

Students Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense in Narrative Text at Tenth Grade of Senior High School 8 Muaro Jambi

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the levels of difficulty faced by tenth-grade students at Senior High School 8 Muaro Jambi in using simple past tense within narrative texts. The research used a quantitative descriptive research design with purposive sampling. 28 students from class XE 4 were taken as participants. The researcher used a test as an instrument. The findings reveal that the students fall into 4 categories: Very Poor, Poor, Moderate, and Good levels. 13 students in the "Very Poor" level, and 10 students in the "Poor" level. It indicates difficulties in using simple past tense. Students performed better in answering Regular verb questions than Irregular ones. The mean score that obtained is 26.43. The standard deviation is 18.72, indicating a relatively high degree of variability. The highest score obtained is 62.5, the lowest is 0. The spread of scores suggests a wide range of individual differences, suggesting heterogeneity in performance within the sample.

Keywords: *Level of difficulty, narrative text, simple past tense*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking, writing, listening, and reading are the four language skills in English. These abilities are linked together, and mastery of one facilitates the growth of the others. Writing and reading, for example, go hand in hand since writing skills can be improved through reading comprehension. Speaking and listening are also related since good listening can lead to better speaking. According to Sadiku (2015), there are four language skills in language learning, they are reading skill, writing skill, listening skill and speaking skill. The four skills play a vital role in the task of learning any language. For successful English learning, the four skills should be mastered to be used effectively.

Sadiku (2015) also has the same opinions about the importance and the connection between the listening skill and speaking skill, saying that the listening skill and speaking skill are highly connected. Proficiency in those two skills is important for the effectiveness of oral communication. Sadiku also had an opinion on the reading and writing skills, saying that the two skills are connected. This is similar to the relationship between speaking skill and listening skills. If the

mastery of listening and speaking skills leads to effective oral communication, then the mastery of reading and writing skills leads to written communication. Learners need to be stimulated gradually to the gradual difficulty of reading and writing materials to help the learners develop their skills.

At the high school level, one of the texts that is used in teaching is narrative text. The narrative text is often used in teaching, especially at the tenth-grade level. Narrative text is a kind of writing that tells a tale or describes a sequence of events. Characters, a setting, a plot, and a point of view are usually included. There are a number of studies that concentrate on teaching English by using texts as the media, narrative texts included. According to Lukens (2004), a narrative text is a story that tells a sequence of events in a logical order, with causes or experiences linked together.

At the tenth grade of senior high school, one of the most important aspects of learning English is the knowledge of grammar. Grammar is important because it helps students write engaging and grammatically correct texts, such as writing narrative text which requires the

knowledge of how to form a base verb into the past verb which is required in narrative text. Understanding grammar also helps the students in understanding text. Without the proper knowledge of grammar, students will have a hard time in answering tests. Students who have strong grammar knowledge will be able to organize ideas coherently and according to the grammar rules. According to Hadfield et. al. (2008), A grammar serves as a description of a language system, revealing the principles governing the arrangement of words in sentences, their combinations, and the alterations in word forms to convey varying meanings.

Simple Past Tense is used in writing a Narrative text. Simple Past Tense is used to describe an event that started and ended at the time before the present time. Adelaide (2014) also stated a similar definition, saying that the past simple tense is a tense that is used to talk about something that started and ended in the past. It is one of the most commonly used tenses in English because it is used to indicate something that has already happened. Mastering this tense is essential for students to effectively communicate stories, anecdotes, and personal experiences and therefore write a better narrative text.

Based on findings from observations the researcher had during the Field Training Practice in the seventh semester in 2023, the researcher discovered that the tenth-grade students of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi were not aware of how the tense forms of irregular and regular verbs differ in simple past tense. For example, during an assignment where the students were required to change the base form (V1) of verbs into the past forms (V2), most students confused the use of the suffix “-ed” by putting it on irregular verbs such as the word "sleep," which is supposed to be written in the past tense form as "slept", is changed by students to "sleped" although the word “sleep” is not a regular verb. Another

example is writing “studyed” instead of “studied”, which means that they do not know that when a regular verb ends with the letter “Y”, then it must be changed into the letter “I” before adding the suffix -ed. All of these mean that they do not understand the difference between the irregular and regular verbs and how they are different as the past verb.

