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Syntactic Study of Linguistic Competence on the Use of Simple Present Tense among some Student of Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State.

Abstract

This study investigates the inadequate linguistic competence on the use of the simple present tense among some students of Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State. The research aims to assess how deficiencies in linguistic skills impact students' mastery and application of the simple present tense. The specific objectives are to explicate and identify the types of errors related to the use of present tense. The study employs a descriptive research design with qualitative method. The sources of data for the study is students' written essays collected from the department of science laboratory technology (SLT) examinations and records in the study area. This study is anchored on the theory of Error Analysis, propounded by Corder in 1967. Timeline is used as Instrument for data analysis. Data analysis is conducted through a detailed syntactic examination of the texts, focusing on errors in simple present tense usage and verb forms within sentence structures. The categories of errors include: historic present, factual statements, daily routines, scheduled events, commands and descriptive expressions. The findings reveal a significant prevalence of errors, including incorrect tense agreement and improper verb conjugation, indicating poor understanding and application of the simple present tense. The study recommends the development and implementation of targeted grammar instruction and workshops that address the specific syntactic challenges identified. Additionally, incorporating more practice and feedback mechanisms into the curriculum is suggested to improve students' grammatical competence. These measures aim to enhance students' linguistic abilities and reduce errors in tense usage, thereby contributing to better overall language proficiency.

Keywords: Syntax, English, Tense, Competence, Features

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The study of English syntax, particularly the simple present tense, is crucial for understanding sentence structures and grammatical rules. Syntax governs the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formedness of sentences. This framework is essential for the correct use of the simple present tense. The use of the present tense is a fundamental aspect of English grammar, pivotal for clear communication and effective writing. As a core element

of linguistic competence, mastery of the use of simple present tense is essential for students, particularly in tertiary institutions where academic and professional communication skills are honed. This study focuses on the effects of linguistic competence on the use of the simple present tense among some students at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Moreover, linguistic competence encompasses an individual's understanding of grammar, otherwise language rules, which is crucial for correct language use (Chomsky, 1965; 1957). As part of this competence, mastering the simple present tense is essential, as it reflects a speaker's ability to use fundamental grammatical structures accurately. The simple present tense is used to describe habitual actions, general truths, and fixed arrangements, requiring precise grammatical knowledge for correct application (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). However, students often struggle with its use, particularly in differentiating between its various functions, such as historic present, factual statements, habitual actions, schedules, descriptions, and commands (Murphy, 2019). These challenges are exacerbated by factors like poor instructional methods, first language interference, and limited exposure to English in practical contexts (Ellis, 2006).

Conversely, Federal Polytechnic, Bali provides a pertinent context for examining these issues due to its diverse student population and varied linguistic backgrounds. As English is Nigeria's official language and the primary medium of instruction, the institution faces the challenge of ensuring that students achieve a high level of linguistic competence amidst the complexities of English language learning. The syntactic use of the simple present tense in academic writing, assignments, and examinations highlights the need for students to master this grammatical component. Failure to do so can lead to misunderstandings, poor academic performance, and hindered professional communication skills (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Understanding the relationship between linguistic competence and the correct syntactic use of the simple present tense offers valuable insights into the educational needs of students. By investigating how different levels of linguistic competence impact the correct usage of this tense, linguists, educators, and curriculum developers should be in a better position to address the gaps in knowledge and provide targeted interventions (Schmitt, 2010). This research aims to identify errors, assess the impact of linguistic competence on these errors, determine the grammatical conditions for each usage, and recommend strategies to enhance mechanical accuracy among the students.

Moreover, grammar is a fundamental concept in linguistics that encompasses syntax, morphology, phonology, and semantics (Isa, 2019). Syntax examines sentence structures and word order (Chomsky, 1957). Morphology studies word formation and internal structures, addressing morphemes as the smallest meaningful units (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011). Phonology focuses on sound shape and how they are pronounced, including phonemes and their patterns (Odden, 2013). Semantics on the other hand, analyses meaning in language, connecting words and sentences to their meanings (Lyons, 1995). Together, these components illustrate how grammar governs linguistic rules for producing and understanding language, highlighting its comprehensive nature in shaping effective communication.

Therefore, the finding of this study is expected to contribute to the broader field of English linguistics and language education by highlighting specific areas where students require additional remedy. Ultimately, improving students' linguistic competence in the simple present tense can lead to better communication skills, academic success, and professional readiness, aligning with the educational goals of Federal Polytechnic, Bali. Moreover, these insights can foster the development of effective teaching methodologies and resources, tailored towards addressing the unique linguistic challenges faced by the participants. This study seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice, thereby

application, providing actionable recommendations to enhance the linguistic competence of students in the study area and beyond.

