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Students' Tenses Mastery and Reading Functional Text Ability: A Case Study

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Abstract

Teaching reading poses a formidable challenge for EFL learners due to the Indonesian educational system's sole emphasis on comprehension and vocabulary exercises, neglecting the cultivation of critical thinking skills necessary for engaging with the text. The objective is to assess students' proficiency in various tenses and their corresponding reading comprehension abilities. This research focuses on a distinct group of 8 students who are distributed among three classes. To obtain a representative sample, the researchers randomly chose 8 students from each class, resulting in total of 8 participants. These students encountered challenges primarily in the areas of grammar, listening, and writing. Based on this scenario, our objective is to establish a connection between the mastery of tenses and the ability to comprehend functional texts. From all the actions we undertook, obtained remarkable outcomes that enhanced their skills. There exists connection among them, indicating the robustness of the three variables. The research findings lead to the conclusion that a positive correlation exists between students' proficiency in tenses and their comprehension of reading functional texts. Put differently, as students' mastery of tenses improves, so does their achievement in comprehending reading functional texts.
Keywords: A case study; tenses mastery; reading functional text, comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Gradually, the world is advancing in all directions toward globalization. We are forced to be creative and innovative because we will be competing with many people around the world. English language skills are special abilities that we must master. Therefore, in this era of globalization, if we want to study modern science and technology, we must master English. Because currently hundreds of millions of people use or learn English to communicate.

Regarding to education, novice teachers must develop their professional skills before entering a specific job environment (Wijayati, R. D at al. 2023). According to H Indriyono. at al, that Gradually it was realized that knowledge of the subject matter was not enough and it was required as well for teachers to comprehend and become skilled at the teaching methodology. In teaching English, teachers must develop

these four skills so that students can use them to relate to each other and express their opinions, feelings, and thoughts in English. For individuals starting out, it is crucial to develop the skill of discerning the written symbols that represent language and to actively and thoughtfully engage in discussions about the content they encounter in their reading materials.

Reading is crucial for learning English because it helps students build their vocabulary, grammar, structures, meanings, and other linguistic skills. Regarding the perceptions of second language acquisition (SLA), Krashen (1985) states that reading materials are considered to be one of the inputs of languages that are analyzed and acquired through a Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Also supported by Bui, T., & Macalister, J. (2021) extensive reading is often discussed for its significant role in promoting language learners' proficiency development. To explore language and participate in learning, extensive reading (ER) is necessary. When students read extensively, they should read books that are simple and enjoyable in order to improve their reading speed and fluency. In other words, students learn to read by reading rather than studying text and its vocabulary, grammar, and phrases. It is beneficial to compare Intensive Reading (IR) with Extensive Reading (ER). Reading extensively also enhances vocabulary. The teacher reads a passage aloud to the class. This is a common for teachers way to teach reading. The material is usually short, and the instruction focuses on testing comprehension, learning grammar and/or vocabulary, or improving reading skills. Due to its impact on both the processes and results of reading, reading motivation is a well-researched subject in relation to the development of first language literacy. The importance of motivation in second language reading has not been as well studied. In several recurrent areas of first and second language reading motivation research, this survey of the literature will emphasize both established studies and recent investigations. It examines both internal and external factors that affect students' motivation to read, focusing on reading in the English language. It also offers an outline of the fundamental elements of reading motivation. In the article's conclusion, it is suggested that future studies on second language reading motivation should focus on additional qualitative studies, sociocultural influences, and instructional strategies that encourage reading. Language input plays a crucial role in the L2 learning process, according to much SLA research and theory. The majority of research has focused on the function, significance, and processing of linguistic input, as demonstrated by a survey of the related literature on the subject of input in the development of SLA. Input is regarded as a highly important aspect in many SLA approaches, but in other ways it has been reduced to a supporting role.