Another difficulty that students of the tenth grade of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi face is in using the past “to be” was and were. For example, in the same assignment as mentioned above where the students are required to write the appropriate verb according to the context provided, many students still confused the use of ‘was’ and ‘were. Such as by writing “She is busy”, using ‘is’ after the subject ‘she’ which is the V1, not V2. The other example is by writing ‘they are.’, which means that they do not know the appropriate ‘to be’ for the subject ‘they’ in the past tense, which is supposed to be “they were...”.

Therefore, the researcher conducted this research entitled "Students' Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense in Narrative Text at Tenth Grade of Senior High School 8 Muaro Jambi". The researcher will conduct a test in the form of a fill-in-the-blank narrative text and requires the changing of the verb from the base form into the past form to find out the level of difficulties of the tenth-grade students of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi in distinguishing the simple past tense in narrative text.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE Difficulties

Difficulty is a state in which a student faces challenges in natural learning, stemming from factors such as threats, obstacles, or distractions during their studies, according to Djamarah (2011).

Similarly, Mayor (2009) stated that difficulty is an issue or challenge, a factor that creates problems. It is characterized

by being something that is not easily accomplished or understood, requiring effort and comprehension. This means that when someone faces an obstacle or problem, this can be called as a difficulty.

Based on the definitions above, the researcher summarized that difficulties are challenges or problems that are faced by a learner. When a learning process is hindered, it means the learner is facing a difficulty. In the case of this research, difficulty refers to a learner's difficulties in learning English language as a foreign language.

Difficulties in Language Learning

Learning a new language is not an easy task to be done, especially if the language is completely foreign to the learner. For example, an Indonesian citizen who tries to learn English will face difficulties in their learning process because English is not an officially accepted national language.

According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the process of learning a second or a foreign language is not a simple task. Learning a new language is commonly associated with the feeling of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt and apprehension. As part of the learning process, grammar is an aspect of English language that has to be learned by the learners. Additionally, according to Hamdani (2011), difficulties in language learning are factors that make language learning difficult. The causes can be internal factors or external factors.

Based on the definitions above of difficulties in language learning, the researcher summarized that difficulties in language learning are factors that hinder the learners from learning their objective to learn the proper rules of English grammar.

In this research, the students' scores are categorized based on the Likert scale. According to Jamieson (2017), Likert scale used in questionnaires, that is designed to measure people's attitudes,

opinions, or perceptions. Subjects choose from a range of possible responses to a specific question or statement.

Table 1
Criteria of Level of Difficulties

Score Interval	Description
0-20	Very Poor
21-40	Poor
41-60	Moderate
61-80	Good
81-100	Very Good

Based on Likert Scale

In this research, the researcher used Likert Scale in determining level of learning difficulties to find out the level of learning difficulties that students face in using simple past tense in narrative text.

Difficulties in Using Simple Past Tense

In the Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1985) claimed that the process of language acquisition and progress happens when a learner comprehend language input that is slightly more advanced than their current level of knowledge. In relation to difficulties in language learning, especially in using simple past tense, difficulties happen when a learner still cannot comprehend the next level of knowledge in a language. Meaning that when a learner cannot progress, then it is the result of a difficulty that they face.

In using simple past tense, Chan (2016) claimed that there are 5 problems that students face. They are problems in learning the forms of simple past tense, problems in learning the usage of simple past tense, problems in using temporal adverbials or keywords, lack of past tense concepts (L1 influence, cultural differences), and problems in forming interrogative and negative sentences. Chan (2016) further broke down the first three problems into subcategories. Below are problems faced by learners and their subcategories:

1. Problems in learning the form of simple past tense

Chan (2016) made subcategories for this problem as follows: Problems in learning Regular and irregular forms, Problems in learning Irregular forms, problems in learning pronunciation, problems where learners are not aware of the presence of verbs.

2. Problems in learning the usage of simple past tense

Subcategories of this problem are as follows: problems in deciding when to use the simple past tense, for getting to use the simple past tense, confusion between past and other tenses, and inconsistency in using the simple past tense.

