

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

English grammar is an important part and considered as a significant element in English learning. Grammar is related with the establishment of sentences and utterances.¹ According to Richards, "A language's grammar is an interpretation of its structure and the ways in which linguistic units like words and phrases are united to form sentences."² It is an essential element of language in studying English. Grammar understanding takes a vital part of a language teaching program, where it occupies a fundamental and dominant position in the "accumulated entities" and helps learners increase their learning from zero to specific language proficiency.³ Every English student needs grammar to be able to use English correctly and properly.

One of the most important components of grammar is tense. Tense is a grammar element that allows learners to locate a situation in time.⁴ So, it refers to the changing verb in a sentence, based on the time of an accident, activity, or action that has happened. Meanwhile Nunan states that "a strictly linear approach to language learning is based on the assumption that learners gain one grammatical item at a time, and they must reveal their mastery of one thing before continue to the next thing".⁵ And English learners still often make errors in using tenses in sentences. Mumek states that "most English learners still face some issues in comprehending and mastering tenses,

¹ Dewi Mustika Sari et al., "The Effects of Grammar Mastery and Reading Habit On Students' Writing Skills in Recount Text" *INFERENCE: Journal of English Language Teaching* vol. 2, no. 3, (2020): 213

² Richards, J.C. and Schmidt, R. *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics. Fourth edition* (Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited, 2010), 251-252

³ Zhuang Xin, "Grammar Learning and Teaching: Time, Tense and Verb" *US-China Education Review*, vol. 7, no.12 (2010): 1

⁴Janaki Manokaran et al., "A Corpus-Based Study on the Use of Past Tense Auxiliary 'Be' in Argumentative Essays of Malaysian ESL Learners", *English Language Teaching* vol. 6, no. 10 (2013): 112

⁵ David Nunan, "Teaching Grammar in Context" in *English Language Teaching in its Social Context*, ed. Christopher N. Candlin and Neil Mercer (New York: Routledge, 2001): 191

especially in activity forms.”⁶ In fact, tense is a complicated element but it is very essential to be mastered because all English sentences cannot be divided from these tenses. They need to be related to, past, present, and future times.⁷ Therefore, the students will be easy to show their emotions, feelings, and ideas through writing and speaking if they understand the tenses.

In Indonesia, students must have knowledge and understanding of linguistic elements which include grammar, especially tenses. Because they are expected to be able to use the English language in real life. As stated in the newest English curriculum in Indonesia (*Kurikulum Merdeka 2022*) the learning outcome of English subject in high school is to grow up English communicative competence through the various multimodal texts (oral, written, visual), to evolve intercultural competence to figure out and respect a perspective. And it is also to develop confidence, critical, and creative skills.⁸ Beside *Kurikulum Merdeka 2022*, many schools in Indonesia are still implementing *Kurikulum 2013*. And the purpose of English subject at high school in *Kurikulum 2013* is to grow up the students’ potential for communicative ability in interpersonal, transactional, and functional discourse, by utilizing a variety of English texts in a coherent manner with the use of accurate and acceptable linguistic elements through perspectives of humanity, nationalism, state, and civilization.⁹ Both of those curricula guide English learners to have good communicative competence, so that mastering tenses is required to support it.

Then, the English curriculum in Indonesia states several tenses must be mastered by the senior high school level. Those tenses are simple present, present continuous, present perfect, simple past tense, past continuous, past perfect, and future tense based on the *Kurikulum 2013*.¹⁰ Tense is quite inconvenient for Indonesian

⁶ Fernando Mumek, A Correlational Study of Past Tense and Compound Word Mastery Toward the Ability in Comprehending Narrative Text”, *Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching*, vol. 2, no.1 (2018): 389

⁷ Dewi Mustika Sari et al., "The Effects of Grammar Mastery and Reading Habit On Students' Writing Skills in Recount Text" *INFERENCE: Journal of English Language Teaching* vol. 2, no. 3, (2020): 213

