



THE SECOND YEAR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL DIFFICULTIES IN PRESENTING SPOKEN EXPOSITION TEXT

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Abstract

This research aimed to describe students' difficulties in presenting spoken exposition text, limited to the use of simple present tense. This research was a descriptive research, conducted in May-June 2017 at MAN 2 Padang. The population was Grade XI of Science program students of MAN 2 Padang. The sample was 38 students chosen by using stratified random sampling method. The research data was the clauses with grammatical mistakes found in the transcript of students' speaking, obtained by a speaking test. The result of the research showed that the most frequent difficulties of verbal clauses using simple present tense were subject-verb agreement (51%) and the use of auxiliary verb (18%). The most frequent difficulties of nominal clauses using simple present tense were no verb (71%) and no subject (13%).

Key words: *Grammatical difficulty, Speaking, Exposition text*

A. INTRODUCTION

In studying English, students study the four skills and some aspects of the language to make them able to communicate in English. One of them is speaking. Speaking is a productive skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning (Bailey, 2005, p. 2). In other words, speaking is not merely about saying words verbally, but the words should be arranged systematically in order to have meaning.

The importance of speaking is indicated by its appearance within the curriculum. Based on Kurikulum 2013 SMA/MA, students study some monolog texts; one of them is exposition text. Exposition text is used to present a logical argument from a particular point of view (Dirgeyasa, 2016, p. 118). It involves comparing opposite point of view, analyzing the arguments, and concluding with an overriding opinion or conclusive argument. Later in their college or working life, the students will talk about an issue and will often be asked to give their

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arguments verbally. Thus, exposition text is a type of monolog text that likely will be more useful for students in the future. The communicative purpose of exposition text is to prove the validity of an idea or point of view, by presenting sound reasoning, discussion, and argument that thoroughly convince the reader; or to persuade the readers or listeners that something is the case, to analyze, or to explain (Dirgeyasa, 2016, p. 117). The text structures of exposition text begin with a topic, arguments, and then concluding sentences. In exposition text, there are some language features that need to be used. One of them is the use of simple present tense.

In studying the texts, students should meet some outcomes demanded by the curriculum. First, the students should be able to understand the purpose, the text structure, and the language features of the text. Second, the students should understand both written and spoken form of the text and be able to create the text, both in its written and spoken form by paying attention to its purpose and text structure and by using the language features of the text.

The outcome of the curriculum demands that the students are able to speak. In order to speak well, there are three components of speaking that should be studied. They are vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. In fact, Bygates says in Zeind, Vega, & Gallegos that “grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary knowledge of the language are required in oral production” (2010, p. 593). Grammar is included as the component of speaking because it enables people to construct sentences. By knowing how to build and use certain structures makes it possible to communicate more successfully (Swan, in Richards & Renadya, 2002, p. 151). Thus, grammar is needed even in speaking skill.

Based on the result of informal interviews with some senior high school English teachers at MAN 2 Padang, it is found that generally, many students often use wrong vocabulary and do not even know how to say something in English. Consequently, they use Indonesian vocabulary instead. The teachers also mentioned that most students have problem in making English sentences. Sometimes, some of them arrange the words in their sentence reversely, or they have wrong word orders. Then, they often use many fillers as they are thinking about what to say. It is caused by either that they do not know the grammar rule or they know the rule but hindered because they do not know the English vocabulary. In short, the students have problem in grammar while speaking.

These problems should be solved as soon as possible and should be prevented to occur in the future. If these problems go on, it will bring disadvantages for the students. For instance, it may reduce the quality of students speaking and affect their performance inside or outside the classroom. Thus, it is necessary to find out the students’ grammatical difficulties in presenting spoken exposition text in order to know what difficulties faced by the students related to the grammatical features of exposition text; one of them is simple present tense.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was a descriptive research which aimed to describe the students’ grammatical difficulties in presenting spoken exposition text. According

to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2007, p. 205), descriptive methods set out to describe and to interpret. It is not aimed to test a certain hypothesis, but sets out to make a careful description of educational phenomena (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003, p. 290).

The data was gathered by using two instruments: speaking test and recording. A speaking test used in this research was a test in which the students were asked to give their arguments about an article. There were 6 articles that had been prepared, taken from Teen Vogue online magazine Volume 3, 2017. The students were asked to read and understand the article then to give their arguments about it. They were being recorded while presenting their speaking. After that, the transcript was made.

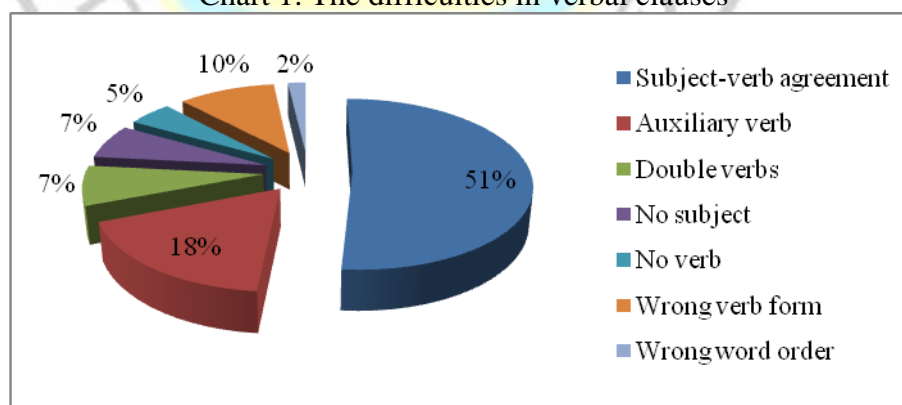
The data was analyzed through the following steps. First, all clauses using simple present tense were listed down. Then they were marked as (+) if the clause was correct and (-) if the clause was wrong. Also they were noted as verbal (V) or nominal (N). After that, the description of the mistakes was given. The analysis was done per clause by referring to the theory of simple present tense as the indicator.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