3. Problems in using temporal adverbials or keywords

Subcategories of this problem: the problem of not using temporal adverbials or keywords, problem of over-reliance on temporal adverbials or key words.

4. Lack of past tense concept (L1 influence, cultural differences)

5. Problems in forming interrogative and negative sentences

Based on the above, the researcher summarized that there are 5 difficulties in using the simple past tense, they are problems in learning the forms of simple past tense, problems in learning the usage of simple past tense, problems in using temporal adverbials or keywords, lack of past tense concepts (L1 influence, cultural differences), and problems in forming interrogative and negative sentences.

Simple Past Tense

In order to effectively analyze the difficulties faced by students in using the simple past tense in narrative texts, it is important to first establish a clear understanding of simple past tense itself. This section explores the key features and usage rules of the simple past tense,

providing a foundation for the following analysis.

According to Declerck (2006), the past tense is a tense that is used to describe a situation that occurred in the past and has stopped in the present time. Additionally, Thomson et. al. (2018) defined simple past tense as an action that has been completed in the past. As a sentence the example of simple past tense is: "I already drank my coffee".

Based on the definitions above, the researcher summarized that simple past tense is a tense that is used to describe an event that started and ended in the past.

Najafi (2023) explained that the function of the simple past tense is to be used to show an action that happened at a particular point in time in the past, be it as close as a moment ago or as distant as a hundred years ago. Simple past tense is not only used to describe an action but also the state of things in the past.

Najafi distinguished between simple past tense's functions as the description of action and the state of things. Below are example of each functions:

1. To describe an action

Example: *She went to the market yesterday.*

2. To describe a state of things

Example: *I was a student.*

Vince (2011) argued that there are three basic uses of simple past tense. The first one is to tell about an event that finished in the past at a definite time. Second, simple past tense is used in narrative telling. Third, simple past tense is used to tell about past habits or routines, usually followed by a time expression. Vince also explained that there are two other uses of simple past tense such as to tell about a very recent events without mentioning time expression and in conditional sentence when saying "It's time".

According to the explanations above, the researcher concluded that simple past tense is used to tell about an action or the state of things that happened

in the past. Simple past tense is also used to tell about events in the past in the narrative way. In this research, the researcher focuses on Vince's explanation that simple past tense is used in narrative telling. Due to that, the researcher uses Narrative Text as one of the variables in this research.

According to Stevanus et. al (2021), there are three structures to construct simple past-tense sentences. The first one is to say positive statement, the second is to say negative statement and the last one is to construct a question / an interrogative sentence. Furthermore, there are active and passive voices in simple past tense.

In simple past tense, the object in the sentence can be in the form of time markers. Thomson et. al. (2018) explained that one of the uses of simple past tense is to explain an event that happened in the past at a definite time, therefore, it is also used when the time of the event is given. These are called markers. These markers can be words or phrases such as: yesterday, last week, a month ago, in 2023, a long time ago, etc.

Verb Forms Changes

According to Thomson et. al. (2018), there are two forms of verbs that are used in simple past tense, they are the Regular Verb and Irregular Verb forms. The form of verbs that are used in the simple past tense is the past verb or also known as the Verb 2 or abbreviated as V2. The forming and changing of the base verb into the V2 depends on the type of verb that is being used in the sentence, which is the Regular or Irregular verbs. The followings are the definitions and examples on the use of both types of verbs:

1. Regular verbs:

The first type of verbs is regular verbs. They are verbs that have pattern. According to Thomson et. al. (2018), a regular verb is formed by adding "-d" or "-ed" suffixes to the infinitive of the verb.

Example of regular verbs and their changes:

1. *pull* (V1) – *pulled* (V2) – *pulled* (V3)
2. *spare* (V1) – *spared* (V2) – *spared* (V3)
3. *carry* (V1) – *carried* (V2) – *carried* (V3)

In example one, the suffix -ed is added to the base word "pull" to form the verb 2 and verb 3. Meanwhile, in example two the suffix -d is used after the base word. The base form of "spare" ends with letter E, which means that the suffix -d is used. In example number three, the base word end with the letter 'Y'. When a regular verb ends with the letter Y, the letter Y is changed into "I" before adding the suffix -ed or -d.

