IMPROVING THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS THROUGH READING NARRATIVE TEXTS

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk membuktikan bahwa penggunaan membaca teks naratif dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Palu dalam mengidentifikasi kata kerja beraturan dan tidak beraturan. Metode yang digunakan adalah true-experimental design dimana terdapat dua kelas yang terlibat yaitu kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Pertanyaan dari penelitian ini adalah "Apakah penggunaan membaca teks naratif dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Palu dalam mengidentifikasi kata kerja beraturan dan kata kerja tidak beraturan?" Sampel penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Palu. Kelas VIII I menjadi kelompok eksperimen, dan kelas VIII J menjadi kelompok kontrol. Berdasarkan pengujian hipotesis yang telah dilakukan, dengan menggunakan taraf signifikansi 0,05 dan derajat kebebasan (df) 78, peneliti menemukan bahwa t-hitung (7,12) lebih tinggi daripada t-tabel (1,66). Artinya hipotesis alternatif (Ha) diterima dan hipotesis nol (Ho) ditolak. Singkatnya, jawaban dari pertanyaan penelitian di atas adalah "Penggunaan membaca teks naratif dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Palu dalam mengidentifikasi kata kerja beraturan dan tidak beraturan."

Kata Kunci: kata kerja beraturan, kata kerja tidak beraturan, teks naratif

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to prove that the use of reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs. The method used is a true-experimental design in which there were two classes involved – experimental and control class. The question of this research is "Can the use of reading narrative texts improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu in identifying regular and irregular verbs?" The sample of this research is the grade eight students of class I and J of SMPN 3 Palu. Class VIII I became the experimental group, and class VIII J became the control group. Based on hypothesis testing done, by using 0.05 level of significance and 78 degrees of freedom (df), the researcher found that the t-counted (7.12) was higher than the t-table (1.66). It means that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. In short, the answer to the research question above is "The use of reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs."

Key Words: Regular verbs, Irregular verbs, narrative text

INTRODUCTION

Grammar is considered an important element in English functioning to make sentences meaningful and understandable. Grammar is the study of a language that provides rules in constructing sentences (Thornbury, 2002). Because students need grammar to learn the rules of how to construct a correct sentence, the point of grammar understanding has never been

eliminated from the teaching materials. However, students at school are provided with the amount of rules especially on the parts of speech although they have no idea of how to use them (Haussamen et al, 2003, 14). Therefore, studying grammar might be a dull activity and even a horrible monster for students if every time they learn grammar, they are provided with any kinds of rules, patterns, and tenses without knowing what the importance of studying them is and how they will be applied in the real situation. One of the areas of grammar that very commonly causes a problem to appear for students is verbs. A verb is one of the main parts of a sentence, and it sometimes changes. Verbs indicate time references (DeCapua, 2008: 166). Verbs can be classified into two groups; regular verbs and irregular verbs. Regular verbs are verbs that change predictably, while irregular verbs are verbs that change in unpredictable ways.

The most common problem encountered by students at the level of Junior High School in learning regular and irregular verbs is recognizing whether a verb is one of the regular verbs or one of the irregular verbs. This problem triggers another difficulty for students when they are asked to say or write the past form of the verb. For example, there are still several of them who write the past form of *teaching* as *teached.* As a result, when they are asked to answer the question, "*What did your teacher teach you last week?*" they will answer, "*She teached us about verbs*." As everybody knows, the past form of *teach* is *taught*, not *teached*. Thinking about this fact, the researcher can conclude that the students get confused about whether *teach* is one of regular verbs or irregular verbs. As a result, they adopt the rule of regular verbs in adding –ed ending in the past tense and past participle form to be applied in irregular verbs. Therefore, the researcher applied narrative texts for students to enable them to identify regular and irregular verbs. The decision of to use narrative texts in this article is determined by two reasons: (1) Narrative texts contain stories. Everybody likes stories, especially students who are still teenagers. By enjoying reading stories, the

students would enjoy working with grammar; and (2) Narrative texts usually use simple past tense. The students would be accustomed to looking at both regular and irregular verbs in the past form.

There are several previous studies related to the topic discussed. The first one is a thesis conducted by Rahmah (2015) entitled *using narrative text to help grade IX students of SMP Negeri 22 identify regular and irregular past verbs.* The difference between the research and this article is the researcher gave treatment to both groups, while in this article, the researcher only gave treatment to the experimental group. The second one is a research paper by Yulian (2016) entitled *an error analysis of the students' narrative text using simple past tense.* The difference between the paper and this article is the paper used a qualitative method of research, while this article used quantitative research. The third one is a thesis written by Susanti (2017) entitled *an error analysis on the use of past tense in narrative text.* The difference between the thesis and this article is the thesis focused on analyzing four types of errors made by students about using past tense in writing narrative text, while this article focused on finding out the result of identifying regular and irregular past verbs by reading narrative texts.