Statement of the problem

The Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State, operates in a multilingual environment where English serves as the medium of instruction. However, many students struggle with the correct use of the simple present tense in both academic and everyday communication. This grammatical difficulty is evident in their misuse of the tense when expressing habitual actions, factual statements, scheduled events, and descriptions. Observations indicate frequent errors, such as incorrect subject-verb agreement and improper tense application, which hinder effective communication and academic performance. The problem is worsened by several factors, including the influence of students' native languages, inadequate teaching methodologies, and limited opportunities for English language practice. Additionally, many instructional materials and English instructors are non-native speakers, which may contribute to inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Existing literature does not comprehensively address this issue, leaving a gap that this study seeks to fill. Without a solid grasp of the simple present tense, students struggle to convey ideas clearly, affecting their overall linguistic competence. If this issue remains unaddressed, students may continue to experience challenges in their academic writing, comprehension, and professional communication. This study aims to identify the common errors associated with the simple present tense, analyse their causes, and propose effective teaching strategies to improve grammatical accuracy, thereby enhancing students' academic and professional success.

Aim and objectives

This study aims to examine the effects of inadequate linguistic competence on the use of simple present tense among the students of Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State, through the following specific objectives which are to:

- I. identify errors made by students in using the simple present tense.
- II. investigate the factors responsible for the grammatical errors.
- III. suggest strategies for improving students' linguistic competence in using simple present tense.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to address critical issues in Linguistics and English language in the study area and similar institutions across Nigeria. By investigating the effects of linguistic competence on the use of the simple present tense, this research provides a valuable understanding of how students' grammatical proficiency impacts their academic and communicative effectiveness. Understanding the specific challenges faced by students in using the simple present tense is crucial for improving their overall language skills, which are essential for academic success and professional readiness.

The study's findings contribute to the development of more effective linguistic analysis and teaching strategies which tailored to the needs of students with varying levels of linguistic competence. By identifying the errors and their underlying causes, linguists and educators can design targeted interventions and instructional methods that address these specific challenges. This can lead to enhanced grammatical accuracy, better writing skills, and more effective communication. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of linguistic competence in mastering English grammar, providing a framework for evaluating and improving syntactic usage of present simple tense and teaching practices. It also offers a

basis for future studies on language learning challenges in diverse educational contexts, particularly in regions with linguistic diversity.

Ultimately, this study aims to bridge gaps in linguistics and language education by offering actionable recommendations for enhancing students' grammatical skills. This not only supports their academic performance but also prepares them for professional environments where clear and accurate communication is critical. Thus, the study has the potential to make a significant impact on linguistics, educational practices and student outcomes at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, and beyond.

Scope and limitation of the study

This study is in the purview of grammar under syntax. use of the simple present tense among the students of Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State, analysing errors and their relation to linguistic competence within the context of syntax only. It limited to students' practical experiences.

Conceptual review

This conceptual review explores the syntactic approach to English syntax, emphasizing linguistic competence and its application to the simple present tense. By examining foundational theories from prominent scholars, the review highlights how syntactic structures and rules underpin effective communication and comprehensive skills.

Syntactic approach in linguistics

The syntactic approach in linguistics focuses on the structure of sentences, examining how words combine to form grammatically correct sentences. Some prominent scholars have significantly contributed to this field, namely: Chomsky, Jackendoff, & Bresnan among others. A scholar revolutionized the study of syntax with his theory of generative grammar, proposing that the ability to generate grammatically correct sentences is innate to humans. Chomsky introduced concepts like deep structure and surface structure, arguing that understanding syntax involves recognizing the underlying rules that govern sentence formation. His work laid the foundation for modern syntactic theory, emphasizing the importance of innate linguistic knowledge (Chomsky, 1965). Another scholar extends Chomsky's ideas, integrating syntax with semantics and cognitive science. This model posits that syntax, semantics, and phonology are distinct yet interrelated components of language. This approach highlights the interaction between syntactic structures and meaning, providing a more comprehensive understanding of language processing (Jackendoff, 2002).

Additionally, another scholar who develops Lexical-Functional Grammar is Bresnan, (2001), henceforth (LFG). It focuses on the relationship between syntactic structures and functional roles. LFG emphasizes the importance of both syntactic rules and lexical information in sentence formation. Bresnan's work has been influential in explaining syntactic variation across languages, emphasizing the adaptability of syntactic structures.