Grabe and Stoller postulated that reading entails the capacity to extract significance from written text and appropriately comprehend and interpret the conveyed information (Salisati, 2013). Here, the writer argues that the student's ability to read functional texts needs to be improved; they have problems understanding such texts. The writer also finds that the student's mastery of tenses needs improvement, as they have difficulty mastering English tenses. Thus, the author wants to conduct a case study research with the title "Students' Tenses Mastery and their Ability in Reading Functional Texts." Reading widely increases one's vocabulary. Numerous terms and lexical patterns that are not taught in textbooks can be encountered by students who read a lot. The learner can become

aware of thousands of vocabulary phrases and collocations through extensive reading.

Reading widely aids students in understanding grammar. Learners encounter hundreds of grammar patterns in textbooks; however, there are not enough opportunities for actual acquisition to take place. To help students better comprehend how language is actually employed, extensive reading offers opportunity the them to see it in use. Learners who read extensively improve their reading fluency and speed, which is particularly crucial as it facilitates quicker and better language comprehension. One of the goals of extensive reading for to encourage reading is enjoyment, which increases motivation and confidence, making the learner a more proficient language user.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching English as a Foreign Language

The objective of instructing English as a second language is to equip students with the ability to effectively interact in English within authentic contexts and grasp foreign languages. English holds significant value as a means of professional communication in fields such as science, humanities, and government. Referenced from Brown, he states that teaching involves demonstrating or assisting individuals in acquiring the skills to perform a task, imparting guidance on the exploration of a subject matter, sharing knowledge, and facilitating comprehension (Jamaludin & Nurdiawati, 2021). In essence, the objective of teaching English as a foreign language is to create an environment in which students can effectively employ English for communication. In contrast, stated by Yulia (2013) Communicative language teaching becomes problematic in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by receptive skills that have been intended to help people recognize, comprehend, and absorb oral and written information. In order to comprehend how sentences are put together and how individual phrases fit together to form a single text, we must relate words to the ideas that are implied by those words. The information in the text must be compared to our understanding of the outside world in order for us to understand it.

Teaching English in Indonesia implied following the history language teaching in the world. Many experts in this area claim that there are three phrases that are frequently used interchangeably in language instruction, including approach, method, and technique. According to Anthony (cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 19) Approach is the level of theories, method is the plan of language teaching which is consistent with the theories, and techniques carry out a method. To put it in a different context, the three elements are organized so that approach is the fundamental, method is the operational, and technique is the implementation area.

Another significant aspect for teaching English for EFL is tenses. Due to its numerous complicated and confusing rules, tenses can be a subject that a lot of learners find rather uncomfortable. However, practicing proper grammar is crucial in school and can serve as a first impression for how readers will evaluate your writing ability and efficacy.

Tenses Mastery

Tenses are an important element in learning grammar. Tenses knowledge, which is essential to understanding English grammar and is used for constructing

sentences, generate a variety of sentence structures, and organize jumbled words, does not receive the proper focus in EFL curricula. They are to display the time connection that affects the form of the verb in the English sentence. Tenses is a technique that we use in English to refer to the time in the past, present, and future. This means that knowing English tenses can help students to understand when an action event occurs. Different tenses are indicated by the ending of a verb or by the auxiliary verb, and they express time in relation to a specific point in the present, past, or future. Many language learning strategies or techniques can be accommodated in the classrooms' teaching and learning meetings. Improving the student's mastery of tenses is no unrelatedly of method used a teacher in teaching his/her students (Firstyani et al., 2022). Accordingly, tenses are one of the significant features of learning English; since by mastering tenses students or learners will comprehend a text improving their capability in functional texts. On the other hands almost all students are still confused in the pattern of simple tense, like the used of auxiliary 'is' or 'Was/Were', 'Do', learning irregular verb, and student do not know the meaning of the questions and the command.