The purpose of this study is to prove that the use of reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs. The students of grade eight of SMPN 3 Palu are expected to identify regular and irregular verbs. Nevertheless, there are still some of them who get confused in determining the past form of a verb. Based on the background above, the researcher focused this article on the following question: "Can the use of reading narrative texts improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs?" Related to the research question, the researcher formulate the alternative hypothesis as follows: "Reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu in identifying regular and irregular verbs."

Learning grammar is seen as an uninteresting activity by some students. However, students need to learn grammar for three reasons as stated by Williams (2005: 40). The first is to define human life. Humans need intelligible language to communicate. The second reason is that grammar provides humans with forms and functions, which both of them lead humans to speak and write in a grammatically correct way. The other reason is that acquiring grammar indicates well-educated people. Therefore, teachers should initiate fascinating ways in teaching grammar to enable students to have grammatically correct and communicative language.

To be able to initiate attractive teaching of grammar to students, there are at least four stages in the organization of grammar teaching as proposed by Ur (2006: 4). The first is presentation, in which the students are given text or spoken language related to the grammar point. The second one is isolation and explanation, in which the students focus on grammatical items. The third stage is practice, in which the students practice grammar in exercises and home assignment. The last stage is the test, in which the students demonstrate how they master what has been taught. By following these four stages in organizing grammar teaching, teachers are expected to reduce or even avoid the dullness of learning grammar and to break the stigma that learning grammar is unattractive.

One of the areas in grammar that plays a big part in discussion is tense. Because English is one of the languages in the world using tense to communicate in both spoken and written language, English learners cannot avoid this part of the discussion about grammar. Tense is the category of verbs (Comrie, 2000: 13). It indicates the time an activity is done. Verb change in English is something usual. Taking an example of simple past tense indicating an activity began and ended at a particular time in the past (Azar, 2009: 29), verbs undergo changes from the infinitive to the past form. Verbs can express tense and can have tense marker as the ending, such as –s/-es for simple present tense and –ed for

simple past tense (Gelderen, 2010: 14). Verb change is an unavoidable part of discussion of tense in grammar.

As Indonesian native speakers, students have different perspectives related to verb change. Verb change does not occur in Indonesian language. Therefore, some students find it hard to learn about this part. The existence of regular and irregular verb differences can be an additional task to do. Regular verbs are verbs ending in –ed for the past simple and past participle, while irregular verbs are verbs not ending in –ed for past simple and past participle (Murphy, 2019: 292). Memorizing the list of regular and irregular verbs can be seen both as a dull or challenging activity depending on the perspective of every student. Therefore, teachers should be able to find the best solution for students to be able to learn regular and irregular verbs in a distressful way.

One of the ways to learn regular and irregular verbs is to bring inductive teaching by reading narrative texts. Reading is a system of decoding by a reader of the author's text (Johnson, 2003: 9). Known as one of the receptive skills, reading is seen as a passive activity. Although this is not quite true, students find reading as a less challenging activity compared to speaking or writing. Reading texts can be interesting or not, depending on the reading material. There are two types of texts; authentic and non-authentic text (Lindsay and Knight, 2010: 67). Authentic texts are texts taken from real life, such as newspapers, magazines, history, and so on that are not provided for learning purposes, while non-authentic texts are meant and made for learning purpose. One example of non-authentic texts is narratives. Narratives are stories including a sequence of cause and effect events (Montgomery, et al., 2007: 251). By reading narrative texts, students are expected to be able to identify regular and irregular verbs inside the texts through an enjoyable classroom activity.

METHOD

This article is a quantitative research with experimental design. Quantitative

research is a research starting with a specific research question or hypothesis (McKay, 2006: 6). Scott and Morrison (2006: 186) write that quantitative research is causality related to variable measurement. An experimental design is used to test an idea of whether influences a dependent variable or not (Creswell, 2012: 295). Experimental research is included in empirical research in which it focuses on data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, answering questions and testing hypotheses (Flood, et al., 2005: 6). This research used two groups. Experimental group was given a treatment after the pre-test, but control group was not given a treatment after the pre-test. The design of the research is presented as follows (Arikunto, 2010, 87).

