



THE EFFECT OF USING SUBSTITUTION DRILL ON STUDENTS' TENSES MASTERY

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the use of substitution drill technique to improve the EFL students' mastery of tenses - simple present and past tense - which were most of students still got into trouble in learning them, particularly when to put of verb-s/es, verb 1, verb 2 and also the auxiliary verb such as do, does and did. Therefore, this study is an endeavor to examine effectiveness of applying the substitution drill to enhance the junior high-school students' mastery of tenses. This study applied pre-experimental design employing one group pretest and posttest. The participants consisted of 27 the third-grade students' SMP Amanna Gappa Makassar, South Sulawesi. The researcher used t-test analysis to find out whether or not the use of substitution drill can improve the students' mastery of tenses. The result of the study indicated that there were differences between students' achievement of tenses mastery in pretest and posttest. It was proved by the value of t-test was greater than the value of t-table ($22.24 > 2.056$) with the level of significance ($P = 0,05$) and degree of freedom ($N-1 = 26$). The mean score of the posttest (71.62) was higher than the mean score of pretest (52.44). It may conclude that the implementation of the substitution drill as a teaching technique of tenses in SMP Amanna Gappa could improve the student's mastery of the tenses.

Key words: Tenses, Substitution Drill, EFL

INTRODUCTION

Grammar plays an important role in learning a language because it is a basic insight to understand the language. Having good knowledge of grammar brings good understanding of speaking, reading, listening and writing. Conversely, poor knowledge of grammar will lead misunderstanding in all the language aspects (Zhong-guo, & Min-yan,

2007). Moreover, the acquisition of and learning grammar is able to improve the students' proficiency and accuracy and facilitate them to comprehend fully its syntactic system; it is thus as a supplement of the fluency development (Eli Hinkel & Sandra Fotos. 2002). Hence, teaching grammar should have a crucial place in students' learning English in order to enable them to communicate well.

Tenses are essential elements of learning grammar. They are to indicate the relation of time influencing the forms of verbs in English sentence. Hornby (1995) explains tense as a verb form or series of verb forms used to indicate the time of the action or state. Angela & Philip (2002) go on viewing it as the grammatical expression of the location of events in time morphologically realized on English verb. Without using tenses correctly, a person's speaking or writing in English will not be understood by other people. This is in line with the idea of Siddiqui (2014) that to build communication better (speaking and writing), you are necessary to master English tenses. The reason is that the tenses assist you acquire the effective communication skills.

Simple present and past are the basic tenses that have the differentiation from either the form of verb or the use of the tenses themselves. Relating to using of the English tenses, most students still get into trouble in learning them. For instance, the students still get confused when to put of the verb; *verb -s*, *verb 1*, *verb 2*, and also to put of auxiliary verbs; *do*, *does*, and *did*. The problems happen due to the fact that English must have a certain different system from that of Indonesian. It is known that every language has its own system. English grammar is certainly different from Indonesian grammar. In Indonesia, a verb appears in the same form in all times or conditions. By adding adverb of time in the sentence construction, it is enough for us to

construct a sentence. It does not matter the verb is in past, present or future. Clearly, in Indonesian, there is no changing of a verb form caused by changing tense. Besides, there is no subject-verb agreement. Therefore, the case becomes a challenge for teachers in teaching them to their students in order that they are able to use them correctly. Indeed, as English teachers, they should render an effective teaching method to teach them.

Enhancing the students' mastery of tenses is no regardless of technique used a teacher in teaching his/her students. There are many language-learning strategies or techniques that can be accommodated in the classrooms' teaching and learning sessions. One of them is a drill technique. An article in BBC English written by Julie (2006) BBC reports that the technique has long been applied in teaching of foreign language. It was a key feature of audio-lingual approaches to language teaching, which placed emphasis on repeating structural patterns through oral practice. Drills are useful in foreign language teaching in that they give students the opportunity to perform what they have learnt (Mart, 2013). Richard, *et al*, (1992) are of opinion that this technique is generally applied to practicing students' pronunciation or sentence structure in learning a language through repetition or practice. One of the principles of the method is that language learning is the process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning (freeman,

2000). She goes on saying that numerous types of drill or drilling techniques were used by these researchers in their studies. For example; backward build-up or expansion drill, Chain drill, Single-slot substitution drill, Multiple-slot substitution drill, Transformation drill, and Question-and-answer drill. In this study, the researcher used substitution drill

