

The Abilities in Applying Verb Tenses in Writing Sentence Using Mixed Model

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Abstract: This research intends to identify the students' ability and the common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences. The research tries to identify students' ability in applying verb tenses in their writing and to explain the problems found in using verb tense in their writing. This research used mixed methods. The participants of the research were the second year students of English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru. The findings showed the students' ability categorized "less". The data also reveals that the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentence was classified in two groups; they were the students' common problems with verb tenses such as errors in time expresses, duration of the action, and aspect of the action beyond its time and the problems influencing the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences such as lack of work on exercises, lazy to review the lesson, and do not have enough time to study verb tenses in the class.

Key words: Abilities, Mixed model, Verb Tenses

1. Introduction

Language is as a means of communication. By using a language people can communicate with each other. Using a language is not as simple as the people thought because there is a set of rules that must be followed, which is called grammar. Actually grammar is used to mean the structure of a language. It is an essential part of the use of language process, both in spoken and written language.

Having a good grammar system of a language, learners will be helped in delivering their ideas, messages and feelings either to the listeners or readers. Language without grammar would be disorganized and causes some communicative problems, like verb tense errors in writing. Hence, learners need to know the grammar system of language they can communicate with others in order to transfer the message properly. Furthermore, writing is the ability to write productive language by mastering grammar can make the learners' writing is clearly. Most of the students find difficulties in applying verb tenses in their speaking and writing in the end errors happen in their sentences. The learners often make errors in learning English, especially when they try to arrange sentences or use verb tenses in their writing. As a result, they will write sentences ungrammatically.

Similarly case happen in FKIP Unilak, based on this study preliminary observation most of the students still make errors in grammar system especially errors in verb tenses. The second year students of English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru often make errors in applying verb tenses when they write a sentence or paragraph. So, regarding on the problems above, the researcher is interesting to conduct a

research under the topic "*The Abilities In Applying Verb Tenses In Writing Sentence Using Mixed Model at the Second Year Student English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru*".

2. The Problems Influencing the Students' Abilitys

The students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences is much or less influenced by the problems in learning English. There are two facets of the affective domain of second language acquisition. The first of these is the intrinsic side of affectivity: personality factors within a person that contribute in some way to the success of language learning. The second facet encompasses extrinsic factors-social cultural variables that emerge as the second language learner brings not just two languages into contact but two cultures, and in some sense must learn a second culture along with second language [4].

2.1 Personality Factors

These factors come from the students themselves that consist of physiological aspect such the affective domain, motivation, the neurobiology of affect, and measuring affective factors (Brown 2000: 143-167).

The Affective Domain

The affective domain is the emotional side of human behavior such as self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety, empathy, and extroversion.

Motivation

Motivation is probably the most frequently used catch-all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task such as instrumental and

integrative orientation, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The Neurobiology of Affect

In the area of neurobiology, including neuroanatomy, neurochemistry, and neurophysiology, informs several areas of interest for language acquisition studies, for example, plasticity, affect, memory, and learning.

Measuring Affective Factors

The measurement of affective factors has for many decades posed a perplexing problem.

2.1 Socio-cultural Factors

The factors consist of social and environmental such as attitudes, second culture acquisition, social distance, and culture in the classroom (Brown 2000: 180-189).

Attitudes

Attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings. These attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of culture in which one is living.

Second Culture Acquisition

Culture is a deeply ingrained part of the very fiber of our being, but language is the means for communication among members of a culture. Culture is the most visible available expression of that culture.

Social Distance

The concept of social distance emerged as an affective construct to give explanatory power to the place of culture learning in second language learning.

Culture in the Classroom

Geert Hofstede in Brown (2000: 190) states that who used different conceptual categories to study the cultural norms of fifty different countries such as individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity or femininity

3. Methodology

In doing this research, the researcher conducted mixed methods; quantitative and qualitative research. The researcher used mixed method based on the research questions in this research. Mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study to understand a research problem. In this research, the researcher used the explanatory research as a type of mixed methods research. An explanatory

design (also called a two-phase model) consists of first collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. It means that in the mixed methods, the researcher collected quantitative first in the sequence and this was followed by the secondary qualitative data collection[6].

This research was conducted for two months; starting from November to December 2010 at the second year students of English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru. The subject of the research was all individuals becoming participants they were the students at the second year students of English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru. Also, some lecturers of structure have been involved in this study. The second year students at English Department FKIP UNILAK consist of two classes: class A and Class B. The population of the second year students was 60 students. Because the number of participants in this research was not big, the researcher involved all participants.