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E          O1    X    O2
     R          _____

C          O3         O4
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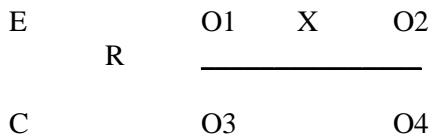
A population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristics (Creswell, 2012: 145). The population of this article is grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu. The students of this grade in this school are divided into ten parallel classes in which each class consists of 40 students. Therefore, the total population is 400 students. The researcher then selected the sample from the population as the representative by applying cluster random sampling. Class VIII I took part as the Experimental Group, while class VIII J was the Control Group. The researcher only used one instrument to collect accurate data to answer the research question. The instrument was tested. The test was conducted two times; in the beginning of the

research activity right before the researcher conducted the treatment to the experimental group usually known as a pre-test, and at the end of the research activity after the treatment was held usually known as a post-test. The researcher conducted both pre-test and post-test on the Experimental and Control Groups.

After analyzing the data obtained from pre-test of both experimental and control groups, the researcher gave treatment to the experimental group for eight meetings. There was a narrative text given to the experimental group in every meeting. Therefore, there were eight narrative texts given to the students. In every meeting, the students were assigned to identify and classify regular and irregular verbs in the narrative text. After conducting the treatment for the experimental group, the researcher gave post-tests to both experimental and control groups. The test that was given to the students in the post-test was the same as the test given to the students in the pre-test. By comparing the results of pre-test and post-test from both experimental and control groups, the researcher would know whether or not the treatment conducted had a positive effect on the students' ability to identify regular and irregular verbs

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After conducting the pre-test and post-test to both the experimental and control group, the researcher then calculated the standard score by applying the following formula.

Standard Score= $\frac{\text{Obtained Score}}{\text{Maximum Score}}$ x 100

Table 1. The Result of Experimental Group

No.	Initial Names	Standard Score of Pre-Test (O1)	Standard Score of Post-Test (O2)	Deviation (O2-O1)	Square Deviation
1	ABD	32.5	72.5	40	1600
2	AFN	35	77.5	42.5	1806
3	AGS	32.5	71.2	38.7	1497
4	AHM	43.7	93.7	50	2500
5	ALF	33.7	87.5	53.8	2894

No.					
6	AND	42.5	78.7	36.2	1310
7	BIN	41.2	70	28.8	829.4
8	DWI	42.5	86.2	43.7	1909
9	ESA	41.2	72.5	31.3	979.6
10	EVL	60	100	40	1600
11	FIT	33.7	76.2	42.5	1806
12	HAR	47.5	78.7	31.2	973.4
13	IKB	38.7	78.7	40	1600
14	IRA	45	82.5	37.5	1406
15	IRW	36.2	75	38.8	1505
16	KUR	45	75	30	900
17	NAZ	36.2	71.2	35	1225
18	OMN	36.2	81.2	45	2025
19	PUT	40	76.2	36.2	1310
20	RAF	45	80	35	1225
21	RAH	42.5	93.7	51.2	2621
22	RAN	37.5	75	37.5	1406
23	REG	40	97.5	57.5	3306
24	REM	45	97.5	52.5	2756
25	RIS	43.7	73.7	30	900
26	RIZ	45	72.5	27.5	756.2
27	ROY	32.5	80	47.5	2256
28	RUD	36.2	76.2	40	1600
29	SAM	47.5	91.2	43.7	1909
30	SAR	48.7	88.7	40	1600
31	SRI	32.5	78.7	46.2	2134
32	SUK	38.7	72.5	33.8	1142
33	SUL	43.7	76.2	32.5	1056
34	SUN	45	88.7	43.7	1909
35	SUT	48.7	72.5	23.8	566.4
36	TRI	45	78.7	33.7	1135
37	VIV	43.7	70	26.3	691.6
38	WAH	47.5	78.7	31.2	973.4
39	ZUF	51.2	87.5	36.3	1317
40	ZUL	33.7	73.7	40	1600
				$\Sigma X=1551.1$	$\Sigma X^2=62535$

Table 2. The Result of Control Group

No.	Initial Names	Standard Score of Pre-Test (O1)	Standard Score of Post-Test (O2)	Deviation (O2-O1)	Square Deviation
1	AHF	45	67.5	22.5	506.2
2	AIS	47.5	72.5	25	625
3	ALI	41.2	66.2	25	625
4	AND	33.7	55	21.3	453.6
5	ANS	36.2	55	18.8	353.4
6	DAW	45	66.2	21.2	449.4
7	DEV	36.2	56.2	20	400
8	FAD	30	50	20	400
9	FAH	40	65	25	625
10	FAN	31.2	60	28.8	829.4