These scholars collectively elucidate the importance of syntax in understanding language. Their contributions highlight different aspects of syntactic theory, from the innate structures proposed by Chomsky to the interaction between syntax and semantics emphasized by Jackendoff, and the functional perspectives provided by Bresnan. Their work continues to shape the study of syntax, offering valuable insights into the complexities of language structure and processing which include simple present tense.

English syntax

The simple present tense in English syntax is fundamental for expressing habitual actions, general truths, and states of being. Scholars of syntactic theories have explored rules and applications extensively. One of the prominent linguists, provides detailed insights into English syntax. He discusses the role of the simple present tense in conveying timeless statements and habitual actions. He emphasizes the importance of syntactic rules for ensuring clarity and precision in communication. Examples include "The earth orbits the sun" and "She visits her grandparents every Sunday," which demonstrate general truths and habitual actions, respectively (Aarts, 2011).

Crystal, (2012) is another figure in linguistics, who examines the use of the simple present tense within the broader context of English grammar. He highlights that the simple present tense is frequently used to describe routines, habits, and universal truths. His analysis emphasizes the need for proper syntactic structure to convey these meanings accurately. For instance, "*Dogs bark*" and "*The sun rises in the east*" are examples that showcase the tense's function in describing habitual actions and universal truths.

Leech, (2004) is known for his work on English grammar and semantics. This provides another perspective on the simple present tense. He explains that this tense is used not only for habitual actions and general truths but also for instructions and fixed future events. He points out that understanding the syntactic patterns governing these uses is crucial for effective communication. Examples of such are "*Open the door*". and "*The train leaves at 6 PM*". These illustrate application in instructions and fixed future events.

To crown it all, Aarts emphasizes the importance of syntactic rules for conveying timeless statements and habitual actions. Crystal focuses on routines, habits, and universal truths, highlighting the need for proper syntactic structure. Leech expands the scope to include instructions and fixed future events, underscoring the role of syntax in effective communication.

Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence, a key concept in syntactic theory, refers to a speaker's inherent knowledge of his/her language's rules and structures, enabling him/her to produce and understand grammatically correct sentences. Linguistic competence, a foundational concept in syntactic theory, encompasses some contributions from the following scholars:

Chomsky introduced the concept of Universal Grammar, emphasizing that all humans have an inherent ability to understand and use the syntactic structures of their native language. He further suggests that linguistic competence includes the ability to form correct sentences like "*She walks to school*" in the simple present tense, reflecting an innate grasp of grammatical rules. (Chomsky, 2015).

Hymes (1972) expanded Noam Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence by introducing communicative competence, emphasizing the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. For example, greeting a friend informally versus addressing a professor formally illustrates how sociolinguistic skills complement grammar knowledge. Hymes argued that language proficiency includes grammatical knowledge and sociolinguistic skills, shaping modern language teaching and sociolinguistics.

Another scholar highlights the importance of the natural acquisition of language structures, including tense usage, as part of linguistic competence. More to that, he explains that through natural language exposure, learners internalize the syntactic rules of the simple present tense, as seen in sentences like "*He eats breakfast every day*" (Krashen, 1982).

In another view, a scholar focuses on the functional aspects of linguistic competence, which involves using language effectively in various contexts. He further argues that understanding how to use the simple present tense to convey habitual actions or general truths, such as "*Birds fly south in winter*," is crucial for effective communication (Halliday, 2004).

Therefore, Chomsky's Universal Grammar posits innate syntactic knowledge, essential for forming sentences like "*She walks to school*." Krashen emphasizes natural language acquisition, internalizing rules like "*He eats breakfast every day*." Halliday highlights functional use, focusing on conveying habitual actions or truths, exemplified by "*Birds fly south in winter*."

Simple present tense as a syntactic concept

The simple present tense in English syntax is fundamental for expressing habitual actions, general truths, and states of being. Scholars such as Chomsky have explored the syntactic theory, its rules and applications extensively. One of the linguists, provides proper understanding of English syntax. He discusses the functions of the simple present tense in conveying timeless statements and habitual actions. He emphasizes the importance of syntactic rules for ensuring clarity and precision in communication. Examples include "*The earth orbits the sun*" and "*She visits her grandparents every Sunday*," which demonstrate general truths and habitual actions, respectively (Aarts, 2011).