Regular verbs generally have pattern, which is by adding the suffix -ed or -d after the base word, depending on the letter at the end of the word. The changes of verbs in regular verbs are more predictable compared to the irregular verbs.

2. Irregular verbs:

The second type of verb used in simple past tense is Irregular Verbs. According to Thomson et. al. (2018), irregular verbs are verbs that have varying forms in their simple past forms. Additionally, no other difficulty from learning the irregular verbs other than the fact that they have to be memorized. Irregular verbs are verbs that have unique past tense forms and do not have exact patterns. The first / base, the second / past and the third / past participle forms may have completely different forms.

Example of irregular verbs and their changes:

1. *think* (V1) – *thought* (V2) – *thought* (V3)
2. *go* (V1) – *went* (V2) – *gone* (V3).

In example number one, the second and third forms have the same word, but they are different from the base word. Meanwhile, in the second example all of the forms have different words.

The changes of forms in irregular verbs are unpredictable, which means that each forms have to be memorized

separately. When unsure, a learner should check the dictionary for reference.

Narrative Text

According to the syllabus of Kurikulum Merdeka that is used at SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi. Narrative text is one of the materials that are taught to the tenth grade students. Narrative text is taught at the second semester. As stated in the subchapter above, Vince (2011) stated that one of the functions of simple past tense is for narrative telling.

Narrative text is essentially a written form designed to convey stories or depict a series of events for the reader's entertainment or information. According to McCormick (2023), Key characteristics of narrative text include the predominant use of past tenses to create a chronological framework, employing adverbials of time for structural clarity and flow, integrating adjectives to add depth and vividness to descriptions, and utilizing noun phrases for detailed portrayals. Past tenses establish a sense of time and context, while adverbials of time provide temporal structure. Adjectives enhance descriptions, and noun phrases contribute to detailed storytelling.

In formal terms, narrative text serves a dual functions: the first is to entertain and, the second is to educate or convey moral lessons. Its social functions extend to entertaining, providing information, and contributing to educational endeavors, making narrative texts valuable components of cultural and literary expression, explained McCormick (2023).

Narrative text is written according to certain structure. They are orientation, complication, resolution and reorientation / evaluation. The structures are used to decide the order of the text written, according to McCormick (2023). Below are further explanations of each parts of the structure:

1. Orientation

The orientation serves as the foundation for the narrative, addressing the

fundamental questions of "who," "where," and "when." It allows readers to identify the characters and the temporal and spatial context of the story. It introduces the background of the story written.

2. Complication

This part is about the challenges encountered within the narrative, divided into three phases:

- Rising action: The point where problems start to surface.
- Climax: The pinnacle of the predicament.
- Falling action: The gradual easing of tension as a solution begins to unfold.

3. Resolution

The resolution marks the phase in the story where conflicts or issues introduced earlier find resolution. It may involve characters overcoming obstacles, discovering solutions, or undergoing personal development. This section ties up loose ends, offering readers closure and revealing the impact of the narrative's events on the characters.

4. Reorientation or Evaluation

Reflection, also known as assessment, is an optional narrative component that reflects on the story and its occurrences, reinforcing the moral or thematic lesson. Typically appearing at the story's conclusion, it provides a summary or commentary on the characters' experiences and the consequences of their actions. This section aids readers in comprehending the narrative's significance, prompting them to ponder the intended message or lesson conveyed by the author.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed the quantitative research design. According to Given (2008) Quantitative research design is a design that uses quantitative data in the form of numerical data like statistics, percentages, and more. Additionally, this research used descriptive approach.

Nawawi (2019) defined the descriptive method as an approach to

problem-solving that involves investigating and portraying the current state of a research subject or object (such as an individual, institution, or community) based on observable facts or the actual situation. This research employed a quantitative descriptive research approach to analyze the difficulties faced by the tenth-grade students at Senior High School 8 Muaro Jambi. The research utilized a test as the instrument, where students are required to fill 40 blank underlines in a narrative text with the appropriate form of verb 2.

Narrative text is a material that is taught at the tenth grade in Kurikulum Merdeka because the curriculum that is used at the tenth grade of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi is Kurikulum Merdeka or Independent Curriculum. According to Suyadi (2023) The English textbooks for SMA/SMK/MA that are currently in use are an implementation of the Independent Curriculum that has been proclaimed by the Central Government (Kemenristekdikti, 2022).

