

## THE ABILITY OF STUDENTS' JUNIOR GRADE IN USING PAST TENSE AT MH. THAMRIN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

English is an international language which has a significant role in the various field of activities, and has wide influences in the world. In learning grammar in english, we need to know about tenses. Tenses is used to make certain time when we do something. There are four main tenses: Present Tense, Past Tense, Future Tense, and Continuous Tense. This focus about Past Tense, they are: Simple Past Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Tense, and Past Perfect Continuous Tense. The population, the students' Junior Grade of MH.Thamrin Language School as her sample. The purpose of this study, they are: to know the ability of students' Junior Grade of MH. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi in using Past Tense and to know what are their difficulties in using Past Tense. This research used Library research and field research. After finishing do the research, the writer The conclusion that 81% the students' Junior Grade at MH. Thamrin Language School are able in using Past Tense and 19% students' Junior Grade at MH. Thamrin Language School are not able in using Past Tense and the difficulties that the students faced in using Past Tense is they still confused and forgot about the pattern of Past Perfect Continuous Tense.

**Key Word:** *tenses, past tense, ability, student*

### 1. The Background of The Study

English is an international language which has a significant role in the various field of activities, and has wide influences in the world. English is a foreign language in Indonesia that has taught from Primary School until Senior High School. People realize that studying english became very important now and needs much concern. The ministry of National Education has decided that English as a first foreign language which has to be taught in Indonesia.

In learning grammar, we need to know how grammar works. It is clearly necessary to understand how the grammar rules work and using it to communicate. Tenses is a system which uses to refer to time; past, present, and future.

In teaching the students' ability in mastering English the teachers have to think how to make students mastery English for their own purpose

There are so many approaches, method, and techniques that can be used by the teacher. One technique that was used by the teacher to improve the students' ability in English is Practise. By practising, by doing many exercises, the students can get motivation to master their English.

The reason chooses this title: "The Ability Of Students' Junior Grade In Using Past Tense At Mh. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi" because the writer wants to know and determine the ability of students' MH. Thamrin Language School whether they have understood in using Past Tense because there are four tenses in fundamental of past tense those are : Simple Past Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Tense, and Past Perfect Continuous Tense. The writer want to know what are the difficulties that faced by the students of MH. Thamrin Language School in using Past Tense. The writer hopes after doing this research, the students are able to use past tense in their daily activities.

The writer feels that this topic is an interesting topic to discuss. MH. Thamrin Language School is one of the famous english course in Tebing Tinggi. The writer chooses MH. Thamrin Language School as the population to research because she has studied there from primary school until senior high school and she ever taught there for 2 years. She has known the owner of MH. Thamrin Language School and also the teacher and some of the students there. She knew that the students have learned about tenses especially Past Tense. She want to know whether the

students have understood and able to use Past Tense in their daily activities.

### 1.1 The Problem of The Study

Based on the background above, the writer wants to know :

1. Are the students' Junior Grade of MH. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi able using Past Tense ?
2. What are the difficulties of students' Junior Grade of Mh. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi in using Past Tense ?

### 1.2 The Objective of The Study

Every research has some objectives, so this study has some objectives, they are :

1. To know the ability of students' Junior Grade of MH. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi in using Past Tense.
2. To know about their difficulties in using Past Tense.

### 1.3 The Scope of The Study

This study is concerned with finding out the students' ability Junior Grade of MH. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi in understanding Past Tense. From this study the writer want to discuss about the fundamental of Past Tense those are:

1. Simple Past Tense
2. Past Continuous Tense
3. Past Perfect Tense
4. Past Perfect Continuous Tense

## 2. SUPPORTING THEORIES

### 2.1 Ability

It means " Ability " can be defined that a person has power, skill, resources to do something. The case of this research, the ability is referred capability in constructing or understanding simple past tense.

### 2.2 Tenses

Tenses is describing or explanation when the statement, event or action happened in sentence. Tenses is also used to make certain a time when we do something. According to file:///C:/Users/LENOVO/Pictures/4518-16680-2-PB.pdf , tenses is the relationship between the form of the verb and the time of the action or state it describes. Mohammad Jafar Jabbari ( 2013 ) said that tenses is a linguistic phenomenon, whereas "time" is an extra-linguistic concept. Tense is the

grammatical category which correlates with distinctions of time.

