



An Analysis Students' Difficulties in Using Present Tense in SMAN 7 Enrekang

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the difficulties that students face in using present tense. This research uses a quantitative descriptive method using tests and interviews. A total of 28 students were selected as samples by random sampling method. Based on the findings of the research, the researcher put the conclusion that the students of SMAN 7 Enrekang still find it difficult to understand tenses, especially the present tense. This is evidenced by an in-depth analysis of the results of student answers that the students mostly made error in omission and then it was followed by addition, misinformation and mis-ordering. The students made errors categorized 133 in omission (34,2%), 107 in addition (27,5%), 61 in misinformation and (15,6%) and 88 in mis-ordering (22,7%). Based on interview, there were three difficulties faced by student in using present tense. The problems faced by student was the form of present tense with percentage 46%, spelling with percentage 32%, and the use of auxiliary with percentage 22%.

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Introduction

Grammar is defined in the English language as a set of rules and procedures that underpin the concepts that explain the structure of language. Students must master the four core language abilities of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing in order to have competent English. There are other sub-skills: grammar,

vocabulary, and pronunciation, in addition to the four main abilities. Grammar is one of the subskills that students should master when studying English. They must know grammar since it is required even in conversational situations.

When students are learning English, they will learn language skills and language components. Grammar is

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one of the English language components that it must be learned and understood by students. Grammar is very basic knowledge and an important tool for a student to master English. By learning grammar, the students will know about the system of language so they will be able to combine and build words into a meaningful sentence.

Anugraheni (2016, p.6) stated that grammar is how words are constructed in sentences well, when the pattern of grammar is use appropriately and how the sentences will be interpreted correctly. It assumed which is it not only how language is put together and how its work but also it tells about the system and pattern in selecting combining word. it also tells about the construction of the word. Many students cannot use English properly, because they were confused using correct sentence. By studying grammar in a good way, especially tenses, researcher believe that it will help them to be able to use English verbally or even in writing. One of the important things in grammar is tenses.

According to Bauer (1983, p.157), tense is commonly characterized as being tied to time or an action, occurrence, or situation. Furthermore, even though tenses have been learned since elementary school, there are still numerous errors in tenses usage. According to Maros et al (2007, p.2), there are two variables that cause pupils to struggle with present tense use. There are both linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects to consider.

In terms of linguistic considerations, when students are required to learn a new language, their knowledge of their mother tongue will interfere with the new language and will also impair the process of internalization. When one memory or concept interacts in some manner with

the memory that the pupils are attempting to recollect, it will be difficult for them to remember. Furthermore, kids will be impacted by their classmates, teachers, and surroundings in non-linguistics variables, which will have an impact on their knowledge.

Student difficulty in learning also became the main issue for the students, including the learning of tenses. Basically, this issue could be caused by many factors. But those causes had not been discovered well. In addition, the students did not have a media to express their complexity in learning. Because of that thing, the researcher wanted to discover more about the issue through the research of: An analysis students' difficulties in using present tense of the second grade at SMAN 7 Enrekang in the academic year 2021/2022.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative approach as its methodology. According to (sugiyono, 2014), descriptive research is study that uses quantitative and qualitative data to describe a phenomena or occurrence. Because the data analysis was provided descriptively, the descriptive approach was used. The main objective of this research was that the researcher described as much detail as possible about students' difficulties in learning English especially present tense.

The research instrument was a multiple-choice test and an interview. There were 20 questions in the multiple-choice test, with 5 questions in the simple present tense, 5 questions in the present continuous tense, 5 questions in the present perfect tense, and 5 questions in the present perfect continuous tense. Furthermore, test consists of four options (a, b, c and d). This instrument was adapted from

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(Rosdiana, 2018, Students' Difficulties in Using Present Tenses in SMKN 6 Makassar). While in interview guide, it consists of some questions related to the students' difficulties in using present tenses.

