are distributed to 16 students of SMK SW YPK MEDAN. The researcher found 116 errors from writing test that the researcher carried out, it was found that the highest frequency of error that students made was mis formation about 78.45% errors, omission was 12.93% errors, selection was 5.17% errors, addition was 2.59% the last was mis ordering with 0.86%. the researcher also found that the highest error was caused by intralingual and the second highest was caused by interference.

Keywords | Error Analysis, Simple Past Tense, Narrative Text, Types and Causes of Error.

INTRODUCTION

English is a major second language learned by most people, especially high school students. To achieve fluency in English, there are 4 skills that must be mastered. They are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. And my topic focuses on the writing part as the researcher finds there are still many students who do not know how to write and choose proper words or grammar, even more in the form of past tense. The four basic skills in learning English have divided into two types namely receptive ability and productive ability. Reading and listening are receptive abilities which means the learners receive information about a particular subject and then process it into an understanding of their native languages, but speaking and writing are referred to as productive abilities

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which means the learners create rational ideas or information, they have into a target language.

In general, students find it difficult to write, especially when learning a foreign language. Even native speakers find it difficult to write as well stated by Javed (2013:2), in (Widiastuti, 2020).

In writing, students are asked to write words or even sentences that are coherent and clear to the readers. It means that students must understand how to use punctuation, as well as choosing vocabulary and utilize the syntactic structure, and also determine the type of tenses according to the change of time event. English tenses are a crucial element in English language because every event and action is expressed in sentence according to the time of occurrence.

According to Erward in (Pensius *et al.:* 2016) says that tense is a form of verb that shows the time of an action or condition. In the other word, tenses mean a form of a time. As a form of thorough analysis, the choice goes to simple past tense. Here, the involvement of simple past tense takes an essential part as the tense will be used by students in writing and also as an assessment material about the development of their understanding of how to write an essay from past events. According to Tanjung (2014:35) cites in (Sari: 2019) simple past tense is an action or activity carried out by a subject in the past. According to Aidaroos (2015:2), cites in (Widiastuti: 2020) adds that events that take place in the past are mostly using the simple past tense pattern. And it does not matter how long the event lasts. Past tense *refers* to actions in the past and tells us all about their relationship with the present.

The main problem when learning simple past tense is that students have difficulty in arranging sentences and also identify alteration from verb 1 into verb 2 as in simple past tense verb 2 is used to form affirmative sentences. The characteristics of simple past tense are past verbs (verb 2/past tense) which are divided into 2 categories namely regular verbs and irregular verbs and the past form of phrases /adverbs that follow them. The phrase consists of yesterday, last, and ... ago. This is supported by the students' weak ability to link word by word in English so that it has the correct meaning according to native speakers. They tend to interpret the words they know without re-analyzing whether it is explained or translated into English vice versa correctly and can be understood by native speakers. And for the writing test in upcoming research the genre of text will be narrative and simple past tense is one of narrative features.

Based on the observation done by the researcher, students of SMK YPK Medan academic year 2022/2023 still don't understand how to use simple past tense. Because of that, they can't achieve certain targets because their knowledge of English is lacking primarily on grammar. There are some errors faced by

students in using simple past tense. First, they do not know the verb 2 form of each word. When they make a sentence in simple past tense, they always use verb 1. Second, they do not know the form and the usage of simple past tense.

Every student who learn language, both native speakers and non- native speakers, will make error in their learning process. Errors are parts of the learning process that are often done by students. These errors can be in the form of deviations from the rules of the language learned. Students often make a mistake or error when they are asked to make a sentence. In learning languages, especially foreign languages, students have their mother tongue and the language can influence the learning process of foreign languages. Usually, students adopt their first grammar rules of the foreign language they learn and that is one of the factors they make grammatical errors. According to Richards (1973:19) people believe that mistakes occur as a result of untruthful learning of a foreign language from the habit of the first language.

Refers to Sugiyanto (2019) the study of the type and quantity of errors that occur, especially in the fields of applied linguistics, is known as error analysis. These errors, which could be categorized into three subcategories: overgeneralization, incomplete rule implementation, and false definition hypothesizing, represented a learner's competence at a particular stage and therefore varied from learner to learner Rustipa (2011:18). According to James, in (Al-Khresheh: 2016) claims that such a type of interference from the structures of the target language itself is the main cause of intralingual errors. These errors can be created without referring to first language (L1) features. According to Daulay et al (1982:138) Error Analysis (EA) serves two main purposes: the first one is "to provide data from which interferences about the nature of the language learning process can be made". The second one "indicates to teachers and curriculum developers which part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types detract most from a learner's ability to communicate".