According to Regina Fletianti Arindri (2014 :39) said that tenses is changes in verbs that indicate the time of a change / event. The writer takes conclusion that tenses is a term in grammar to indicate the time of the action in the sentences.

### 2.3 Past Tense

According to [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) , past tense is a grammatical tense whose principal function is to place an action or situation in past time. In languages which have a past tense, it thus provides a grammatical means of indicating that the event being referred to took place in the past. There are four sentences in fundamental of past tense :

1. Simple Past Tense
2. Past Continuous Tense
3. Past Perfect Tense
4. Past Perfect Continuous Tense

#### 2.3.1 Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense is used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past. Simple past tense also shows that you are talking about something that has already happened. Simple past tense is used to express actions/events in past time. Biber, Conrad and Leech (2002: 151) said that Simple Past Tense is most often used in past time. The form verb in simple past tense is "Verb II". In some cases, past tense is used to describe past situations and events. In addition, past form has a special use in reported speech or thought. Similarly, Folse (2009:114) states that past tense is the most common devices used to indicate sequencing of action are the use of time adverbials such as yesterday or before I arrived.

Simple Past Tense

Example :

1. (+) We studied english yesterday  
(-) We did not study english yesterday  
(?) Did we study english yesterday ? Yes, we did / No, we didn't

1. Nominal

I/ She/ He/ It	= was
You/ We/ They	= were
(+) S + was/were + O + C	
(-) S + was/were + not + O + C	
(?) Was/were + S + O + C ?	
Yes, S + was/were	
No, S + was/were + not	

Example :

- 1.(+) She was a nurse
2. (+) They were students

Time Signal of Simple Past Tense :

1. Yesterday
2. Last year/month/week
3. A year ago
4. At ten o'clock yesterday
5. Just now

### 2.3.2.Past Continuous Tense

Past Continuous Tense is used to indicate an action that was happening at a defined time in the past. Past Continuous Tense is a construction. It is express made up of the past tense of the auxiliary be + Ing ( present participle ) form of the verb. According to Jurnal of Hassan Mergani Mohamed Aidaroos, Phd (2015 ; 25) said that Hewings "Using the past continuous indicates that the action was in progress during the past period of time. It is also called progressivetenseand weuse it to say what we were in the middle of doing at a particular moment in the past."We can use the past continuous, particularly in spoken English, when we want to emphasize that repeated actions went on for a limited and temporary period of past time".

The Pattern of Past Continuous Tense

(+) S + was/were + V ing + O + C  
 (-) S + was/were + not + V ing + O + C  
 (?) Was/were + S + V ing + O + C ?  
     Yes, S + Was/were  
     No, S + Was/were + not

Example :

1. (+) I was going to Malang yesterday morning

(-) I was not going to Malang yesterday morning

(?) Was I going to Malang yesterday morning ? Yes, I was / No, I wasn't.

2. (+) Riris was sweeping the floor

(-) Riris was not sweeping the floor

(?)Was Riris sweeping the floor ? Yes, she was/ No she wasn't

3. (+) He was sleeping when i come

(-) He was not sleeping when i come

(?) Was he sleeping when i come ? Yes, he was/No, he wasn't

Time Signal of Past Continuous Tense :

1. Yesterday morning/ night/ afternoon
2. At this time yesterday
3. At the present last week

4. At the moment last month
5. All days yesterday
6. The whole day yesterday, etc

If we state two activities that occur together, we can report this in combination using "while/when"

Example : Jasmine was having lunch while her mom was ironing the clothes.

Past Continuous Tense may be used in the following ways :

1. To indicate an action that was in progress at a define time in the past.

Example : They were eating soto at this time yesterday

2. To indicate an action that was happening at the same time as another event in the past.

Example : When Budi come home, Alfi was waiting for him

### 2.3.3 Past Perfect Tense

Past Perfect Tense is used to describe events or activities that have been done before the activity or other events occurred in the past. Past Perfect Tense is a construction made of had + past participle form of the verb. According to Jurnal of Hassan Mergani Mohamed Aidaroos, Phd (2015 ; 25) said that Richard Side & Guy Wellman "The past perfect tense is used to show that an action took place before another one in the past (the past in the past)"We use Past Perfect to talk about things that took place before something else in the past."