The substitution drill is a drill where one word in an utterance is replaced by another (Brooks in Kholifah2006). Robertson and Acklam (2000) states that it is used to practice a structure which has the different element. In each part of the drill the teacher asks the class or student to change one of the parts of the sentence. It's particularly useful for verb forms. This technique is effective to able to be used by students to develop their rules of a language such as pronoun, preposition, verb, and so forth (Harmer, 1987). Furthermore, such technique provides the students with practice with the rules of the grammar where the purpose is to internalize the structure by practicing the pattern. Therefore, using the technique can accustom the students to construct English sentence correctly particularly in usage of tenses through the practicing (Paulson and Bruder 1986).

Regarding to the above matter, there have been several studies having been carried out in exposure the language-learning benefit using the technique. Maharida (2014), for instance, points out in her study that the technique was effective to improve the

students' pronunciation ability. Another study related to the use of the technique reported by Abdilah (2012). Hemaintains that the implementation of substitution concord drill technique improved the students' comprehension in simple past tense. Furthermore, Pratama (2015) stipulates that the single slot substitution drill could enhance the students' writing skill; the students are able to develop their ideas in making a good descriptive text, to use correct grammar of a simple present tense, use the correct spelling and punctuation, and to get more new vocabularies from the cue that was given by the researcher.

Leaving to the above reasons, this study is an endeavor to examine the effectiveness of the substitution drill application in junior high students as a teaching technique of grammar particularly the tenses usage, present and past tense.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were the third grade students of SMP Amana Gappa, South Sulawesi, consisted of 27 students.

Research design

This study utilized a single-group pretest-posttest design to examine effectiveness of applying the substitution drill.

Instrument

Written test were used in this study – a pre-post test given to that group. The pretest was

given before treatment intended to find out the students' prior knowledge in constructing English sentences, particularly in using of simple present and simple past tense while the posttest was given after treatment for seven meetings intended to measure the students' mastery of tenses achievement.

Data analysis

In analyzing the data having been collected through pretest and posttest, the researcher did several procedures such as scoring the students' correct answer of the test, tabulating the score of the students' test as a result of the test, classifying the students' score into the measurement scale, calculating the mean

scores, t-test, and frequency and percentage of both pretest and posttest using the SPSS Program.

FINDING

This study was done to investigate the extent of the use of substitution drill to enhance students' mastery tenses. The finding of this study is that the result of the given measurements after the treatments indicates a difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest. Table 1 demonstrates the result of rate percentage of the students' pretest and posttest after taught using the technique.

Table 1 Rate Percentage of the Students' Pretest and Posttest

No	Classification	Score	Pretest		Posttest	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Good	90 - 100	0	0%	1	3.07 %
2	Good	70 – 89	3	11.11%	19	70.37%
3	Fair	50 – 69	16	59.25%	7	25.92%
4	Poor	30 – 49	8	29.62 %	0	0%
5	Very Poor	0- 29	0	0%	0	0%
Total			27	100%	27	100%

Table 1 shows that the percentage result of students' pretest was of 27 students, 8 of them (29.62%) got poor, 16 of them (59.25%) got fair, only did 3 students (11.11%) get good, and no student got very good and also got very poor. Whereas the result of students' posttest based on the table is illustrated that of 27 students, no students got very poor and poor, 7 of them (25.92%) got fair, 19 of them (70.37) got good, only did 1 (3.07) student get very good. In sum,

the rate percentage of the posttest was higher than the rate percentage of the pretest.

Table 2 The Mean Score

Test	Mean score
Pretest	52.44
Posttest	71.62

Table 2 shows that the mean score of students' pretest was 52.44, which was categorized as fair. While the mean score of

students' posttest was higher than that of pretest, namely 71.62 which was categorized as good. It means that the mean score rises about 19.18 points.

Furthermore, to compare the mean score of the pretest and posttest, t-test was administered to acquire a significant difference between them. A making-decision rule of the test is that the data differ significantly if the t-test value is higher than t-table. The result of the test is presented as follows:

Table 3 T-test result of students

Variable	T-test	T-table
$X_2 - X_1$	22.24	2.056

Table 3 indicates that t-test value of students' mastering of tenses achievement was higher than that of t-table value so it could be drawn a conclusion that there was a difference between the result of the students' pretest and posttest and it signified that teaching English tenses by using substitution drill technique was to improve the students' mastering of tenses.