Objectives of the Research the researcher intends to obtain some objectives through the study as follows:

1. To know the types and causes of error on the use of simple past tense in writing narrative text.
2. To know the dominant error on the use of simple past tense in writing narrative text.
3. To find out difficulties faced by the students in comprehending simple past tense and narrative text.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher adopted the descriptive qualitative method in this session. It would be carried out by gathering data from the natural environment without altering the situation in any way. Because of the nature of the research, the qualitative method was chosen; the researcher didn't use comparison or measurement. According to Lambert, in (Wibawati, R. T., & Musthafa, B: 2019) the goal of qualitative descriptive research was to directly describe a phenomenon. They went on to say that it was appropriate for studies that seek to answer questions about what was involved, who was involved, and where things happened in an event.

The research conducted for 11th grade students at SMK SWASTA YPK Medan academic year 2022 / 2023. The plan was to ask about 16 students to be participants and observed, hopefully from this test researcher would be able to obtain certain results and explanations of what kinds of errors made by students in learning and understanding of simple past tense.

The data of this research was an error made by the students in their written test of past tense. The data source was a writing test with the theme "My Holiday" given to the students. It consists of 55 words or more than that in one paragraph. The test was distributed to 16 students of SMK SWASTA YPK MEDAN academic year 2022/2023.

In this research, data was collected through observation in the form of students' answers to a test paper provided by the researcher as the instrument. In learning the simple past tense, the instrument was related to the types of verbal and nominal forms. The purpose of this data collection was to obtain the information required to achieve the research objectives, and the instruments were the tools used to collect the data.

To collect the data, the researcher used an English writing test and interview. The researcher gave the test to know error frequency in using Simple Past Tense in Narrative text. The test was a narrative paragraph writing test. The researcher conducted an interview with participants face to face, to get in-depth understanding on how the students face difficulties learning simple past tense. The researcher also interviewed the English teacher to know what the difficulties faced by students in Simple Past Tense commonly.

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RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

After collecting the data from the test, the researcher found some errors made by the students in using Simple Past Tense in writing narrative text. To collect the data, the researcher used an English writing test and interviewed 16 students of 11th grade at SMK Swasta YPK MEDAN. The researcher gave the test to know what kind of error frequency emerged when using Simple Past Tense in Narrative text. The test was a Narrative paragraph writing test.

Each student had a score that had been calculated by using a percentage formula.

Table 1.
The Frequency of the students' Error

No.	Types of Error	Frequency of Error	Percentage
1.	Mis formation	91	78.45%
2.	Omission	15	12.93%
3.	Selection	6	5.17%
4.	Addition	3	2.59%
5.	Mis ordering	1	0.86%

Based on the table of students' errors recapitulation, it could be stated that:
a) Total errors on Mis formation were 91 errors with a percentage of 78.45%
b) Total errors on Omission were 15 errors with a percentage of 12.93%
c) Total errors on Selection were 6 errors with a percentage of 5.17%
d) Total errors on Addition were 3 errors with a percentage of 2.59%
e) Total error on Mis ordering was 1 error with percentage of 0.86%

DISCUSSION

The next step was to analyze the result of data. The data below were examined into each respective area according to what kind of errors that students made when writing Simple Past Tense in Narrative Text.

a. Mis formation

There were 16 students and 91 errors committed in Mis formation area with a percentage of 78.45%. It happened because the students might face difficulties in forming verbs (regular and irregular). First the students tended to use present verb (verb 1) so it caused mis formation of verb form such as:

- **Written**: *and feel the freshness of the water including me*
- **Correction**: *and felt the freshness of the water including me*

It should be "felt" and not "feel" because it happened in the past and should be narrated in past tense form and also the verb happened to be the form of an irregular verb.

b. Omission

15 errors committed in the Omission area with a percentage of 12.93%. Most errors derived from omission of auxiliary verbs or subject of the sentence. First the omission of auxiliary verb, the students omitted the necessary auxiliary verb such as

- **Written**   : *I just vacation at home*
- **Correction**   : *I **was** just **on** vacation at home*

They should have put the auxiliary verb be (***was***) after the subject because the auxiliary verb such as ***was*** necessary to make it a well-formed simple past tense and also to explain the state that was happening in the past. Another example of omission that lacked of auxiliary verb of *be* in sentence

- **Written**   : *By the way, my grandma's <u>house in</u> Langkat*
- **Correction**   : *By the way, my grandma's **house <u>was</u> in** Langkat*

It seemed well-formed but it still lacked of be *was* between the word "house" and preposition -in and it needed the auxiliary verb of be ***was*** in order to make the sentence well-formed in grammar and also to explain the state of position/exact location of something.

c. Selection

Next was the Selection area where the students made 6 errors with a percentage of 5.17%. In this area the students were influenced by overgeneralization of their learning toward English and their interferences when translating word by word. One of the examples was:

- **Written**   : *And the greatest moment of holiday, **I hadn't to** study.*
- **Correction**   : *And the greatest moment of the holiday, I **did not have** to study.*