The Pattern of Past Perfect Tense

1. Verbal

(+) S + Had + V3 + O + C  
 (-) S + Had + Not + V3+ O + C  
 (?) Had + S + V3 + O + C ?  
     Yes, S + Had  
     No. S + Had + not

Example :

1. (+) I had eaten Soto

(-) I had not gone to school

(?) Had she graduated from her school ?

Yes, she had/ No, she had

Time Signal of Past Perfect Tense

1. Before 3. After 4. When.

Past Perfect Tense may be used in the following ways:

1. To indicate an action that has been done in the past or not related with the present.

Example : I had taken a nap for 35 minutes.

2. Used to make conditional sentences type 3.

Example : If you had told me the truth, i would have phoned her.

3. To indicate two actions where the first action has finished when the second was happening.

We have to used conjunction :

1. After + (Past Perfect)
2. Before + (Simple Past)
3. When + (Simple Past)

Example :

1. My grandmother passed away after I had got a job
2. I had got a job before my grandmother passed away
3. I had got a job when my grandmother passed away

#### 2.3.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense

The past perfect continuous is used to explain an act or event that has been done at the same time as another event happened. The past perfect continuous is composed of two elements - the past perfect of the verb *to be* (=had been) + the present participle (base+ing). According to Jurnal of Hassan Mergani Mohamed Aidaroos, Phd (2015 ; 25) said that (Eckersley C.E. & Eckersley J. M 1981 ; 180) "The past perfect continuous tense is like the past perfect tense, but it expresses longer actions in the past before another action in the past." It is used to express the duration of an action up to a certain time in the past".

The Pattern of Past Perfect Continuous Tense

(+) S + Had + Been + V ing + O + C  
 (-) S + Had + Not + Been + V ing + O + C  
 (?) Had + S + Been + O + C ?  
 Yes, S + Had  
 No, S + Had + Not

1. (+) I had been waiting for you for 15 minutes

(-) I had not been waiting for you for 15 minutes

(?) Had I been waiting for you for 15 minutes ? Yes, I had/ No, I hadn't

2. (+) He had been working for 5 years

(-) He had not been working for 5 years

(?) Had he been working for 5 years ? Yes, He had/ No, He hadn't

3. (+) He had been living in Jakarta about ten years when we moved there

(-) He had not been living in Jakarta about ten years when we moved there

(?) Had he not been living in Jakarta about ten years when we moved there ?

Yes, he had/ No, he hadn't

Time Signal of Past Perfect Continuous Tense

1. When, 2 For, 3 since

Past Perfect Continuous Tense may be used in the following ways:

1. To indicate an action that had finished in the past and contain duration time.

Example : They had been living in Jakarta since April 2010

2. To indicate two action where the first action had been happening when the second action happened.

Example : We had been waiting for him for an hour when he came late.

There are two kinds of verbs that express simple past tense, they are :

1. Regular Verbs

Regular verbs are verb 1 that added *-ed* ending

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Play	Played	Played
Guide	Guided	Guided
Finish	Finished	Finished
Help	Helped	Helped
Ask	Asked	Asked
Clean	Cleaned	Cleaned
Follow	Followed	Followed
Hunt	Hunted	Hunted
Open	Opened	Opened
Protect	Protected	Protected
Participate	Participated	Participated
Pick	Picked	Picked
Wish	Wished	Wished
Solve	Solved	Solved
Save	Saved	Saved
Expect	Expected	Expected
Organize	Organized	Organized
Invite	Invited	Invited
Notice	Noticed	Noticed
Imagine	Imagined	Imagined
Join	Joined	Joined
Pack	Packed	Packed
Arrest	Arrested	Arrested
Appear	Appeared	Appeared

When the verb ends in *-e*, we only have to add *-d*

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Love	Loved	Loved
Debate	Debated	Debated
Erase	Erased	Erased
Dance	Danced	Danced
Note	Noted	Noted
Invite	Invited	Invited
Move	Moved	Moved
Surprise	Surprised	Surprised

When the verb ends in consonant *-y*, we change *-y* for *-i* and then add *-ed*

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Cry	Cried	Cried
Study	Studied	Studied
Fry	Fried	Fried
Try	Tried	Tired
Worry	Worried	Worried
Carry	Carried	Carried
Identify	Identified	Identified
Dry	Dried	Dried