TABLE I

The Number of First Year Students at English Department FKIP UNILAK

Class	Male	Female	Total
Class A	5	25	30
Class B	8	22	30
Total	12	50	60

The researcher used mixed methods research because the two research questions of this study pertinent to the first: the inquiry of numbers using statistics in this case was dealing with the students' ability and the second: the data also relied on the views of participants regarding to the problems that they faced particularly within the scope of this study.

Regarding to this study, the researcher used quantitative method to identify students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences. Also, the qualitative research has been used to find out the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in their writing sentences. In short, this research was to identify the phenomena of English verb tense errors among the second year students at English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru.

Table. I
Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Data Collection and Types of Data

Quantitative Research		Qualitative Research	
Methods of Data Collection	Data	Methods of Data Collection	Data
Instrument (Test)	Numeric Scores	Open-ended Interview	Text data from transcribed interview
		Open-ended questions on questionnaires	Text data from questionnaire

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 The Ability

The ability of the second year students English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru in applying verb tenses in writing sentences can be generally categorized into less. Table IV above shows that the total of the students' scores in verb tenses test is 3098, mode of the students' scores is 52, median of the students' scores is 50.6, variance of the students' scores is 261.54, and standard deviation is 16.17. The scores range from a low of 20 to a high of 84, a range of 64 points. The average of mean score of the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence is 51.63. It could be identified that the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences is lower.

4.2 The Students' Common Problems

In this research, the researcher conducted interview and questionnaire to know the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences. The interview has been recorded on December, 13th 2010 and the questionnaire has been conducted on December, 31st 2010. The interview and questionnaire conducted to have qualitative data. To conduct the interview, the researcher divided the students into ten groups in which the participant of each group was chosen randomly. The participant represents the group that he or she was. In short, the researcher interviewed the participant of each group only. The researcher interviewed not only the students but also the lecturer of English structure. In conducting questionnaire, the researcher used open-ended questions on questionnaires. The open-ended questions on questionnaires consisted of ten questions. The interview and questionnaires have been given to answer the second research question in this research. The interview and questionnaires were about the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences. The data taken from interview and questionnaire have been classified into two groups as in the following:

4.2.1 The students' common problems with verb tenses

Based on the interview and questionnaire, the researcher found some problems that the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences such as the students were difficult in present perfect tense, future tense, and could not differentiate between present and past tense. It could be identified that the students are not able to control verb tenses such as time of the actions and events take place so that they often make error in time express, errors in duration of the action, and errors in aspect of the action or event beyond its time. The students' problems in English verb tenses are identified as in the following:

The students make errors in time expresses

It indicates that the students are not able to control when the action is happening such as in the present, past, and future time. For example; the word *argued* in the sentence *Jenifer and her friend argued about something in the class yesterday*. Based on the sentence above, it can be identified that the action was happening and completing in the past time, not in the present or in the future time. So, identifying time expresses is important in writing sentence to give clear information to the reader.

The students make errors in duration of the actions

It indicates that the students are not able to analyze the other information such as duration of the event or action is happening. For example; in the sentence *John was doing his homework when the earthquake started*, this sentence indicates that duration of the actions or events was happening in the past time. For instance, duration of the events or actions is necessary in writing sentence.

The students make errors in aspect of the actions or events beyond its time

It means that the students are not able to identify some characteristics of an events or actions beyond its time. For example; in the sentences *Mr. Boy teaches English everyday* and *Mr. Boy is teaching English right*

now. The first sentence shows a habitual action and the second sentence shows a temporary action that is happening now. In short, aspect of an event or action is important in writing sentence.

The students' common problems in mastering verb tenses above is similar to Lane and Lange's (1993: 4-5) that there are two problems that the students commonly have in using verb tenses in writing sentence; an incorrect verb tense has been used in a sentence or clause and the verb tenses within a piece of writing (one or more paragraphs) are inappropriately shifted from one time frame to another.

4.2 Personal Problems Influencing the Ability

Referring to the interview and questionnaire, the researcher found some problems influencing the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences such as the students seldom work on exercises pertinent to verb tenses in the class and at home, they are lazy to read grammar books especially about verb tenses, they do not have enough time to study verb tenses, they seldom discuss verb tenses with their friends, they are shy to ask the lecturer, and they are lazy to review the lesson of verb tenses at home. In short, these problems were influencing the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences.