Second clause of the sentence showed overgeneralization of making all verbs into its past form or verb 2 directly which was wrong because the auxiliary verb of ***had*** could not stand by itself and it depended on what context the sentence should be. If ***had*** in the sentence stood as a verb, it needed the past tense of the auxiliary verb ***do.*** But instead of adding the past verb of "do" the student made an error by changing "have" into its past form "had" while in correct English grammar they must added auxiliary verb ***did+not+verb 1*** into negative sentence.

d. Addition

Errors committed in the Addition area were 3 errors with a percentage of 2.59%. Mostly the students made the errors of unnecessary morpheme or auxiliary verb of *be* such as:

- **Written**   : *That's what my vacation story <u>is </u>about*
- **Correction**   : *That **was** what my vacation story was about".*

It would have been better if to be "**is**" at the end of the sentence was removed because there was already an auxiliary verb attached to pronoun *that* which was also incorrectly written by the student. Instead of to be *was*, the student shortened the pronoun with auxiliary verb *is*.

e. Mis Ordering

In the misordering area there was 1 error with a percentage of 0.86%. Among all of the classifications of error, this was the only area who had 1 error made by the student:

- **Written** : *There, it was very cold and the scenery was beautiful.*
- **Correction** : *It was very cold **there** and the scenery was so beautiful".*

The error itself was considered as misordering because the student who made the error put the adverb *there* in the beginning of the sentence while it should have been correct if the student put the *spatial adverb* at the end of the sentence or at the end of the first clause.

From the analysis above, it could be concluded that this research was in line with Herlina Widiastuti's result which suggested the most dominant error was misformation with 40%, omission 37.14%, addition 14.29%, and misordering 8.57%. It was supported by Rinda Rizaldi Syarif findings which also found that the highest error committed by the students was misformation with 57,83%, omission 15.68%, misordering 14.59%, and addition 11.9%. It was also supported by Ari Sugiyanto in his research. He discovered that the students made some errors in misformation with percentage 54.26%, error of omission 26.60%, error of addition 14.89%, and error of misordering 4.25%, it could be seen by the findings that misformation was the most error made by students.

The researcher also learned from several students who agreed to be interviewed after doing the test that the majority of the students struggled to learn English, particularly writing. The difficulties included a lack of mastery of the material as well as a lack of vocabulary. For student interviews, the researcher used a Google online form consisting of three main questions in order to obtain their opinions about writing simple past tense in narrative text.

1. Setelah menyelesaikan tugas yang diminta oleh saya, bagaimana cara anda untuk mengerjakan tugas tersebut dan apa tanggapan anda dengan hasilnya?
   Answer: *"Saya mengerjakan menggunakan google translate dan kurang puas dengan hasilnya"* (PW:1)
   "Saya puas, dan saya merasa pengetahuan saya jadi lebih bertambah" (MDY:1)
   "Cara saya mengerjakannya saya menggunakan google translate karena saya kurang paham rumus simple past tense" (NA:1)

2. Apa kendala yang dialami saat menulis dalam Simple Past Tense dengan genre Narrative Text?

   Answer: *"Kurang paham tentang simple past tense dengan genre narrative text"* *(PW:2) "Kendalanya saat saya harus mengikuti rumus" (MDY:2) "Bingung dalam membuat narrative text dan juga simple past" (NA:2)*

3. Setelah diteliti dengan singkat, ada beberapa kesalahan yang ditemukan dalam tugas anda, apa yang menyebabkan kesalahan tersebut dan apakah anda merasakan peningkatan kemampuan dalam bahasa Inggris setelah mencoba menulis teks naratif dalam Simple Past Tense?

   Answer: *"Ya karena saya kurang pandai dalam menulis text narrative dalam simple past tense" (PW:3) "Saya tidak banyak mengetahui tentang tenses" (MYD:3) "Dalam membuat tugas narrative text saya ada banyak salah karena kurang paham atas tugas tersebut dan juga saya kurang pandai dalam pelajaran bahasa Inggris" (NA:3)*

CONCLUSIONS

From the very beginning of this research, the main problem that has been faced by the students was writing in correct form according to what kind of tense was in use, particularly simple past tense. The researcher also laid out all factors in the theoretical framework of how the experts saw this ongoing phenomenon and how to identify, categorize, evaluate and fix the errors that interfere with students' ability in writing simple past tense in the genre of narrative text. Qualitative method was chosen to interpret and explain the data that has been taken from students. Dealing with the result of the research from the writing test and interview, it can be concluded that students still committed errors. From a writing test that the researcher carried out, it was found that the highest frequency of error that students made was misformation about 78.45% errors, omission was 12.93% errors, selection was 5.17% errors, addition was 2.59% the last was mis ordering with 0.86%. After doing the test, the researcher asked students to fill in an online interview sheet in order to know what caused and affected their errors in their writing and as a replacement for face-to-face interview because of the shortage of time. From there, the researcher found that the highest error was caused by intralingual and the second highest was caused by interference.

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