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Usage and importance of the simple present tense

The historic present conveys immediacy, making events feel more vivid and engaging (White, 2023; Kirkpatrick, 2021), e.g., "*She visits the museum*" for ongoing significance. Facts use simple present for timeless truths (Green, 2020), e.g., "*The sun rises in the east*." Daily routines and commands also use the simple present for regular actions (Smith, 2019), e.g., "*She wakes up early*." Descriptive language uses the simple present for habitual actions (Jones, 2022), e.g., "*The cat sits on the mat*." The simple present tense expresses scheduled events, indicating fixed plans or timetables (Miller, 2021), e.g., "*Marafa departs Bali for Jalingo tomorrow*."

Therefore, simple present tense conveys immediacy in storytelling, expresses timeless facts, and describes daily routines and commands. It is also used for habitual actions in descriptive language and to indicate scheduled events or fixed plans. These functions make it essential for clear and effective communication in various contexts.

Comparative characteristics of English and African languages

Phonology: Mbah (2022) notes that English is stress-timed, meaning certain syllables are stressed more than others, creating a rhythm. For instance, in "*banana*," the second syllable is stressed. In contrast, Yoruba is syllable-timed, with each syllable receiving equal emphasis. For example, "*ọkọ*" (meaning "husband" or "vehicle") has equal stress on both syllables.

Aboh (2018) highlights that English relies on word order, particularly the Subject-Verb-Object structure, to indicate grammatical relationships. For example, in English, "*She eats rice*" follows a fixed order to convey meaning. However, many African languages, such as Igbo and Yoruba, rely on inflection and tone to express tense distinctions.

For instance, in Igbo, "*Ọ na-azụ anụ*" (He/she buys meat) employs the prefix "*na-*" to indicate an ongoing action, contrasting with English, where the simple present typically expresses habitual actions rather than ongoing ones. Similarly, in Yoruba, "*Ọ ra eran*" (He/she buys meat) lacks auxiliary verbs, unlike English, which differentiates between simple and continuous forms. These structural differences lead to challenges for African language speakers learning English, particularly in the correct use of the simple present tense.

Semantics: Bamgbose (2017) observes that African languages frequently use proverbs and idiomatic expressions. In Zulu, the phrase "*Inkunzi isematholeni*" (The bull is among the calves) implies that young people have potential. English, conversely, tends to be more direct, saying "*The youth have potential*."

As a result, the disparity in tense between English and African languages stems from structural and functional differences. Many African languages rely on aspect rather than strict tense distinctions, unlike English, which has a more rigid tense system. Therefore, these differences necessitate culturally aware teaching methods and translations to ensure effective communication and understanding between English and African languages.

Empirical review

Selinker (1972), discovers that fossilization, or the stagnation in language learning, leads to persistent errors in tense usage, including the simple present tense, due to inadequate linguistic competence. He emphasizes the need for continuous, context-based practice to mitigate fossilization effects. However, his study focuses broadly on second language learners without specific attention to particular educational institutions or regions, such as Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State. This general approach leaves a gap in understanding the localized issues of inadequate linguistic competence affecting simple present tense usage in this specific context.

Brown (2000) found that students with inadequate linguistic competence struggle significantly with the correct usage of tenses, including the simple present tense, which impacts overall language proficiency. He recommends incorporating metacognitive strategies in language instruction to enhance linguistic competence. Despite its valuable insights, Brown's study covers various tenses and aspects of language learning broadly, without focusing specifically on the simple present tense among students at polytechnics. This broad scope leaves a gap for research that targets the unique challenges faced by students at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State, in mastering the simple present tense.

Ellis (2006) found out that explicit grammar instruction significantly improves students' use of the simple present tense, although retention over time varies. He recommends combining explicit instruction with regular practice to enhance retention. However, Ellis's study is limited by its short duration and lack of longitudinal follow-up, restricting understanding of the long-term effects of grammar instruction. Additionally, the study does not specifically address students at polytechnic institutions. This gap indicates a need for further research in prolonged settings like Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State, to better understand the impact of explicit grammar instruction on the use of the simple present tense.