⁸ Kemendikbudristek No 008/H/KR/2022, “Capaian Pembelajaran Pada PAUD, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar Dan Pendidikan Menengah Pada Kurikulum Merdeka.” 2022

⁹ Pusat Kurikulum Dan Perbukuan Badan Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Kementerian Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan “Kurikulum 2013, Pedoman Guru Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris”, (2014): 8

¹⁰ Permendikbud Nomor 59 Tahun 2014 Kurikulum 2013, “Silabus Bahasa Inggris Wajib SMA Kurikulum 2013”

students, since in the Indonesian language there are no tenses or changes of verbs. They difficult to differentiate the changes in verb1 to verb2 or verb3, and when to use a regular verb and irregular verb¹¹ One of the tenses in which the verb needs to be changed is simple past tense. It has become one of the challenging tenses for Indonesian learners.¹² It also happens at tenth grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijakja Pati, the simple past tense is hard to be mastered and needs extra time to be understood by the students.¹³ Whereas, based on the current curriculum, simple past tense is one of the tenses that have to be mastered by tenth-grade senior high school students. Therefore, the in this research discussed simple past tense.

In learning tenses, reading activities are required for students to gain more new knowledge about a changing verb. Reading is one of the important ways to improve English language skills in general. For students, reading has many benefits in learning process, it has become a fundamental tool to improve their basic knowledge. In addition, the command to carry out reading activities in Islam is emphasized. As the verse that was first revealed was *Surah Al-'Alaq* verse 1 which contains a command to read.

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝

It means: Read! In the name of your Lord who has created

Reading habit is acquiring new information frequently from printed material which the reader likes to do and make it a pleasurable activity. According to Kurniawati et al, “the habit of reading will be very influential automatically on student learning outcomes.”¹⁴ So, reading habit refers to an automated process in which a reader reads textual material and unknowingly guesses what it means.

Palani suggest that “Reading habit is an important aspect for producing a literate society in this world. It forms the personality of individuals and supports them to develop a good thinking method,

¹¹ Ulva Sri Handayani et al. “The Difficulties of High School Students in Learning Tense in Bone District”, *PINISI journal of Art, Humanity & Social Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2022):20

¹² Rina Listia and Emma Rosa Febrianti, “EFL Learners’ Problem in Using Tenses: An Insight for Grammar Teaching”, *IJET*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2020): 90

¹³ Kudlori, English teacher in tenth-grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum, interview, The Grammar Mastery at MA Ihyaul Ulum, 21st December 2021.

¹⁴ Cicilia Nanik Kurniawati et al., “Reading Habits and Grammar Mastery Impact on EFL Students Descriptive Writing Skills” *INFERENCE: Journal of English Language Teaching* vol. 3, no. 3, (2021): 185

and produces new ideas.”¹⁵ In language learning, habit plays an important role in helping someone acquire language competence.¹⁶ Many benefits can be obtained by the student through reading, so English students are encouraged to have the habit of reading English texts.

Reading habits that are carried out continuously will become a culture in English students and provide benefits for them. For example, they will face and encounter words, and sentences that have standardized grammatical structures. The students can find similarities, differences, and developments in the grammar used in the sentences or texts they read.¹⁷ At MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati, students are accustomed to reading text in their English books. This activity is expected to foster students’ interest in reading. Through this reading book activity, they can learn a lot, and become accustomed to reading English texts or books. Reading some texts or sentences in English will make students more sensitive to the structure of words and the grammatical in the English language.¹⁸ So, the students that are accustomed to reading maybe directly have a relationship with their grammatical mastery, especially simple past tense mastery.

Then, the researcher is focused in researching the correlation between reading habits and simple past tense mastery. Thus the researcher decides the topic entitled **“THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS’ READING HABITS OF ENGLISH TEXTS AND STUDENTS’ MASTERY OF SIMPLE PAST TENSE”**

B. Research Problems

Based on the research background above, the researcher stated some problems as follows:

1. To what extent is the reading habits of English text at 10th grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati?