The students are lack of working on exercises in the class and at home

It can be analyzed that the students are less to work on exercises pertinent to verb tenses inside or outside classroom so that it can influence the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence. The students will be good at writing sentence if they work on more exercises about verb tenses in the class or home to increase their ability in English verb tenses.

The students are lazy to read grammar books especially about verb tenses

It can be analyzed that the students are lazy to read grammar books at home and they think it is boring to do it so that their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence is lower than the students who often read grammar books.

The students do not have enough time to work on exercises of verb tenses in the class

It can be identified that the students need more time to work on exercises in the class. The time is one of the aspects that influence the students' ability in learning English. The students will be good in applying verb tenses in writing sentence if they have enough time to work on some exercises in the class especially in structure class.

The students seldom discuss verb tenses with their friends

It can be identified that the students seldom discuss verb tenses in the class or at home with their friends. With discussion the students can share with their friends about their problems in applying verb tenses so that it can improve the students' ability in applying verb tenses.

The students are shy to ask the lecturer

It can be identified that some of the students are not confident to ask more explanation to the lecturer so that they do not understand about verb tenses. It can influence their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences. As English students, they have to ask more explanation the lecturer to increase their ability in English verb tenses.

The students are lazy to review the lesson of verb tenses at home

It can be concluded that the students do not care about English verb tenses so that their ability in verb tenses is lower than their friends who always review the lesson of verb tenses at home.

5. Discussion

As clarified previously, this research was carried out in two classes. This research was conducted at the second year students of English Department of FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru. The classes were chosen due to the verb tenses problem faced by the students in writing sentences. The purposes of this research were to identify the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences and to explain the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences.

In accordance with the data analysis done during this research, the researcher found that the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences is categorized into less. It was supported by the result of the students' test, interview, and questionnaire.

5.1 The Identification of the Students' Ability

Based on the presentation and analysis of the research data above, the finding of the whole participants (60 students) led the researcher to infer that the ability of the second year students of English Department of FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru in applying verb tenses in writing sentences is categorized into less. The total of the students' scores in verb tenses test is 3098, mode of the students' scores is 52, median of the students' scores is 50.6, variance of the students' scores is 261.54, and standard deviation is 16.17. The scores range from a low of 20 to a high of 84, a range of 64 points. The average of mean score of the students'

ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence is 51.63.

5.2 The Students' Common Problems

Referring to the data taken from interview and questionnaire, it can be classified into two groups; they are the students' common problems with verb tenses and the students' personal problems influencing their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences.

The first, the students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences such as the students were difficult in present perfect tense, future tense, and can not differentiate between present and past tense. It could be identified that the students are not able to control verb tenses such as time of the actions and events take place so that they often make error in time express, errors in duration of the action, and errors in aspect of the action or event beyond its time.

The second, the students' personal problems influencing their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences such as the students seldom work on exercises pertinent to verb tenses in the class and at home, they are lazy to read grammar books especially about verb tenses, they do not have enough time to study verb tenses, they seldom discuss verb tenses with their friends, they are shy to ask the lecturer, and they are lazy to review the lesson of verb tenses at home. In short, these problems were influencing the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences.

6. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis explained in chapter IV, the researcher described some conclusions as in the following:

There are 60 students of the second year students of English Department FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru who participated in this research. From these 60 students can be seen that the total of the students' scores in verb tenses test is 3098, mode of the students' scores is 52, median of the students' scores is 50.6, variance of the students' scores is 261.54, and standard deviation is 16.17. The scores range from a low of 20 to a high of 84, a range of 64 points.

The average score of the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence is 51.63. It means that the students' ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentence is categorized into less.

The students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences can be classified into two groups; they are the students' common problems with verb tenses and the students' personal problems influencing their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences.

The students' common problems in mastering verb tenses in writing sentences is the students are not able to control verb tenses such as time of the actions and events take place so that they often make error in time express, errors in duration of the action, and errors in aspect of the action or event beyond its time.

The students' personal problems influencing their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences such as the students seldom work on exercises pertinent to verb tenses in the class and at home, they are lazy to read grammar books especially about verb tenses, they do not have enough time to study verb tenses, they seldom discuss verb tenses with their friends, they are shy to ask the lecturer, and they are lazy to review the lesson of verb tenses at home.

The researcher concludes that the findings on students' common problems in mastering verb tenses correspond to their ability in applying verb tenses in writing sentences, particularly the students at the second year students of English Department of FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru.

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