According to Sugiyono (2012), a population refers to a generalized domain comprising objects or subjects possessing specific qualities or characteristics defined by the researcher for investigation, with conclusions drawn after the investigation has been done.

The population in this research is the total students at the tenth grade of SMA N 8 Muaro Jambi in academic year 2023/2024. There are seven classes at the tenth grade of SMA N 8 Muaro Jambi and the total populations are 228 students.

According to Creswell, J. W. (2014) sample is a subset of the population that is being studied in a research. It is a smaller group of individuals or objects that is selected from the population in a way that is representative of the population as a whole. The sample in this research is students from XE 4 in academic year 2023/2024. According to Kelly (2010), Purposive sampling is employed to choose participants who are most likely to provide

relevant and valuable information. Purposive sampling is used by the researcher in determining XE 4 class as the sample of this research. The total number of students from XE 4 class is 32 students.

According to Arikunto (1992) Instrument of the research is the means in order to collect the data that is used by the researcher. This study used a test as the instrument. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), a test is a tool that is used to determine a person's aptitude, expertise, or output in a certain field.

The test used in the research is the test where the students are required to fill in the blanks in the provided narrative text by changing verb 1 that is used as the clue that is indicated in bracket symbols, into past tense verbs (Verb 2). The items of simple past tense are 40 items. Twenty items are regular verbs and the other 20 items are irregular verbs. Irregular verbs include auxiliary verbs.

The item types of the test is explained in the table below:

Table 2.
List of Question Items Classification

Type of Item:	Regular Verbs	Irregular Verbs
Question Numbers:	3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39	1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 25, 26, 29, 30, 34, 36, 37, 40
Total Item per Type:	20	20
Total Questions	40	

The data of this research is collected by giving test to the students. The research participants are instructed to read the narrative text provided by the researcher. In the narrative text, there are 40 blank spaces that must be filled with the appropriate verb 2, according to the base form provided as the clue in brackets.

The question items are divided into two categories that test two aspects of difficulties in learning tenses.

The question items of the test is divided into 2 types, the first type which consists of 20 question items are changing verb 1 into regular verb 2, the second one which also consists of 20 question items are changing verb 1 into irregular verb 2. There are 3 data that the researcher is proposing, the first is the subjects' overall difficulty in changing verb 1 into verb 2. The second data is the subjects' difficulties in changing verb 1 into regular verb 2, the third data is the subjects' difficulties in changing verb 1 into verb 2 irregular verbs. The subjects of the research are given 60 minutes to answer the test.

Further explanations of the steps of data collection in this research are explained down below:

1. Proposing the research proposal
2. Asking permission to conduct research at the setting of the research. In this case, the setting is SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi
3. Collecting data. In this case, the researcher uses a fill-in-the-blank test with 40 items.
4. Analyzing the data. The collected data are analyzed and calculated.
5. Drawing conclusion and interpretation. The analyzed data are interpreted based on the criteria of level of difficulties based on the Likert Scale.

Quantitative descriptive refers to a research approach that involves the collection and analysis of written or oral data to describe, summarize, and interpret the characteristics of a population or phenomenon, according to Given (2008). This method focuses on quantifying variables and providing a statistical summary of the data without necessarily testing hypotheses or making inferences about a larger population. It is commonly used to understand the basic features of a dataset, identify patterns, and describe the main points of interest.

In consideration of the research aims, this research's design is descriptive quantitative research. According to Gay et. al. (2012), It is used to examine quantitative data in relation to statistics or numerical data in order to characterize, explain, forecast, or control the phenomena that is the subject of this study in order to help the respondents and the researcher to gather data, the researcher administers a test to the students in the study.

This descriptive analysis is used to describe the frequency of respondents' characteristics grouped by gender, age, occupation, highest level of education and occupation. The formula of descriptive analysis according to Sugiyono (2012). The data that have been analyzed are then interpreted using the Likert Scale criteria of score.