Therefore, a gap to be filled by this study is the lack of targeted research on the effects of inadequate linguistic competence on the use of the simple present tense among students at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Taraba State. Previous studies by Selinker, Brown, and Ellis focus broadly on second language learners without addressing the specific challenges faced in this localized context syntactically over extended periods.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on the Theory of Error Analysis, henceforth (EA), propounded by Stephen Pit Corder in 1967, which emphasizes the significance of learners' errors in understanding second language acquisition processes. EA highlights errors as valuable insights into learners' interlanguage and linguistic challenges. Scholars like Richards (1971) explored EA to classify errors and their sources, identifying intralingual and interlingual influences. Selinker (1972) applied EA in his work on fossilization, explaining why certain errors persist. Similarly, Dulay and Burt (1974) utilized EA to examine error patterns in child language acquisition. To complement EA, this study also draws on Selinker's (1972) Interlanguage Theory, particularly the concept of overgeneralization or simplification, where learners apply known rules incorrectly across different linguistic contexts. Anchoring this study in both EA and Interlanguage Theory provides a robust framework to analyze students' challenges with the simple present tense, linking their errors to developmental, transfer, and cognitive processes while considering the dynamic nature of interlanguage formation.

Method for data collection

The research design is descriptive survey. The method for data is documentation which is qualitative component involves collecting, assessing, categorising and analysing exam scripts from ND II SLT students, aged 20-25, and enrolled in the 2022/2023 academic session precisely second semester. The scripts were examined for accuracy in using the simple present tense. The accessed scripts were 99 out of 109 some were rejected due to poor handwriting of some students for clinical research. The analysis is done for the identified corrected versions of common patterns and types of errors with a focus on: historic present, factual statements, habitual statements or daily routine, scheduled expressions, commands and descriptive use of language. This is as a result of adapting qualitative approach in this study. The method aligns with the approach used by Ellis (1994), who emphasized the importance of error analysis in understanding learner language and interlanguage development.

Timeline is adopted in this study to analyse simple present tense involves distinguishing between three key points: Event (E), Speech (S), and Reference (R). This method helps in understanding the temporal relationships in tense usage, ensuring precise grammatical analysis (Börjars & Burridge, 2010).

Data presentation

Table 1: Presents errors committed by the participants alongside the corrected versions, factors responsible and the strategies for correcting each as thus:

Categories from context	Error sentence	Corrected sentence	Factors responsible for the error	Strategies for correction: is to show clarity and avoid fossilisation
1.Command	Please, you will bring me the book tomorrow.	Please, you bring me the book tomorrow.	Developmental process – overgeneralization of future markers.	Removing "will" clarifies direct future commands, ensuring proper syntax.
2. Daily routine	Bara'u attend the class every day.	Bara'u attends the class every day.	Transfer process – influence from native language without third-person singular agreement.	Correct verb form aligns with English grammar rules for habitual actions, preventing fossilization.
3. Description	Our class rep. look gorgeous today.	Our class rep. looks gorgeous today.	Transfer process – failure to apply subject-verb agreement.	Correct verb form ensures descriptive accuracy and prevents fossilized errors.
4.Fact	The sun rise in the west.	The sun rises in the east.	Developmental process – lack of understanding of universal truths.	Correct verb use reflects universal facts, preventing misconceptions.
5.Historic present	The crowd cheered as the Rector stepped onto the stage.	The crowd cheers as the Rector steps onto the stage.	Cognitive process – misunderstanding narrative techniques.	Universal application of the historic present aids clarity and avoids fossilization.
6.Schedule	Musa will depart Bali for Jalingo tomorrow.	Musa departs Bali for Jalingo tomorrow.	Cognitive process – misapplication of future tense to scheduled events.	Using present simple for schedules ensures grammatical accuracy and relatability.

Data analysis

This study uses Timeline to interpret and analyse the data presented in table 1 above. This shows a clear distinction of the temporal relationships in tense usage and ensure precise grammatical analysis. This can be supported by the following analysis from each corrected version of the findings as thus:

- Historic present:** The crowd cheers as the Rector steps onto the stage.

S

E
R

—————→
Past Present Future

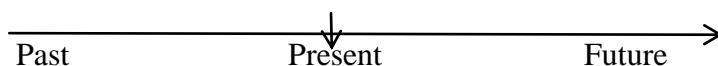
The shift from present tense in "The crowd cheers as the Rector steps onto the stage" to past tense in "The crowd cheered as the Rector stepped onto the stage" alters the immediacy and vividness of the narrative. The original sentence conveys a sense of

immediacy, placing the reader in the moment as events unfold, enhancing engagement. Conversely, the participants' version distances the reader, making the event feel completed and less engaging. This error highlights a lack of awareness of tense consistency, which can erode the effectiveness of communication. Addressing this can significantly enhance narrative clarity and impact.

