

Freshman of Grammar: Students' Ability in Using Simple Present Tense at Batanghari University

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki kemampuan siswa di Universitas Batanghari Jambi dalam menggunakan Simple Present Tense. Metode yang di gunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kuantitative research dengan menggunakan pendekatan survey. Smample penelitian terdiri dari 88 orang siswa dengan menggunakan purposive sampling. Data di ambil dengan menggunakan test pilihan ganda. Peneliti menggunakan total rata rata untuk mengetahui persentasi mahasiswa dalam menggunakan simple present tense. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, peneliti menemukan bahwa sebagian besar mahasiswa dalam menggunakan simple present tense (do dan does) rata rata adalah (41%) and di bawah rata rata adalah (20%). Terutama , kemampuan mahasiswa dalam menggunakan simple present tense di atas rata rata (35.2%) dan kategori rata rata yaitu (35.2%). Di samping itu, kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan am, is are adalah di atas rata rata (31.8%) dan kategori di bawah rata rata adalah (28.4%). Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini maka dapat di simpulkan bahwa kemampuan mahasiswa Unbari Semester pertama adalah sedang dalam menguasai present tense. Bedasarkan hal ini maka disarankan kepada para pengajar khususnya Bahasa Inggris (grammar) untuk memberikan tidak hanya penjelasan serta materi tetapi juga mengajak mahasiswa berpartisipasi aktif baik lewat diskusi maupun perorangan.

Kata kunci: kemampuan, *simple present tense*, *grammar*

INTRODUCTION

Language has been analyzed as being composed of skills, They are listening, speaking, reading and writing, Harris (1975). They are lacked for reach two objectives, those are oral language production and written language production. In addition of four language skills, English also has some language sections or components. As mention the following below are: grammar vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling. One of the important sector that should be mastered by the students is grammar. It must be understood by the students in both targets such as oral language production and in written language production. Beside has four language learning skills, English also has some language components.

Undoubtedly, structure or grammar is a wide study which has many aspects about role of using language. Grammar explains about sentence pattern. In grammar students can find any concept of using tenses in English. Furthermore, through grammar students can get important rules of using modals, auxiliaries, prepositions, adverb of frequency and so on. It can be said that the grammar of a language covers all of grammatical

rules which have important function in constructing sentences.

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2007), grammar is a describe that relation if the categories of grammatical form are clearly defined in the first place, and defined separately from the kinds of meaning that they may or may not sometimes express. Thornburry (1999) says that "grammar is description of the rules for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey". Larsen-Freeman (2001) claims that grammar is a system of meaningful structures and patterns that are governed by particular pragmatic constraints. The other definition Altenberg and Vago (2010), describes that grammar is simply labeling words to an understanding of how the differences pieces of a sentence fit it together. Ansell (2000) claims that grammar is an analysis of the various function performed by the words of the language, as they are used by native speaker and writers.

Grammar instruction is one of the most difficult issues of language teaching. Grammar which in composed of tenses which an indispensable part of a language and it constitutes the bone of the body language. So, if we want to master English, we should know about the

grammar and also the tenses. Making the students to interested in learning is not easy, especially learning about grammar. It is challenge to the lecturer who teach English. It has many reason of the lack of students to interested in grammar. They have no idea how to understand about it. There are some tenses in grammar, such as simple present tense, past tense, future tense, present progressive, and so on. Another statement about grammar comes from Greenbaum & Nelson (2002). They state that the several applications of grammatical study. First, recognition of grammatical structures is often essential for punctuation. Second, a study of one's native grammar is helpful when one studies the grammar of a foreign language. And then, knowledge of grammar is a help in the interpretation of literary as well as nonliterary texts, since the interpretation of a passage sometimes depends crucially on grammatical analysis. Last, a study of the grammatical resources of English is useful in composition. From that statement, it is clear that grammar is important to be mastered by the students in order to be able to express their feelings, emotions, and to be able to use English appropriately in many aspects.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher will be interested in analyzing students' ability in using.