After analyzing the data quantitatively, the researcher grouped the data based on the Likert scale. After that, a descriptive analysis of the test results was done. Meaning, after the data have been analyzed in the form of numbers or analyzed quantitatively, the test results are then re-analyzed, summarized and written in the form of narrative description. After that, the researcher concluded the level of students' difficulties in using the simple past tense.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher conducted the data collection on the 26th of January 2024. The research was conducted at Class XE4 of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi. The instrument of data collection was a fill-in-the-blank test with 40 questions in total. 20 questions in changing verb 1 into regular verb 2 and 20 questions in changing verb 1 into irregular verb 2. During the data collection, there were only 28 students present compared to the previously proposed 32 students which were the total students of Class XE4. After the data was collected, the researcher gave a score to the submitted test results and calculated the score and percentage. After

that, the means and standard deviation were calculated. Then, the result was classified into 5 levels of scoring based on the Likert Scale.

Based on the findings of the student's test, the number of questions that the students were able to answer correctly in answering regular verbs was 249 questions out of the total 560 among all students, which is 44.46% of the data. Furthermore, the number of questions in answering regular verbs that the students answered incorrectly was 311 or 55.54% of the data, which is more than a half of the total regular verb questions. Meanwhile in using Irregular verbs, there were only 47 correct answers out of the 560 total Irregular questions. It accounts to only 8.39% of the data. On the other hand, there were 513 incorrect answers in answering Irregular verb questions out of the 560 questions. This is 91.61% of the data. Meaning that the majority of Irregular questions were answered incorrectly. In the overall calculation, 26.43% of total questions were answered correctly and 73.57% were answered incorrectly.

From the test that had been given, it was found that the lowest score the students obtained was 0 while the highest score was 62.5. Three students obtained the lowest score, while two students obtained the highest score. The average overall score of the correct answer from the sampled class is 26.43. The average correct answer score is 26,43% which was obtained by adding up all the scores obtained by all 28 students and dividing by the amount of participants in the sampled class. In other words, the total value of the sample class is 740 and divided by the number of students, 28, then the average value (mean) was obtained, which is 26,43.

Percentage of Students' Difficulties

Below is the table presenting the scores of the total questions based on the subjects' correct answers. The correct answers are calculated into scores. The

scores were used to determine the percentage of learning difficulty levels. The difficulty levels are concluded based on Likert Scale scoring.

Based on the data, it was found that the standard deviation obtained from determining the value of the sample data is from the average value of the sample. The standard deviation value obtained based on the data above is 18,72. The difference in the value of the standard deviation from the mean or average value is 7,71.

From the data that has been obtained, the average value of the sample class is 26,43. By using Likert scale to group the scores, the majority of participants in the class XE4 obtained the level "Very Poor". Followed by the level "Poor" in the second position. This shows that there is a high difficulty level that the students face in using simple past tense, especially in using past verbs. However, it should be noted that the participants had higher scores in answering regular verbs compared to irregular verbs.

Levels of Students' Difficulties

Based on the analysis of the data, the students of Class XE4 of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi obtained different score ranges in using verbs of simple past tense. The data that have been presented in the research findings showed that students of Class XE4 obtained different grades of scores, starting from Good to Very Poor. Below are more detailed explanations of each level of grades that the students obtained:

1. Good

Based on Likert Scale intervals, the Good level includes students that get correct scores between 61 to 80. Based on the total score of the students' answers, there were 3 students that reached the Good range. They showed the highest overall correct scores compared to others.

2. Moderate

Based on Likert Scale intervals, the Moderate level includes students who get correct scores between 41 to 60.

Based on the total score of the students' answers, 2 students reached the moderate level. They showed medium overall correct scores compared to others.

3. Poor

Based on Likert Scale intervals, the Difficulty level includes students that get correct scores between 21 to 40. Based on the total score of the students' answers, 10 students faced difficulties in the Poor level. They showed lower overall correct scores compared to others.

4. Very Poor

Based on Likert Scale intervals, the Very Poor level includes students that get correct scores between 0 to 20. Based on the total score of the students' answers, 13 students faced difficulties at the Very Poor level. They showed the lowest overall correct scores compared to others. The Very Poor level is also the range of scores that is obtained by students the most, which is 13 students.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the tenth-grade students of XE4 Class have difficulties in using verb 2, especially in changing verb 1 into verb 2, whether it is regular or irregular verbs. This finding is in line with Chan's (2016) theory that students face problems in learning Regular and Irregular forms.