The Concept of Reading

Stephen Krashen's contribution premise is one of the most significant models of second language acquisition. He claims that Comprehensible Input is the most significant influence in learning additional languages. This Comprehensible Input is also known as a learning method namely input-based. "Input" can be definite as whatever you listen to, watch or read in your target language(Karimah et al., 2022). In general, studies show that learning can and often does improve from reading and listening to language input. And, it shows that second language acquisition can occur even without explicit teaching or instruction. Krashen identified that "To ensure that language learners are attentive to the input, it should be captivating. However, mere interest might not suffice for optimal language acquisition. It could be necessary for the input to be not only interesting but also persuasive." This also in line with Mustangin (2020) said that The implementation of discussion technique in class reading, especially in comprehending the text can make students' mind relaxed in thinking and not depressed.

Comprehension comes from reading, where sounds correspond to meanings. Furthermore, significance is conveyed not just through individual words, but also via the constituent parts of phrases and sentences. The reader creates meaning through a combination of previous information and previous experiences, the information accessible in the text, and the attitudes he or she takes about the text. However, when one reads, they engage in a communicative process with the text, attempting to comprehend its meaning by integrating their existing knowledge. Catherine Wallace has become such an integral aspect of our everyday existence in communities overwhelmed by litter that we often overlook the intricacies underlying the entire experience (Yani, 2013). It must be giving a lot of attention when teacher choose their text such as experience, situation, background, knowledge, method and the student's level. The negligence of numerous points above would make teaching less effective.

Language input

The input in L2 acquisition serves as a 'mandatory entry point,' and thus plays a critical role. Without it, L2 learners will struggle to learn the language. As a result, different L2 acquisition inputs may yield different results. Many studies and theories of SLA emphasize the importance of language input in the L2 learning process. In numerous methodologies to SLA, input is considered as being a highly essential factor while in other approaches it has been neglected to a secondary role (Ellis, 2010). The amount of exposure learners have to authentic language in use is referred to as input. A crucial component of learning a second language is input. Long-lasting improvements in English skills can be attained by increased input, or exposure, to the target language. When a language learner has the chance for natural immersion by residing in the target language community, input can be considered a key factor in language acquisition. This can come from a variety of sources, including the teacher, other students, and the environment in which the students are located. Input can be compared to intake, which is input that is then internalized and applied by the learner. Input as an important factor in language learning can be seen especially in the cases where the language learner has the opportunity of natural immersion through living in the language community (Sivertzen, 2013). Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language learners are typically not aware that they are learning a language; instead, they are just aware that they are using it to communicate. Acquired competence, the end result of language learning, is subconscious as well. Most of the time, we do not consciously recognize the rules of the languages we have learned. Instead, we rely on our "feel" for accuracy. Even if we are not consciously aware of the rule that was broken, grammatical statements "sound" or "feel" right, while errors feel wrong. Additionally, learners must be provided with input or must seek it on their own. Input may be operationally defined as oral and/or written corpus of the target language (TL) to which L2 learners are exposed through various sources, and recognized by them as language input (Kumaravadivelu, 2006:26).
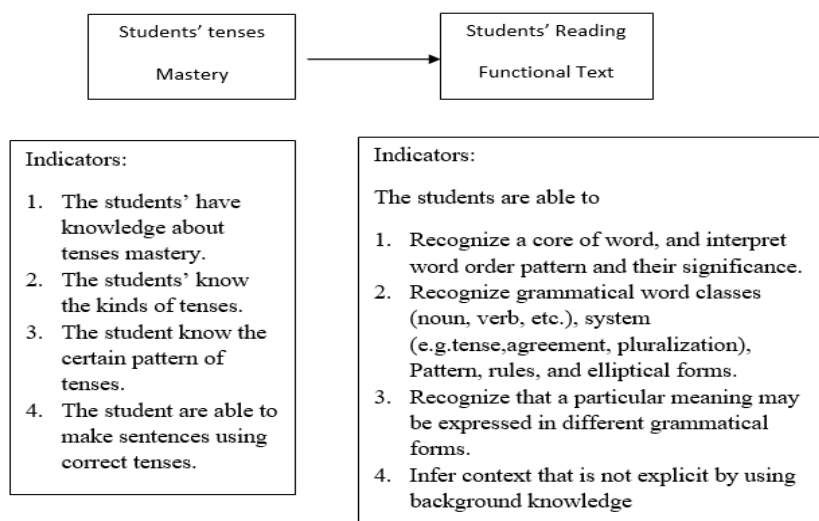
Functional Text