2. **Factual statement:** Water boils at 100% .

S

E
R

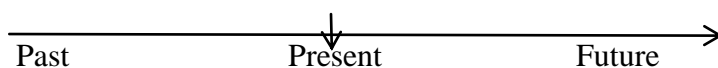


Inadequate linguistic competence among SLT students leads to errors like "Water will boil at 100%." instead of the correct version "Water boils at 100%." The correct form uses the simple present tense "boils" for factual statements, while the incorrect form uses "will boil," which is typically for future events, making the factual statement less accurate.

3. **Daily routine:** Bara'u attends lectures everyday.

S

R E
R R R

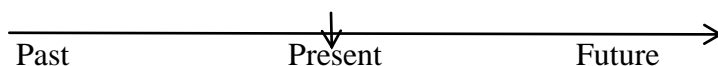


Inadequate linguistic competence leads to errors like "Bara'u attend lectures every day" instead of the correct "Bara'u attends lectures every day." The correct form uses "attends" to indicate a daily routine, adhering to subject-verb agreement in the simple present tense. The incorrect form, lacking this agreement, disrupts clarity and grammatical accuracy.

4. **Scheduled events:** Musa departs Bali for Jalingo tomorrow.

S

E R

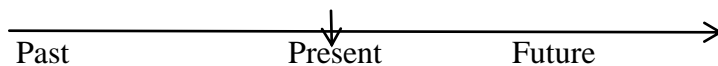


Inadequate linguistic competence results in errors like "Musa will departs Bali for Jalingo tomorrow" instead of the correct "Musa departs Bali for Jalingo tomorrow." The correct form uses "departs" in the simple present tense to indicate a scheduled event, while the incorrect form mistakenly combines "will" with "departs," violating standard grammatical rules.

5. **Polite command:** Please, bring the book tomorrow.

S

E R



Inadequate linguistic competence leads to errors like "please, you will bring the book tomorrow" instead of the correct "please, (you) bring the book tomorrow." The incorrect form uses "will," typically for predictions or future plans, making it unsuitable for future

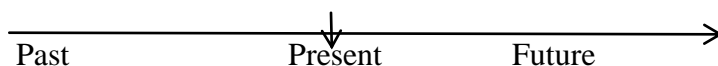
requests. The correct command uses the simple present tense "bring" for polite and direct requests.

6. Descriptive expression: Our class representative looks gorgeous today.

S

E

R



Inadequate linguistic competence among SLT students at Federal Polytechnic, Bali, results in errors like using "look" instead of "looks" in descriptive expressions. This misuse of simple present tense disrupts sentence structure and clarity, as third-person singular subjects require verb conjugation to "looks" for grammatical accuracy.

Therefore, the findings reveal that inadequate linguistic competence, particularly in verb conjugation and tense usage, leads to frequent grammatical errors. This affects participants' written communication by reducing clarity, accuracy, and overall effectiveness in conveying intended meanings.

Summary of the findings:

Historic Present: Students often use the simple present tense incorrectly for past actions, indicating confusion between tense and time reference. **Factual Statements:** Many students fail to use the correct third-person singular form, leading to errors in expressing universal truths. **Daily Routines:** Errors in verb conjugation, especially with habitual actions, are prevalent among students. **Descriptive Expressions:** Misuse of the simple present tense is common, particularly in descriptive contexts, affecting clarity and accuracy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that inadequate linguistic competence significantly affects the correct use of the simple present tense among students of Federal Polytechnic, Bali. These findings suggest the need for enhanced language instruction focusing on tense usage to improve students' syntactic accuracy.

Call for Further Research: Another study is called to explore the impact of linguistic competence on other tenses to equally improve tense accuracy, focusing on a broader participants with focus on oral communication to assess overall linguistic competence.

Recommendations:

- i. Educationists are invited to provide relevant instructional drills for teaching English present tense.
- ii. Language instructors need to be trained and retrained for teaching English present tense.
- iii. Targeted Grammar Workshops: Conduct workshops focusing on verb conjugation, tense usage, and syntactic structures to address specific linguistic weaknesses.
- iv. Practice-Based Learning: Incorporate regular exercises and assignments that require the correct use of simple present tense in various contexts.
- v. Peer Review Sessions: Encourage peer reviews to help students identify and correct each other's errors, fostering collaborative learning.
- vi. Instructor Feedback: Provide detailed, constructive feedback on students' written work, highlighting tense-related errors and offering corrective suggestions.

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