¹⁵ K. K., Palani, “Promoting Reading Habits and Creating Literate Society”. *Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce*, vol.2 no 1 (2012): 1

¹⁶ Dewi Mustika Sari et al., "The Effects of Grammar Mastery and Reading Habit On Students' Writing Skills in Recount Text", *INFERENCE: Journal of English Language Teaching* vol. 2, no. 3, (2020): 213

¹⁷ Cicilia Nanik Kurniawati et al., “Reading Habits and Grammar Mastery Impact on EFL Students Descriptive Writing Skills” *INFERENCE: Journal of English Language Teaching* vol. 3, no. 3, (2021): 185

¹⁸ I Nyoman Muliana “Mengatasi Kesulitan Dalam Berbahasa Inggris” *Linguistic Community Service Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, (2021): 6

2. To what extent is the simple past tense mastery at 10th grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati?
3. Is there any positive correlation between the students' reading habits of English text and students' mastery of simple past tense at 10th grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati?

C. Research Objectives

The Objectives of the research are stated as follows:

1. To find out the reading habits of English texts at 10th grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati
2. To find out the simple past tense mastery of the 10th grade of MA Ihyayul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati
3. To find out the correlation between the students' reading habits of English text and students' mastery of simple past tense at 10th grade of MA Ihyaul Ulum Wedarijaksa Pati.

D. Research Significances

The result of this research about the correlation between students' reading habits of English texts and students' mastery of simple past tense is expected to give benefits as follow:

1. Theoretical benefits

The result of this research hopefully can give some beneficial information about the description and relationship between reading habits and simple past tense mastery. And hopefully can develop English learning and teaching which relate to reading habits and simple past tense mastery.

2. Practical benefits

a. For students

- 1) The researcher hopes that the outcome of this research can be used students to develop students' understanding of reading habits of English texts and improve their reading habits
- 2) The researcher expects that the outcome of this research can encourage students to learn English by reading a lot of books and motivate them to read more than before and increase their simple past tense mastery.

b. For teachers

- 1) This research is expected can give an insight to the teacher on the most appropriate method, approach, technique, or strategies for increasing students' mastery of the simple past tense through reading habits.

c. For researchers

- 1) The finding of this research hopefully can be beneficial for other researchers who will arrange a similar subject or related research in the future as the source of their reference.

3. Pedagogical benefits

This research determines the correlation between reading habit and simple past tense mastery at tenth grade and hopefully can give useful information to choose the appropriate pedagogical approach in teaching.

E. Definition of Key Term

In this research, three key terms are used. They are:

1. Correlation

Correlation is a reciprocal relationship of cause and effect, a measure of how closely two variables change concerning one another. It is a term to describe whether there is a relationship or not between one variable and another.

2. Reading habit

Reading habit is a habitual and ingrained activity to gain an understanding of the contents of something written. It is a reading activity that is usually done by someone repeatedly.

3. Simple past tense

Simple past tense is a tense sentence that is used to describe past events that occurred and ended in the past. This means that simple past tense indicates a whole action that happened in the past time.

F. Organization of Thesis

The organization of the thesis is intended as an overview of the sections in this study so that it can facilitate understanding of the problems to be discussed. The organization of the thesis is stated as follows:

1. The Complementary pages

This section includes cover, approval pages, declaration page, abstract, motto, dedication pages, acknowledgments, preface, table of contents, list of figures, list of tables, and list of appendices.

2. The content of the research

This section is formulated as follows:

- a. Chapter I: Introduction, contains the research background, research problems, research objectives, research

- significances, the definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.
- b. Chapter II: Review of related literature, this section consists of a theoretical description, theoretical framework, previous study, and hypothesis.
 - c. Chapter III: Research methodology, contains research method, population, and samples, research participant, instrument data collection technique, validity and reliability of the instrument, data analysis technique, and research ethical consideration.
 - d. Chapter IV: Research findings and discussion.
 - e. Chapter V: Conclusion and recommendation.
3. The closing pages
This section consists of references, appendices, and curriculum vitae.