When the verb ends in vowel -y after vocal, just add -ed

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Play	Played	Played
Obey	Obeyed	Obeyed
Destroy	Destroyed	Destroyed
Enjoy	Enjoyed	Enjoyed

When we have a verb and this verb ends in CVC (Consonant, Vocal, Consonant), we double the last consonant and add -ed

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Stop	Stopped	Stopped
Wrap	Wrapped	Wrapped
Plan	Planned	Planned
Travel	Travelled	Travelled
Program	Programmed	Programmed
Chat	Chatted	Chatted

## 2. Irregular Verbs

There is no rule for these verbs, we do not put -ed and -d in the end. We have to memorize them.

Example :

Verb I	Verb II	Verb III
Buy	Bought	Bought
Come	Came	Come
Take	Took	Taken
Eat	Ate	Eaten

## 3. Method of Research.

### 3.1 Method of Research

3.1.1 Kinds of this research is descriptive. In this study, the writer evaluated the problems by making research, they are : library research and field research. In library research the writer read some books from the library that has relation with the topic. Beside that, she took the references by reading from internet. In field research, the writer did the research by going to MH. Thamrin Language School and give the question sheet to the students of MH. Thamrin Language School. After finding the data, the writer analyzes it. To be unable if

they get score 0-59, and able if they get score 60-100.

### 3.2 The Population and Sample

The population is quite necessary as sample in the field research to find the data. The population of this study is MH. Thamrin Language School. The total class of the students are 15 classes, they are Primary (3 classes), Basic (5 classes), Junior (5 classes) and Senior (3 classes). The writer chooses Junior Grade (3 classes) as her sample

### 3.3 The Instrument of Collecting Data

The writer used question sheets. The writer collected the students in the class, then the writer gave question sheets to the students that consist of essay test and changed the sentences into positive, negative or interrogative sentences. Those are 20 essay questions, and 5 questions to change the following sentences into positive, negative or interrogative sentences. The time was given 60 minutes. So all questions are 25 questions. Then the writer collected the answer sheet.

The writer distributed the test and the answer sheet.

1. The writer gave the instruction how to answer the test.
2. The allocated time only 60 minutes to answer all the questions.
3. After the students had finished doing the test, the writer collected the answer sheet.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

In this research, The writer analyzed the data by giving a test. The writer gave the paper of questions sheet to the students without explaining the topic and the students have to be answered. After the students answered the question sheet that the writer was given, she collected the paper that have been answered and then gave the score. The writer will give the total marks is 100 for all the answer, for essay is 80 score (20 questions) and the 20 score to change the sentences into positive, negative or interrogative sentences (5 questions). After finding the data of students' MH. Thamrin Language School Tebing Tinggi, the writer will give the criteria of level achievement in this paper as follow :

Score	Category	Explanation
90 -100	Excellent	Able
80 - 89	Very Good	Able
60 - 79	Good	Able
0 - 59	Bad	Unable

From this level achievement, the writer will know how many students could answer the question well and improve the difficulties of the students in using Past Tense ( Simple Past Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Tense, and Past Perfect Continuous Tense ). Their ability will be categorized to be able if they get score 60-100 and to be unable if they get score 0-59.

#### 4. Finding

In this chapter, the writer would like to explain the results of the research that have been taken from the students at MH. Thamrin Languange School Tebing Tinggi in using Past Tense. The data obtained by giving test consisting of essay test and changed the sentences into positive, negative or interrogative sentences. The test can be looked at appendix. The data was the students' answer on the test. In scoring the result of the test, the writer uses the formula as follows :

$$S = R/Q \times 100$$

So :

S : Score of students

R : The sum of correct answer

Q : The sum of question

Example :  $S = 16/25 \times 100$

$$S = 64$$

16 : The sum of correct answer (R)

25 : The sum of question (Q)

64 : Score of student (S)

The data of students' ability in answering questions :