Limitation of the Problem

Based on background that mention above, the problem in this research will be limited by analyzing students' ability in using simple present tense and the use of am, is are and do does.

Formulation of the Problem

The researcher is focused on the freshman students' ability in using simple present tense at Batanghari University.

The Purpose of the Research

In line with the question above, this research aimed to analyze the students' ability in using simple present tense.

Benefits of the Research

The significant of this research is expected to give valuable information whether the students can mastery the use of simple present tense or not. The result of this research showed the students'

grammatical problems in learning simple present tense, especially in use am, is are and do, does. This research will be useful for the students as the learner and for the lecturer as the researcher. The following benefits as the describe below:

1. The students train their ability in grammar, especially about the use of "am, is, are" and do, does" in simple present tense.
2. The English lecturer know about the grammatical problems about the use of "am, is are and do, does" in simple present tense of their students. They also know what she or he should maintain, and what she or he should improve in their teaching and learning process.
3. The researcher will added the knowledge and can apply the knowledge during taught in college and as the experience for the researcher in phase the self construction as a good and professional lecturer. And it can enlarge the knowledge in teaching English and also becomes a basic consideration and information to the further research in the future.

Review Of Related Literature

Tense

Definition of Tense

The term of "tense", derived from the Latin word "tempus", the meaning is "time". The word of tense stand for a verb form used to express a time relation. According to dictionary of contemporary English (1987), Grammar means that an arrangement or organization, the way in which parts are formed into whole for instance the structure of a sentence. The synonymous their form and are combined into sentence. Widdowson in Al-mekhlafi and Nagaratman (2011) claims that ".....grammar is not constraining imposition but a liberating force; it frees us from dependency on context and a purely lexical categorization of reality." Grammar constitutes all competent language user knows about rules of constructing consist of finite member of rules with which it is possible to create an infinitive member of sentence. Harmer (1991). According to Chalker (1998), tense is a form taken by a verb to indicate the time at which the action or state is viewed according. In talking about tense, It is not only focused on the time of the situation that is being described, but also focused on English mark tense.

Form and Pattern

Before the teacher introduce any new language the teacher should have analyzed the form that he/she wants to teach. One of teacher's job is to show the new language is formed-how the grammar works and how it is put together. One way to do this to explains the grammar in detail.

In this research the word pattern refer to the form of modal auxiliary, in other words, the arrangement of words which form a correct sentence.

Language Learning

Learning a foreign language is, of course, different from learning one's mother tongue. There are three types of language items, which are introduced to learners, first, phonological items which cover sound of the language. Second, lexical items, which discuss frequent repetition and exposure, and adopt memorization strategies when learning the lexical items. Third, structural items which include the rules of constructing sentences. Hubbard(1998).

In learning English, the learners have difference ability in comprehending the structural items. The learners are given the chance to apply their knowledge in grammar based on their ability.

“The aim of teaching grammar should ensure that students are communicatively efficient with grammar they have at their level. We may not teach them the finer points of style at the intermediate level, but we should make sure that they can use what they can use what they know”
Jeremy Harmer (1999).

The Definition of Simple Present Tense

Ansell (2000) claim that simple present tense is refer to actions which occurs at regular intervals.

e.g. They come here everyday
Ani buys a candy one a week

We take holiday every year
The simple present is also use in stating general truths.

e.g. Cat has four legs

Ball is round

Borobudur is the biggest temple in Indonesia

The Simple Present Tense of the Verb To Be

A conjunction of a verb is a list showing the different forms a verb may take. When a verb is conjugated, it is usually accompanied by all of the personal pronouns which can act as a subject of a verb. Thus, a conjunction can show the different forms a verb must take when it is used with different subjects. Such as:

I
You
They
We
He
she
It

Furthermore, the simple present of the verb to be is conjugated as follows:

I am You are

They are We are

He is She is It is

Alexander (1998) says that simple present tense has seven basic uses. We use it for:

1. Permanent truths: Summer follows spring
2. The present period' (= 'this is the situation at present'): My mother works in a hospital
3. Habitual actions: I have breakfast at 7:45, I sometimes go to cinema
4. Future references (for timetable, etc.): The new movie begins at 8:00 next Saturday evening.
5. Observations and declarations: I hope so, It says here that... I love you. I hate him
6. Instructions: first you weight the ingredients
7. Commentaries: Ronaldo serves to Messi

Krohn (1971) describes about the following rule in simple present tense, as the following below:
Am , is , are for examples:

1. Substitutes adjective (green, old, new, etc.) I the proper position. For example:
Green The book is green
Old The man is old
New They are new students
2. Substitutes noun phrases in the proper position in statements. For example:
The pencil The pencil is new
The watch The watch is new

3. Substitutes adjective (green, old, new, etc.) in the proper position (at the end) in questions. For example:

Green	Is the book green?
Old	Is the book old?
New	Is the book new?
4. Substitutes noun phrases in the proper position in question. For example:

The pencil	Is the pencil new?
The watch	Is the watch new?

Negative of simple present tenses :

- A. The simple present tense: third person singular does not/doesn't + infinitive; other person do not/don't + infinitive. Contractions are usual in speech:
He does not/doesn't answer the letter
They do not/don't play football
- B. Negative contraction
The auxiliaries be as follows:
Am not, 'm not
Is not, isn't or 's not
Are not, aren't or 're no

Interrogative for questions and request:

- A. Simple present tense interrogative :does he/ she/ it +infinitive; do I/you/we they+ infinitive. Does Akhmad enjoy parties?
- B. Contractions of auxiliary used in the interrogative
Am, is, are. After how, what, ho, where, why, these can be contracted as shown belows:
What's the colour of the book?, where're yu?

Be as an ordinary verb

- Be to denote existence, be + adjective
- A. Be is the verb normally used to denote the existence of, or to give information about a person or thing:
- Tom is a carpenter. The dog is in the garden
Bali is an island. Gold is shine
- B. Be is used to express physical or mental condition:
- I am cold She is sad
- C. Be is used for age:
- How old are you? I am ten years old
How old this temple? It is 500 years old.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Research

The research was designed as a quantitative research by using survey approach. Johnson & Christensen (2008) explains that quantitative research is research that relies primarily on the collection of quantitative data. In relation to definition above, this research was attempted to describe the student's mastery with regard to their comprehension toward I simple present tense. Descriptive research is a research that answer question concerning the current status of the

subject of the study (Gay,1987). In accordance to analyze students' ability in using simple present tense .

Population and Sample

Population

Croswell (2012) claims that population is a group of individuals who have same characteristic. In addition, Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) say that population is totally of all the value which possible, result of counting or calculating or measurement, qualitative and also quantitative hit

the certain characteristic from all clear and complete corps member is which wish learned from the nature. Johnson & Christensen (2008) claim that the sample which is a set of elements taken from a larger population.

The population consist of four classes of law faculty. From the four classes the researcher takes one class by using Purposive sampling technique.

No	Class	Students
1	A	27
2	B	28
3	C	28
4	D	40

Sample

A number of students is taken as sample which represent the population. In this research, the sample is selected by using purposive random sampling technique. Fraenkel & Wallen claim that the purposive sampling is different from convenience sampling in that researchers do not simply study whoever is available but rather use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information.

Instrument of the Research

Test

Test Specification

Present Tense	Sentence Form	Number of Item	Total Item
Simple Present Tense by using "am, is, are"	(+) Affirmative	3,10,12,13,19,20,30	7
	(-) Negative	8,16,24,2,29,33	6
	(?) Interrogative	1,5,7,21,23,31,32	7
Simple Present Tense by Using "do, does"	(+) Affirmative	9,11,14,25,35,36,37	7
	(-) Negative	2,15,27,28,34,40	6
	(?) Interrogative	4,6,17,18,22,38,39	7

Validity of the test

Christensen and Johnson (2008) say that validity is the accuracy of the inferences, interpretations or actions made on the basis of the test scores. Creswell (2011) clarifies that the extent to which an instrument measure what it should be measure.