Functional text is printed text that helps the reader to do; or function in everyday life. These specialized texts provide information and direction to help the reader(Etfita et al., 2022). Functional text is a short text that contains commands, instructions, or something that can be done or not done which can be in the form of prohibitions, invitations, greeting cards, short message announcements, and others that contain meaning and are used in ordinary communication. Functional text is written content that is intended to be used to carry out a certain task or to support daily functioning. Examples include recipes, instruction guides, product manuals, how-to instructions, advertisements, and pamphlets. The purpose of the functional text is a general purpose the functional text is to find specific information. Readers most frequently use functional text to accomplish everyday actions or understand how to do something. A brief functional text is one that can be used in daily life and has a specific meaning and purpose. It could take the form of a warning, invitation, card, brief message, shopping list, notification, or announcement, among other things. The study was conducted in Class eight of SMP Miftahul Falah Gandrungmangu study functional texts, namely: advertisements, announcements, invitations, notifications, greeting cards, short messages, etc.

A text that serves a functional purpose is written content that was created to address a problem or achieve a certain objective. Functional text should contain material that has been crafted with the intention of using it to carry out a certain task. Functional text is not something one would read for enjoyment or solely to learn something.

The Correlation between Students' Tenses Mastery and their ability to Reading Functional Text

So many sentences are full of meaning with functional text. To make it easier to understand and obtain information in the text, students must distinguish and study tenses(Adnyana, 2018). As long as the sentence is complete, the point is the association pattern between the subject, event, and time expressed in the form of tenses. Sentences in functional texts are constructive using tenses, consequently to be able to realize in functional texts students understand tenses.

An approach to reading in a second language is called Extensive Reading (ER). When students read widely, they choose books that are enjoyable and easy to read in order to improve their reading fluency and speed. To put it another way, reading is the best approach for students to learn how to read, rather than looking at books and studying the vocabulary, grammar, and phrases. It is useful to contrast Extensive Reading (ER) and Intensive Reading (IR). Revealed by Brown's (2001:307) states that to be effective readers, students should recognize grammatical word classes (noun, verb, etc.), system (e. g tenses argument, pluralization), pattern, ruler, and elliptical form). Strongly mention that the relationship between students' tenses mastery and their ability in the functional text occurs. It also exposed students' understanding of the information and will be easier for reading functional text(Isna Wahyumi, 2019). Accomplished tenses will be easy to understand, interpret and advance information or knowledge in reading functional texts. It is clear that tenses have an important role and affect their ability in functional texts(Styaningrum, 2019). The writer will draw a frame of mind as follows:

Pic. 1. The Correlation between Students' Tenses Mastery and their ability to Reading Functional Text

RESEARCH METHOD

This study tries to investigate the unique phenomenon of teaching English as foreign language specifically tenses mastery for reading skill. Different types of methodological approaches, such as qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods, can be identified by their emphasis on words, numbers, or both. Although it is an oversimplification, this is a good place to start in order to understand. The Case Study allows us to closely examine each situation's single phenomenon as a whole. As mention by Merriam's (1998) definition which describes case studies as the "holistic description and analysis of a single entity" (p. 16). In addition, case study researchers frequently use a variety of data collection strategies, including interviews, documents, and observations, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of a specific event. The "how" of a research study is simply referred to as a research technique. More specifically, it pertains to the methodical process by which a researcher designs a study to ensure valid and reliable findings that address the goals, objectives, and research questions of the study.