The findings were determined on the basis of one of grammatical features of exposition text: simple present tense. The difficulties were sought from two kinds of clauses: verbal and nominal. The finding shows that there were several grammatical difficulties done by the students in using simple present tense both in verbal and nominal clauses. As shown in the following chart:

Chart 1: The difficulties in verbal clauses

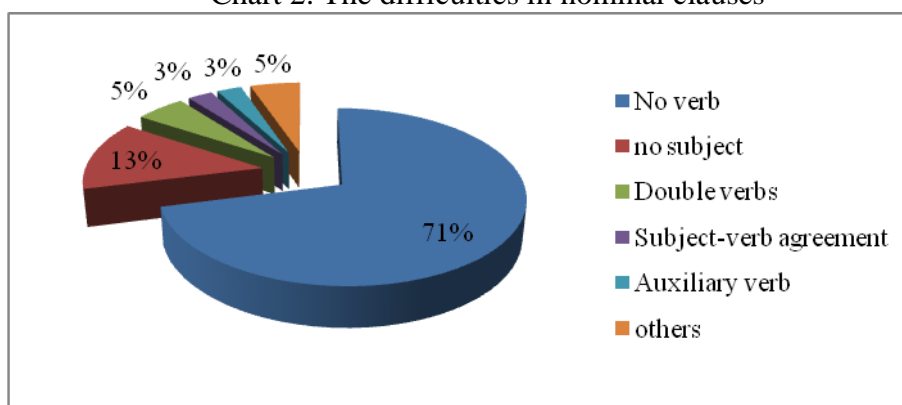


In using verbal clauses of simple present tense, there were some difficulties identified. As shown in chart 1, the difficulties that appeared in verbal clauses were subject-verb agreement, sequentially followed by auxiliary verb, wrong verb form, double verbs, no subject, no verb, and wrong word order.

From chart 1, it could be seen that the most frequent difficulties of verbal clause using simple present tense were subject-verb agreement (51%) and auxiliary verb (18%). In subject-verb agreement, most students did not use –s form of the verb while the subject was third-singular person even though the

subject should agree in number with the verb: singular subject takes the –s form of the verb, and plural subject takes the simple form of the verb. In auxiliary verb, the students either did not use auxiliary verb in negative clause or passive voice clause or used wrong auxiliary verb in their clauses.

Chart 2: The difficulties in nominal clauses



In using nominal clauses of simple present tense, there were some difficulties identified. As shown in chart 2, the difficulties that appeared in nominal clauses were no verb, sequentially followed by no subject, double verbs, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary verb, and others.

From chart 2, it could be seen that the most frequent difficulties of nominal clause using simple present tense were no verb (71%) and no subject (13%). In nominal clause, *to be* (am, is, are) acts as the verb of a clause. However, there were many clauses that did not have verb. Whereas, verb is a necessary element of a clause. A nominal clause also requires a subject. However, there were some nominal clauses that had no subject.

2. Discussion

Based on the findings, there were many grammatical mistakes about simple present tense in students' speaking, indicating that the students had grammatical difficulties in presenting spoken exposition text. This implied that students still have problem understanding the language features of the text and to use it in speaking skill. This finding is in line with a research done by Fuadi (2013) whose result showed that students got problem in grammar in speaking. This research also showed that students still have problem in grammar but in more detail categories; that there was grammatical difficulties in using simple present tense in presenting spoken exposition text. Grammar has been one of component of speaking that became obstacle for students in speaking. Because of some reasons, the students could not apply grammar rule in speaking English. One of the reasons is that English grammar is different from grammar of Bahasa Indonesia.

Moreover, the findings showed that the most frequent mistake in using simple present tense was about subject-verb agreement. There was 51% mistakes about subject-verb agreement found in this research with the most mistakes are related to the omission of suffix –s in the verb with singular subject. This result is

relevant with the research conducted by Susanto (2016) whose result showed that the most error in subject-verb agreement was omission. As stated by Warriner (2008, p. 148) that the number of a verb should agree with the number of its subject. Singular verbs should be used for singular subjects, and plural verbs should be used for plural subjects. However, most clauses in the transcript did not have correct subject-verb agreement. Most of them did not use –s form of the verb for singular subject, instead they just used the basic form of the verb. This is probably happened due to the differences between verb in English and Bahasa Indonesia. In Bahasa Indonesia, the verb does not change form even if the subject is singular or plural. In other words, there is no subject-verb agreement in Bahasa Indonesia. For example, the verb “go” will become “goes” if the subject is singular; however, in Bahasa Indonesia the verb is the same, which is “pergi”, no matter what the subject is.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

There were students' grammatical difficulties in using simple present tense in presenting spoken exposition text. In making verbal clauses using simple present tense, the students had difficulties with subject-verb agreement (51%), and in the use of auxiliary verb (18%). On the other hand, in making nominal clauses using simple present tense, the students have difficulties in using verb (no verb) (71%) and subject (13%).

Some suggestions were as follows. It is necessary for the English teachers in high school to know what factors hinder their students from speaking English, especially in grammar. It is advisable for English teachers to develop their teaching method, especially in speaking and grammar so that it can improve students' understanding about speaking and grammar skill. This can help the students to be better speakers.

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