Data Analysis and Result

a. Simple present tense errors

Table 1 the students' errors in simple present tense

Item Number	Simple Present Tense	Errors			
		Omission	Addition	Mis-formation	Mis-ordering
1	It snow in Alaska	7	-	-	-
	It snowing in Alaska	-	7	-	-
	It snowes in Alaska	-	-	1	-
5	Tom not watch television everyday	5	-	-	-
	Tom does not watched television everyday	-	6	-	-
	Tom does not watches television everyday	-	7	-	-
9	Water consisted of hydrogen and oxygen	-	16	-	-
	Water consist of hydrogen and oxygen	5	-	-	-
	Water consistid of hydrogen and oxygen	-	-	6	-
13	He always eating sandwich for lunch	-	5	-	-
	He always eat sandwich for lunch	14	-	-	-
	He always eates sandwich for lunch	-	-	1	-
18	She does play tennis every week?	-	-	-	11
	She play does tennis every week?	-	-	-	3
	She play tennis every week does?	-	-	-	10
Total		31	41	8	24

Table 1 showed that the errors in simple present tense items number 1, 5, 9, 13, and 18. The students made 31

errors in omission, 41 errors in addition, 8 errors in mis-formation and 24 errors in mis-ordering.

b. Present continuous tense errors

Table 2 the students' errors in present continuous tense

Item Number	Simple Present Tense	Errors			
		Omission	Addition	Mis-formation	Mis-ordering
2	John sleeping right now	13	-	-	-
	John sleeped right now	-	-	2	-
	John is sleepings right now	-	5	-	-
6	I not crying	10	-	-	-
	I am not cries	-	-	1	-
10	They not taking five courses this semester	7	-	-	-

	They are not taked five courses this semester	-	-	6	-
	They are not takings five courses this semester	-	5	-	-
14	John try to improve his work habits	8	-	-	-
	John is tryings to improve his work habits	-	9	-	-
	John is tryes to improve his work habits	-	-	2	-
17	Susan is writing another book this year?	-	-	-	10
	Another book this year writing Susan is ?	-	-	-	3
	Writing Susan another book this year is?	-	-	-	8
Total		38	19	11	21

Table 4.2 showed that the errors in present continuous tense items number 2, 6, 10,14, and 17. The students made 38 errors

in omission, 19 errors in addition, 11 errors in mis-formation and 21 errors in mis-ordering.

c. Present perfect tense errors

Table 3 the students' errors in present perfect tense

Item Number	Simple Present Tense	Errors			
		Omission	Addition	Mis-formation	Mis-ordering
3	Tom has already eating	-	14	-	-
	Tom already eat	5	-	-	-
	Tom has already eated	-	-	5	-
7	Have you see snow before?	14	-	-	-
	Have you seens snow before?	-	1	-	-
	Have you sawed snow before?	-	-	4	-
11	Ann started a letter to her parents last week, but she still not finished it.	8	-	-	-
	Ann started a letter to her parents last week, but she still has not finishes it	-	6	-	-
	Ann started a letter to her parents last week, but she still has not finisheds it	-	-	3	-
15	I met many peoples since I come here in june	9	-	-	-
	I have meetted many peoples since I come here in june	-	-	8	-
19	Into a new apartment they have moved	-	-	-	6
	Have move into a new apartment they	-	-	-	11
	Have they moved into a new apartment	-	-	-	6
Total		36	21	20	23

Table 4.3 showed that the errors in present perfect tense items number 3, 7, 11, 15, and 19. Furthermore, the

students made 36 errors in omission, 21 errors in addition, 20 errors in mis-formation and 23 error in mis-ordering.