In order for someone to use the data in a future research endeavor and comprehend its structure and content, the Data of the Description objective Document is to capture all relevant information about the data files and their contents. The data description pertains to the mistakes made by eighth-grade senior high school students when using the simple present tense in reading functional texts. The writer utilized a four-step approach, which includes error identification, error classification, error quantification, and error source analysis(Ariessa, 2020)(Styaningrum, 2019). Quantitative method is implemented, because the writer reveals the correlation between students' tenses mastery and their ability in reading functional text. In the social sciences, the quantitative approach dominates the research framework. It refers to a collection of methods, approaches, and assumptions used to investigate numerical patterns in order to examine psychological, social, and economic phenomena. Numerous numerical data are gathered during quantitative research. Quantitative research aims to produce knowledge and foster understanding of the social world. Social scientists, including communication scholars, employ quantitative research to investigate phenomena or events that have an impact on people. Social scientists are interested in examining people. A sample population is a particular group of people that can be studied using quantitative methods. Quantitative research uses scientific inquiry to address questions about the sample population using data that is observed or measured. The examination is administered to the participants during this event, and the participants are selected from students enrolled in the eighth grade's second semester at SMP Miftahul Falah Gandrungmangu. The sample for this research will consist of eight students from the second semester of SMP Miftahulfalah. The following table is the distribution of the school population used to determine the characteristics and classification of the sample in this study(Arikunto Suharsimi, 2013).

Table 1. The population of student based on class and gender of the eight class at SMP Miftahulfalah Gandrungmangu.

Class	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
V III A	5	3	8

The writer use multiple choice test to find out the students' mastery of tenses, The test questions consist of 40 questions with five choices. The score for the answer is 2.5 and the score is zero for the wrong answer, the highest score for students is 100 and the lowest is 0. Furthermore, to find out the functional text of reading ability, multiple choice test is applied. The test questions consist of 40 queries with five choices. The score for the answer is 2.5 and the score is zero for the wrong answer, the highest score for students is 100 and the lowest is 0.

Reliability of the Test

To ascertain the dependability of the exam, the writer experimented with administering the test to the students in the sample group prior to implementing the treatment (Ekawati, 2017). Test reliability is a measure of how accurately a test evaluates something. It has a close connection to test validity. Test reliability can be viewed as precision, or the degree to which measurements are free from error. The degree to which a test accurately measures the underlying construct that is hypothesized might be referred to as test validity. It is more accurate to think of reliability as distinct types of reliability for various populations at various levels of the construct being tested, rather than as a constant quality of a test. To know the reliability of the test, the writer tried the test items by using the following steps:

a. Perform the instrument test items to students out the sample of research.
b. Divide the result to be odd items and event items.
c. Analyze the test result by using product moment formula to know the coefficient correlation.

Data Analysis

$$rxy = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)\,(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\}\{N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Notes:

N   : The number of student

rxy   : The correlation between X and Y

$\sum X$: The number of X score (ood item)

$\sum Y$: The number of Y score (even item)

$\sum X2$: The number of square of X scores

$\sum Y2$: The number of square of Y scores

$\sum XY$: The total of X and Y

Finding out the reliability of test the writer use the formula of Spearman brown as follow :

$$r11 = \frac{2\,r\,½½}{(1 + r½½)}$$

Notes:

r11: The Coefficient reability of the test

r½½: The Corelation between Variable X and Y

(Arikunto, Suharsimi 1999: 93)

The next course of action for the writer is to refer to the findings in order to assess their reliability.

0,800 – 1,00 is very high
0,600 – 0,799 is high
0,400 – 0,599 is fair
0,200 – 0,399 is low
0,00 – 0,199 is very low

FINDINGS

Based on the data that has been submitted, the authors examined the list of grades of all students from three classes containing 8 students. Therefore, the writer took from one class, the class consisted of 8 students.

The author does not carry out the validity and reliability of the data then it must be trusted because the data comes from a legal entity and the data already exists, so the author cannot manipulate it. For this study, the authors estimated the R-test to regulate the relationship between the two variables and the response to the hypothesis. Here is the data that the author got.