DISCUSSION

The use of substitution drill as a teaching technique could enhance students' mastery of tenses as explained in the previous section. The finding of this research support some previous researches (Abdillillah 2012; Amrudin *et al* 2013; Maharida 2014; Sulfiana *et. el* 2015; and Khetaguri & Albay, 2016) that substitutions drill is an effective teaching one to develop not only

the students' speaking ability (pronunciation) but also writing one (tenses).

Related to the use of the teaching technique in this research, it helped students build their insight up to construct English sentences correctly or grammatically particularly in usage of tenses (simple present and past) through the drill. For instance, a teacher gives a sentence to the student and requires them to substitute one or more words in the sentence whether it is subject, verb or adverb of time of the sentence so that in the sentence forms a new structure. As the result of the drill, the students implicitly can understand constructing of sentences, or they become more conscious of the structure of a sentence such as the agreement between subject and verb or between verb and adverb of time. The researcher assumes that the drills render students a good starting point to learn the forms of the tenses and enforce their understanding of structural sentence so that they have sufficient knowledge of the tenses. Drills help learners develop automatic responses. When learners are able to provide quick responses, they will become highly motivated; therefore, their foreign language learning process will get easier (Khetaguri & Albay, 2016). Furthermore, Paulson and Bruder (1986) states that substitution drill technique is one used to provide the students with practice with the rules of the grammar where the purpose is to internalize the structure by practicing the pattern. Robertson and Acklam in

their book "Action Plan for Teachers", a guide to teaching English (2000) further go on explaining that this technique is used to practice a structure which has different elements. In each part of the drill the teacher asks the class or student to change one of the parts of the sentence. It's particularly useful for verb forms. By means of that, students implicitly can understand easily constructing of sentence.

CONCLUSION

The utilization of the substitution drill as a technique of English teaching specializing in teaching tenses enhanced the mastery of students' tenses. In this case that, the implementation of the techniques is able to render a good starting point to learning forms of the tenses and enforce their understanding of structural sentence through drills by guiding the teacher due to the fact that students internalize the pattern by practicing.

SUGGESTION

It is suggested that the English teacher utilize the substitution drill technique, a traditional way in teaching learning process of grammar specializing in teaching tenses as an alternative technique in teaching tenses. Although it is traditional way, but it is very useful to make students understanding structural sentence. In addition, the teacher should also be more creative to provide various teaching technique to improve the students' tenses mastery.

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APPENDIXES

Frequencies

Statistics

		pretest	posttest
N	Valid	27	27
	Missing	0	0
Mean		52.4444	71.6296
Std. Deviation		1.18365E1	1.06848E1
Minimum		30.00	50.00
Maximum		74.00	90.00

Pretest

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30	2	7.4	7.4	7.4
	32	1	3.7	3.7	11.1
	34	1	3.7	3.7	14.8
	38	1	3.7	3.7	18.5
	48	3	11.1	11.1	29.6
	50	2	7.4	7.4	37.0
	52	2	7.4	7.4	44.4
	54	5	18.5	18.5	63.0
	56	2	7.4	7.4	70.4
	58	2	7.4	7.4	77.8
	62	1	3.7	3.7	81.5
	64	1	3.7	3.7	85.2
	66	1	3.7	3.7	88.9
	68	1	3.7	3.7	92.6
	72	1	3.7	3.7	96.3
	74	1	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total		27	100.0	100.0

Posttest

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 50	3	11.1	11.1	11.1
56	1	3.7	3.7	14.8
66	1	3.7	3.7	18.5
68	2	7.4	7.4	25.9
70	6	22.2	22.2	48.1
72	3	11.1	11.1	59.3
74	1	3.7	3.7	63.0
76	2	7.4	7.4	70.4
78	2	7.4	7.4	77.8
80	2	7.4	7.4	85.2
82	1	3.7	3.7	88.9
88	2	7.4	7.4	96.3
90	1	3.7	3.7	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
pretest	27	30.00	74.00	52.4444	11.83649
posttest	27	50.00	90.00	71.6296	10.68481
Valid N (listwise)	27				

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 posttest	71.6296	27	10.68481	2.05629
pretest	52.4444	27	11.83649	2.27793

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 posttest & pretest	27	.926	.000

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 posttest - pretest	1.92E+01	4.4811	0.86238	17.41	20.958	22.25	26	0