Reliability of the Test

Johnson and Christensen (2008) claims that reliability refers to the consistency with which it measure whatever is measured. To measure the reliability of this test, the test will distribute for one class in law faculty.

In this research the researcher will use a test as an instrument to collect the data. Hitchcock and Highes (1989) claims that test is a set of questions and exercises used to measure the achievement or capability of the individual or group. In this research the researcher will take the test from some books at the student's level then modified them. Furthermore, some of the them have added by the researcher. The test consists of 40 items, the forms of the test are in the form of multiple choices, the score of each number was 2,5 points. For correct answer and 0 point for the incorrect answer. They were 20 items of simple present of "am, is are" and 20 items of "do does". Each of tense consist of affirmative, negative and interrogative sentence forms.

Technique of Data collection

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008) there are several ways to collecting the data such as questionnaire, observation, interview and test. In this research, the researcher will use to test to collect data. The form of the test is multiple choice test, that divided into three part they are part A for positive sentences, part B for negatives sentences and part C for interrogative sentences

Method of Data analysis

R

$X = \frac{R}{N} \times 100$

N

In Which:

X= the ultimate result of the students' score

R= the correct answer

N= the number of test items

(Surakhmad,1990)

$T \times 100\%$

X = -----

$$Ns \times 100$$

In which:

X = the percentage of the students who answer correctly each item

T = the average of students who answer correctly each form

Ns= The number of students
(Sudjana, 1998)**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS****Students Ability in Comprehending Present Tense**

No	Score Range	Classification	Number of Students	
			Number	%
1	91-100	Excellent	-	-
2	81-90	Above average	6	6.8%
3	71-80	Average	36	41%
4	61-70	Below average	18	20.4%
5	51-60	Insuffient	11	12.5%
6	41-50	Poor	17	19.3%
7	Less than 40	Very poor	-	-
Total			88	100%

Discussion

The findings of the research were discussed in this sub chapter. After analyzed the data, the researcher found that the ability of the freshman students in Batanghari University in using simple present tense based on the data showed that generally classified as average (4%) and below average category (20.4%). The fact can be seen from the result of the score distribution of the test at table 14 which showed that a half of them scored more than or equal to 70.

In particularly, students' ability in using simple present tense belonged to above average as

many as 31 students (35.2%) and average category as many as 31 students (35.2%). A common problem among ESL/EFL students in using simple present tense when referring to something happening now. EFL/ESL students' problems were using the do auxiliary correctly. To recap briefly, learners frequently forget to insert do in questions and negatives, and or to inflect do and the main verb correctly (De Capua, 2008). His statement regarding this matter can be seen from the percentage of incorrect answers of students about the usage of do auxiliary on the test items as the table below

Number of Incorrect Answer of do Auxiliary Item

Kind of Present Tense	Sentences Form (do auxiliary)	Test Items	Number of Incorrect Answer	Average of Incorrect Answer for Sentence Form
Simple Present Tense	Negative	Item no 16	27	24 Students (27%)
		Item no 24	22	
		Item no 29	22	
		Item no 33	25	
		Item no 7	22	
	Interrogative	Item no 21	45	25 Students (28%)
		Item no 23	33	
		Item no 24	24	

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis from the freshman of Batanghari University, the researcher wants to present the conclusions. Based on the research findings written in previous chapter, researcher concludes that generally, the majority of students' ability of freshman in Batanghari

University in using simple present tense classified as average (41%) and below average category (20.4%). This conclusion is based on the calculation of finding from the test that the students' ability in using simple present tense.

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