Table. 2 *the score list of Tense (X) and Reading (Y)*

No	Name	Tense (X)	Reading (Y)
1	MK	80	78,6
2	MB	72,6	82,5
3	DN	78	80,2
4	MS	79,5	84,7
5	AS	81,5	85,7
6	NM	72,6	77,5
7	NA	73	77,5
8	RT	86,4	81

Table 3. *The table for calculating the formula*

No	Name	Tense (X)	Reading (Y)	X^2	Y^2	Xy
1	MK	80	78,6	6400	6177,96	6288
2	MB	72,6	82,5	5270,76	6806,25	5989,5
3	DN	78	80,2	6084	6432,04	6255,6
4	MS	79,5	84,7	6320,25	7174,09	6733,65
5	AS	81,5	85,7	6642,25	7344,49	6984,55
6	NM	72,6	77,5	5270,76	6006,25	5626,5
7	NA	73	77,5	5329	6006,25	5657,5
8	RT	86,4	81	7464,96	6561	6998,4
	Amount	**623,6**	**647,7**	**48782**	**52508,3**	**50533,7**

N   = 8
$\sum$x   = 623,6

$$\sum y \quad = 647,7$$
$$\sum x^2 \quad = 48782$$
$$\sum y^2 \quad = 52508,3$$
$$\sum Xy \quad = 50533,7$$

$$Rxy = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2(N\sum Y2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

DISCUSSION

Through a descriptive analysis and subsequent correlation analysis, the obtained coefficient of 0.780 and determination coefficient of 60.8% indicate a significant correlation. This implies that the dependent variable X (Tenses mastery) has an effect on the dependent variable Y (reading comprehension). The regression analysis reveals the regression line equation as Ÿ = -14.683 + 0.597X. The constant score of -14.683 indicates that students face difficulties in improving their reading comprehension skills with low mastery of tenses and vocabulary. However, the regression coefficient scores of 0.597 and 0.625 demonstrate a positive effect of the independent variable X (tenses mastery) on the dependent variable Y (reading comprehension). A one-point increase in tenses mastery results in a 0.597 increase in reading comprehension, while a one-point increase in tenses mastery corresponds to a 0.625 increase in reading comprehension. The linearity test conducted using the SPSS program confirms that the regression line is linear. Moreover, the significant test of the regression coefficient, also conducted using SPSS, confirms the positive effect of the independent variable X (tenses mastery) on the dependent variable Y (reading comprehension). Consequently, higher mastery of tenses and vocabulary leads to improved reading comprehension skills. Based on the quantitative information and theory, the researcher concludes that both grammar mastery and vocabulary mastery significantly influence students' reading comprehension. A one-point increase in grammar mastery corresponds to a 0.157 increase in reading comprehension. The influence of Grammar Mastery on students' reading comprehension was examined through a hypothesis test. The obtained scores were Sig = 0.000 and ttest = 4.011, with ttable = 1.98. Since Sig < 0.05 and ttest > ttable, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, indicating a significant impact of the independent variable X (mastery of tenses) on the dependent variable Y (reading comprehension). Based on quantitative data and theory, it can be concluded that grammar mastery significantly affects students' reading comprehension. The same conclusion was reached, with Sig < 0.05 and ttest > ttable, stating a significant influence of the independent variable X (mastery of tenses) on the dependent variable Y (reading comprehension). This conclusion is drawn from quantitative information and theoretical knowledge, supporting the notion that vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in students' reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The mastery of tenses is a crucial aspect in English education, alongside grammar, pronunciation, phonology, and spelling. For academic writing to be exact and clear, understanding verb tenses is essential. This article will discuss the value of utilizing the appropriate verb tenses in your writing and provide a general

overview of the many tenses commonly used in scholarly discourse. You will be better able to properly present your ideas and arguments if you are familiar with these verb tenses and how to use them. Proficiency in tenses holds great significance, especially when it comes to comprehending written passages. Tenses serve as the primary means through which we comprehend the structure, expressions, sentences, and individual words within texts. The findings of this study reveal a noteworthy correlation between tenses mastery and the ability to comprehend functional texts during reading activities among students.

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