Students' Difficulties in Changing Verb 1 into Verb 2

Based on the findings, it was found that from the total question items, 527 items were left without any attempts to change the verbs into verb 2. For example, many students wrote **Has** instead of its past verb form which **Had**. Other examples include **Will, Become, Reward, Come, Busy** etc. See appendix for details.

The findings above is in line with Thornbury's (2003) opinion on the internal difficulty in learning a language. It is said that lack of vocabulary is one of many difficulties faced by language learners.

This means that the students' inability to change verb 1 into verb 2 is connected to their lack of vocabulary knowledge.

Based on the findings, the score of regular verbs are significantly higher than the score of irregular verbs. Below are more detailed explanations of the difference in difficulty levels based on changing verb 1 into regular and irregular verbs.

Regular Verbs

Based on the findings, it was found that a total of 43 failed attempts were made by the total subjects in using the suffix -ed or -d in changing verb 1 regular verbs into verb 2. Examples of such failure as below:

Student 10 wrote **Announced** instead of **Announced**. In this case, the student made a mistake by adding a double E letter at the end of the word.

Student 19 wrote **Pileed** instead of **Piled**, which is the same mistake that Student 10 also made.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that students' failed attempts to use the suffix -ed on regular verbs are connected to their lack of vocabulary knowledge. This is in line with Thornbury which says that lack of vocabulary is one of the difficulties in using simple past tense.

Irregular Verbs

Based on the data, students face higher levels of difficulty in changing verb 1 into irregular verbs compared to changing into regular verbs. The highest level that students obtained was only at Moderate level. Below are explanation of each levels:

1. There were 3 students that obtained score range at Moderate level, which means that they face medium difficulty in changing verb 1 into verb 2 irregular verb.
2. 2 students obtained score range at Poor level, which means that they face

higher difficulty in changing verb 1 into verb 2 irregular verb.

3. 23 students obtained score range at Very Poor level, which means that they have face the highest difficulty in changing verb 1 into verb 2 irregular verb.

Most of the students were at Very Poor level in changing verb 1 into verb 2 of irregular verbs. Most of these students made no effort or failed to change verb 1 into verb 2 by using the rules of regular verbs. Examples of the most common mistakes in changing verb 1 to verb 2 irregular verbs:

Cry	>	Cryed
Become	>	Becomed
Find	>	Finded
Study	>	Studyed

Based on the data, 151 items of irregular verbs were incorrectly assigned the suffix -ed by the students. For example, Student 19 wrote **Taked** instead of its past verb which is **Took**; writing **Builed** for **Built**; or **Comed** for **Came**. This prove that Thornbury's (2003) opinion which says that lack of vocabulary is a cause of difficulty. Additionally, this also prove Chan's (2016) theory that students face problems in learning Regular and Irregular forms.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher made conclusions to answer the aim of the research. The conclusion was made according to Likert Scale as score range:

1. In terms of distribution of scores, the students of Class XE4 of SMAN 8 Muaro Jambi are at different levels. The scores are divided into four levels: Very Poor, Poor, Moderate, and Good levels. The majority of students (13 out of 28) fall into the "very poor" level, followed by 10 students in "Poor" level, totalling 23 students performing lower than the Moderate, Good and Very Good levels. Having low scores indicate that students face difficulties

in using simple past tense in narrative text.

2. Based on the data, the students performed better in answering Regular verb questions than Irregular verb questions. Among 296 correct answers from all participants, there are 249 correct answers from answering Regular verb questions, while there are only 47 correct answers in answering Irregular verb questions.
3. The mean score that the students obtained is 26.43. It represents the average total score across all participants. This suggests that, on average, participants scored around this value. Additionally, the standard deviation is 18.72, which indicates a relatively high degree of variability in the scores. Moreover, the highest score obtained by a participant is 62.5, while the lowest score is 0. The spread of scores from the mean and between the highest and lowest scores are substantial, suggesting that there is a wide range of individual differences in the data. It suggests heterogeneity in performance within the sample.

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