No	Name	Score	Categorize	Ability
1	Marisha Yosepa S	80	Very Good	Able
2	Erizca Amanda S	84	Very Good	Able
3	Selsi Liztia H	72	Good	Able
4	Lianty	84	Very Good	Able
5	Steven Wijaya	88	Very Good	Able
6	Elysbeth Sijabat	52	Bad	Unable
7	Syifa Febriana R	88	Very Good	Able
8	Sutriyaningsih	64	Good	Able
9	Josephine Angelica S	96	Excellent	Able
10	Sellyna Nova I	96	Excellent	Able
11	Difani Mutia Ika P D	76	Good	Able
12	Erphy Maria S	76	Good	Able
13	Gracia Amelia S	80	Very Good	Able
14	Bertha	40	Bad	Unable
15	Theresia Widya A	76	Good	Able
16	Dyah Ayu Lestari G	100	Excellent	Able
17	Athiyyah Inaayah	96	Excellent	Able
18	Novita Hotmauli S	84	Very Good	Able
19	Yudhistira Aidil F	84	Very Good	Able

20	Rio Yabbes Tpubolot	80	Very Good	Able
21	Pasya Aulia	36	Bad	Unable
22	Rizaldi	92	Excellent	Able
23	Adinda Yusri Nzhifa	88	Very Good	Able
24	Vira Ananda	48	Bad	Unable
25	Hafliza Amira	68	Good	Able
26	Chintya Novianti	44	Bad	Unable
27	Raymon Adrian S	96	Excellent	Able

Percentage of the able students, by patterns :

$$P = (C/TS) \times 100\%$$

C = the total of students categorized excellent/very good/good/and bad

TS = the total of students

<b>Excellent:</b> $P = (6/27) \times 100\% = 22\%$	<b>Very Good</b> $P = (10/27) \times 100\% = 37\%$
<b>Good:</b> $P = (6/27) \times 100\% = 22\%$	<b>Bad:</b> $P = (5/27) \times 100\% = 19\%$

The result of percentage of students in answering the questions

No	Categorize	Total	Percentage
1	Excellent	6	22%
2	Very good	10	37%
3	Good	6	22%
4	Bad	5	19%

After seeing the table percentage of students in answering the questions, the writer found that 22 students categorized able to answer the questions about past tense and 5 students categorized unable to answer the questions about past tense.

Here is the table percentage of able and unable students in answering the questions.

No	Categorize	Total	Percentage
1	Able	22	81%
2	Unable	5	19%
	Total	27	100%

#### 4.1. Discussions

Based on the answer of the students, the writer concludes that the students of MH. Thamrin Language School are able in using Past Tense. The writer found that 22 students (81%) of MH. Thamrin Language School are able to answer the questions ( Excellent = 6 students (22%), Very Good = 10 students (37%), Good = 6 students (22%), and 5 students (19%) are unable to answer the question). The lowest score is 36 and the highest score is 100.

After finishing correct the answer sheets, the writer found the students of MH. Thamrin Language School have many mistakes in answering questions about Past Perfect Continuous Tense.

These are some questions in past perfect continuous tense that students have many mistakes to answer it.

1. Yuni was not paying attention. She (think) about her problem.

Some of the students answer **had been thought**

The right answer is **had been thinking** because the pattern of past perfect continuous (**positif (+)**) is **S + Had + Been + Ving**

2. Agus \_\_\_\_\_ (not, live) in Jakarta

Some of the students answer **had been not lived**

The answer is **had not been living** because the pattern of past perfect continuous (**negative (-)**) is **S + Had + Been + Not + Ving**

From the examples of the students' answer above, we know that some of the students of MH. Thamrin Language School didn't understand and still confused in using past perfect continuous tense. When the writer asked directly to them, they said that they forgot about the pattern. So, the writer suggests to the students that they must study hard about past perfect continuous tense. The writer also suggests the students to pay attention to the teacher when teaching the lesson. They must ask their teacher if they don't understand yet about the lesson.

#### 4.2 Conclusions

Based on the data analysis about the ability in using Past Tense, it can be concluded as follows:

1. The writer concluded that the students of MH. Thamrin Language School are able in using Past Tense. According to the result of the research as follows, the test, there are 81% (22) students of MH. Thamrin Language School are able in answering questions and got good scores and 19% (5) students of MH. Thamrin Language School are unable in answering the questions and got bad scores.
2. The difficulties found from the students of MH. Thamrin Language School

in using Past Tense are they were still confused about the pattern of Past Perfect Continuous Tense. Many of the students got many mistakes to answer questions about Past Perfect Continuous Tense because they forgot about the pattern.