d. Present perfect continuous tense errors

Table 4 the students' errors in present perfect continuous tense

Item Number	Simple Present Tense	Errors			
		Omission	Addition	Mis-formation	Mis-ordering
4	It has been rainings all day. It is still raining right now	-	4	-	-
	It been raining all day. It is still raining right now	4	-	-	-
	It has being raining allday. It is still raining right now	-	-	6	-
8	All of the students have not studying hard. Final exams start next week	15	-	-	-
	All of the students have not been studyings hard. Final exams start next week.	-	5	-	-
	All of the students has not been studying hard. Final exams start next week	-	-	7	-
12	I have sitting for two hours	2	-	-	-
	I has have been sitting for two hours	-	11	-	-
	I have being sitting for two hours.	-	-	5	-
16	I have thinking about changing my major	7	-	-	-
	I have been thinkings about changing my major	-	6	-	-
	I has been thought about changing my major	-	-	4	-
20	Has been Anha having a job for three years.	-	-	-	10
	Having a job for three years Anha been has.	-	-	-	6
	For three years Anha having a job has been	-	-	-	4
Total		28	26	22	20

Table 4 showed that the errors in present perfect continuous tense questions number 4, 8, 12, 16 and 20. The students made 28 errors in omission, 26 errors in addition, 22 errors in mis-formation and 20 errors in mis-ordering.

2. Students' Difficulties

The findings of the research presented with the analysis of data collected from the interview the findings answered the second problem statement "What are the factors causing students complexities in learning Reported Speech?" The following questions of the interview related to the

students' opinion in doing the test. Based on the students' answers in the interview, the researcher found that some difficulties in using present tense, those were:

a. The form of present tense

Based on interview, there were 13 students answered that they had difficulty about the form of present tense (46%). Several students argued:

"I can't memorize the pattern, because there are many kinds of tenses"

"I think I don't know the pattern"

"The pattern, I feel difficult to remember all the pattern of tenses"

"I don't know when the verb was add

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ing"

b. Spelling

There were 9 students said that they had difficulty in chose the right spell of the word (32%). They felt confused about the right word. In other hand, they didn't know the right form when the verb has to added *s/es*. Some students argued:

"Sometimes I forgot the right spelling of the word"

"I don't know right word"

"I think I don't know the right verb when we are adding *s/es*"

c. The use of auxiliary 'have/has' and adding -ing

According to the interview, they didn't know about the use of *have/has* and when the verb has to add *ing* (22%). The students used the wrong auxiliary verb by putting "*has*" as the auxiliary verb for plural subject and "*have*" as the auxiliary verb in singular subject. This statement was answered by 6 students. The students argued:

"I don't know when we are using *have/has*"

"I don't know the rule about the use of *have/has*"

Discussion

1. Students' errors

Error analysis is a method that researchers may use to check for grammatical errors produced by students, particularly when utilizing tenses in narrative prose. "Error analysis is a vital source of information for instructors," (Hourani, 2008, p. 16). It offers information on students' mistakes, which aids teachers in correcting students' faults and improving their teaching effectiveness." It means that error analysis is critical since the researcher has to know what kinds of mistakes students make while

utilizing the present tense.

Duley et al (as cited in Rosdiana, 2018) divide error into four types namely omission, addition, misformation and mis-ordering. In this research, the researcher found out the students of SMAN 7 Enrekang, especially in XI MIPA 2 made errors in using present tenses such as simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tense and present perfect continuous tense in multiple choices test. The students made errors categorized 133 in omission (34,2%), 107 in addition (27,5%), 61 in misformation and (15,6%) and 88 in mis-ordering (22,7%).

For omission errors, most of the students have a tendency for omitting '*s/es*' in the verb and omitting '*did/does as to be*' in negative sentences of simple present tense. Meanwhile, in present continuous tenses, they omitted '*am, is, are as to be*' in the sentences. Then in present perfect tense, they omitted '*have/has as to be*' and the adding of '*ed*' in regular verb. Furthermore, in present perfect continuous tense, they omitted '*has/have*' and '*been as to be*' in the sentences.

For addition errors, most of students added '*ing*' in the verb and '*s*' in negative sentences of simple present tense. While, in present continuous tense they added '*s*' in the verb that has added '*ing*'. Then, in present perfect tense they added '*ing*' in the verb and '*s*' in '*V3*'. Then in present perfect continuous tense, they added '*s*' in the verb, which has added '*ing*' and '*have*'. Meanwhile, it has added by '*has*'.