11	FAR	48.7	67.5	18.8	353.4
12	FIK	46.2	62.5	16.3	265.6
13	HEN	26.2	52.5	26.3	691.6
14	IMA	45	67.5	22.5	506.2
15	INT	48.7	67.5	18.8	353.4
16	ISN	48.7	77.5	28.8	829.4
17	JUF	42.5	67.5	25	625
18	JUR	46.2	67.5	21.3	453.6
19	KAR	47.5	75	27.5	756.2
20	KAT	35	57.5	22.5	506.2
21	MAG	50	63.7	13.7	187.6
22	MAS	15	47.5	32.5	1056.2
23	MER	46.2	68.7	22.5	506.2
24	NEL	52.5	75	22.5	506.2
25	PRA	47.5	62.5	15	225
26	PUT	42.5	65	22.5	506.2
27	RAH	31.2	60	28.8	829.4
28	RED	31.2	61.2	30	900
29	REZ	41.2	66.2	25	625
30	RIF	40	66.2	26.2	686,4
31	RIS	48.7	61.2	12.5	156.2
32	RON	40	63.7	23.7	561.6
33	RUS	42.5	66.2	23.7	561.6
34	SIF	43.7	67.5	23.8	566.4
35	SUG	45	57.5	12.5	156.2
36	TIK	33.7	61.2	27.5	756.2
37	WID	41.2	65	23.8	566.4
38	YAN	45	76.2	31.2	973.4
39	YUN	30	61.2	31.2	973.4
40	YUZ	33.7	62.5	28.8	829.4
				$\Sigma Y=932.8$	$\Sigma Y^2=22736$

After having the deviation and the square deviation of the two groups, the researcher calculated the mean deviation of the two groups by using the formula by Arikunto (2010: 313) as follows:

$$Mx = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$
$$My = \frac{\Sigma Y}{N}$$

From the calculation, it was found that Mx (the mean deviation of experimental group) is 38.78, while My (the mean deviation of control group) is 23.32.

Furthermore, the researcher computed the square deviation of both experimental and control groups by using the formula by Arikunto (2010: 313) as follows:

$$\Sigma x^2 = \Sigma X^2 - \frac{(\Sigma X)^2}{N}$$
$$\Sigma y^2 = \Sigma Y^2 - \frac{(\Sigma Y)^2}{N}$$

From the calculation, it was found that Σx^2 (the square deviation of experimental group) is 6388, while Σy^2 (the square deviation of control group) is 984.

Next, the researcher computed the t-test by applying the formula by Arikunto (2010: 313) as follows:

$$t = \frac{M_x - M_y}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\Sigma x^2 + \Sigma y^2}{N_x + N_y - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{N_x} + \frac{1}{N_y}\right)}}$$

From the calculation, it was found that the value of the t-test is 7.12.

By having the calculation above, it is known that the value of t-test is 7.12. To obtain the value of t-table, the researcher needed to find out the df (Degree of Freedom). The df can be determined by using the formula Nx+Ny-2. So, 40+40-2=78. With the level of significance 0.05 and df is 78, it is found that the value of t-table is 1.66. After having the value of t-test and t-table, the last step is testing the hypothesis. Since the value of the t-test (7.12) is higher than the value of t-table (1.66), the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, the use of reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs.

Based on the data analysis, it is proved that there is a significant difference between the result of post-test of experimental group and the one of control group. The comparison between the deviations of both experimental and control groups is far different. It is known that deviation is the result of post-test subtracted from the result of pre-test to know how much the increase was gained or whether or not there is any significant improvement after conducting the treatment. In the data analysis, it can be seen clearly that the sum of deviation of experimental group (ΣX) is 1551.1, while the sum of deviation of control group (ΣY) is only 932.8. So, it is clear that the deviation of experimental group is higher than the deviation of control group, and it affects the mean deviations of both groups, where the mean deviation of control group (My) is 23.32, while the mean deviation of experimental group (Mx) is 38.78.

When the students were given various stories – narrative texts – continually as the media for learning regular and irregular verbs, they became accustomed to looking at the forms of both regular and irregular verbs by identifying them. It could happen because several verbs appeared more than three times for they were found in more than three different narrative texts. So, they had to see the verbs again in the next meetings in the different narrative texts until they did know the past form of the verb.

CONCLUSION

Based on the hypothesis testing showing that the t-test (7.12) was higher than the t-table (1.66), the researcher concluded that the use of reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs. In short, narrative texts are effective media for teaching students about regular and irregular verbs. Reading narrative texts can improve the ability of grade eight students of SMPN 3 Palu to identify regular and irregular verbs.

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