Moreover, especially for misformation errors, most of students made wrong in the verb they added '*es*' in the word '*snow*' whereas it should add '*s*' not '*es*' in simple present tense. Furthermore, they also used '*V3*' in the

sentences, while it should use 'V1+s/es'. Then, in present continuous tense they added 'ed' in irregular verb and choose 'I is' in the sentences, whereas it should be 'I am' and added 'es' in the word 'try' become 'tryes', it should be ' tries' if it used in simple present tense.

Then, in present perfect tense they added 'ed' in irregular verb and added 's' in the verb. Then, in present perfect continuous tense, the students used 'being' not 'been'. Furthermore, for mis-ordering errors, most of students did not give their attention to the punctuation '?' and '.', they arranged the sentences without seeing the marker of the sentences.

Based on the previous research from Wati (2011), the researcher found that the result from Wati (2011) An error analysis is important to describe what kinds of error that students made because every students have different mistake when they made a paragraph and how students could learn from their mistake as a English teacher Error analysis is important to correct their method when they taught.

Moreover, the researcher found the dominant errors in Wati (2011) are omission and mis-ordering with percentages 28,9%. Then, the dominant errors after omission were mis-formation and addition. This research's finding from Wati (2011) was same with this finding which omission was dominant errors but the highest errors after omission was addition mis-ordering and mis-formation.

The correlation between result of researcher's finding and previous study, there were discussed the importance of error analysis are this method could help English teacher found the next media or technique to teach writing and help students if they found difficulties in learning tenses. This theory was

supposed by the previous study that described about error analysis had important role to find a solution by the teacher about what they to do next in explaining the material especially learning tenses.

2. Students' difficulties

The students tend to make the problems in learning present tense. According to the interview, there were three difficulties faced by student in using present tense. The problems faced by student was the form of present tense (46%), spelling (32%), and the use of auxiliary (22%).

The first was the form of present tense. As we knew that present tense had four kinds (simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tense and present perfect continuous tense). The students argued that they cannot memorize the form or the pattern. This finding was in line with Widayanti (2008) which showed that a common error that students often made in writing simple present tense was incomplete application of rules or forms. The other research stated that

The second difficulty was spelling. they had difficulty in chose the right spell of the word. They failed to write some word correctly. In other hand, they didn't know the right form when the verb has to added s/es. For example, in the test number one, student chose *snowes* instead of *snows*. In the test number nine, some students chose *consisted* instead of *consisted* (the right word). This finding was in line with Rizka (2017) which showed that spelling is the one of problem faced by students in using present perfect tense.

The third problem was the auxiliary. Students didn't know about the use of have/has and when the verb have to add *ing*. The students used the

wrong auxiliary verb by putting "has" as the auxiliary verb for plural subject and "have" as the auxiliary verb in singular subject. This finding was in line with Ratmanida (2019) which stated that the use of auxiliary verb is the one of student's difficulty in using simple present tense.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of this research, the researcher put the conclusion that the students of SMAN 7 Enrekang still find it difficult to understand tenses, especially the present tense. This is evidenced by an in-depth analysis of the results of student answers that show: (1) Students mostly made error in omission and then it was followed by addition, mis-formation and mis-ordering. The students made errors categorized 133 in omission (34,2%), 107 in addition (27,5%), 61 in mis-formation and (15,6%) and 88 in mis ordering (22,7%); (2) Based on interview, there were three difficulties faced by student in using present tense. The problems faced by student was the form of present tense (46%), spelling (32%), and the use of auxiliary (22%).

Suggestion

Based on the results of this research, the researcher gave some suggestions: (1) For the teacher, based on the result of this research that the students were still difficult in using tenses. Therefore, the researcher suggested that the teacher has to increase their strategies in teaching tenses to motivate the students in learning tenses. (2) The researcher suggested to the next researchers who want to analyses the difficulties in tenses that they can make research in detailed about tenses, not only in present tenses, but more about the other tenses.

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