FUNCTION OF TENSES SENTENCES (PAST TENSE, SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE, FUTURE TENSES) IN IMPROVING SPEAKING SKIIL

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Abstrak: Kemampuan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan keterampilan utama dalam komunikasi global yang sangat dipengaruhi oleh penguasaan struktur gramatikal, terutama tenses. Tiga bentuk waktu utama—simple present, past, dan future tense—berperan penting dalam membangun kalimat yang koheren dan bermakna dalam komunikasi lisan. Penguasaan ketiga tense ini tidak hanya mendukung kelancaran berbicara, tetapi juga memperjelas makna pesan serta memperkuat struktur penyampaian ide. Penelitian ini mengadopsi metode studi pustaka dengan menelaah berbagai sumber ilmiah guna mengidentifikasi kontribusi tense dalam peningkatan keterampilan speaking. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman yang baik terhadap penggunaan tenses secara kontekstual berpengaruh positif terhadap kepercayaan diri pembelajar, mengurangi kecemasan dalam berbicara, dan mendukung kemampuan menyusun kalimat yang sistematis. Selain itu, integrasi media digital seperti aplikasi pembelajaran juga terbukti efektif dalam memperkuat pemahaman tense secara praktis. Oleh karena itu, pengajaran tenses sebaiknya tidak hanya dipandang sebagai latihan mekanis, melainkan sebagai strategi integral dalam pengembangan kompetensi berbicara berbahasa Inggris yang efektif.
Kata Kunci: Speaking, Tenses, Simple Present, Past Tense, Future Tense.

Abstract: English speaking ability is a key skill in global communication that is greatly influenced by mastery of grammatical structures, especially tenses. The three main tenses—simple present, past, and future tense—play an important role in constructing coherent and meaningful sentences in oral communication. Mastery of these three tenses not only supports fluency in speaking, but also clarifies the meaning of the message and strengthens the structure of delivering ideas. This study adopts a literature study method by reviewing various scientific sources to identify the contribution of tenses in improving speaking skills. The results of the study indicate that a good understanding of the use of tenses contextually has a positive effect on learners' self-confidence, reduces anxiety in speaking, and supports the ability to construct systematic sentences. In addition, the integration of digital media such as learning applications has also proven effective in strengthening the understanding of tenses practically. Therefore, teaching tenses should not only be viewed as mechanical exercises, but as an integral strategy in developing effective English-speaking competence.
Keywords: Speaking, Tenses, Simple Present, Past Tense, Future Tense.

INTRODUCTION

English speaking ability is one of the important aspects in mastering a foreign language because it involves the integration of linguistic knowledge, thinking skills, and motor skills. In higher education environments, speaking is often used as the main benchmark in assessing the extent to which students are able to communicate ideas and information effectively and in a structured manner. However, a common obstacle faced by many students is the limited mastery of grammar, especially in the application of appropriate tenses.

Tenses play an important role in forming temporally correct sentences, so that the message conveyed can be clearly understood by the listener. The use of tenses such as simple present, past tense, and future tense provides a time frame that helps speakers adjust information according to context. Mistakes in the use of these tenses can cause confusion, misunderstandings, and even communication failures in oral interactions. Therefore, mastery of tenses is not only a matter of grammar rules, but also an important skill in conveying meaning accurately and logically.

Previous research has shown that a good understanding of tenses can increase learners' confidence when speaking. Those who are able to apply tenses correctly tend to be more fluent in conveying ideas, are not easily nervous, and are able to construct clear and coherent sentences (Al-Tamimi, 2014; Bodie, 2010). For example, the simple present tense is commonly used to express habits or facts, the past tense is used to tell past experiences, while the future tense is used to express plans or predictions. These three tenses are the main foundations in the ability to speak grammatically accurate.

Along with the development of technology, the process of learning tenses is also increasingly assisted by the existence of digital media and interactive applications that allow students to learn independently and contextually. An approach that combines grammar theory with speaking practice has proven to be more effective in shaping students' oral competence.

Seeing the importance of the role of tenses in verbal communication, this study aims to further examine how the use of past tense, simple present, and future tense sentences can contribute to improving students' speaking skills in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). It is hoped that this study can provide theoretical understanding as well as practical input in improving the effectiveness of grammar-based speaking learning

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach using library research as the main technique in data collection. The selection of this method is based on the purpose of the study which focuses on an in-depth review of relevant literature in order to understand how the role of tenses, especially simple present, past tense, and future tense, can improve English speaking skills.

Data were obtained from various written sources, both primary and secondary, such as international journals, reference books, scientific articles, and academic reports that discuss the topic of using tenses in the context of speaking skills. The analysis process was carried out by classifying and interpreting information from these sources to reveal patterns and tendencies related to the use of tenses in oral communication.

This study also applies content analysis techniques to explore the contents of the literature based on the main themes that emerge, such as the accuracy of the use of tenses, their impact on listener understanding, and their contribution to self-confidence when speaking. Some of the literature that is the main reference in this study includes the writings of Al-Tamimi (2014), Joshi (2014), Bodie (2010), Sholihin et al. (2023), and various other relevant current sources. Through this method, it is hoped that the research will be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the importance of mastering tenses in speaking practice, while also presenting a theoretical and practical basis for the development of more effective and communicative English learning strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Tenses as a Foundation in Oral Communication

Understanding tenses is a crucial component in forming effective oral communication. Tenses not only indicate the time of an event, but also form a structure of thought in conveying information accurately. Tense is not only a grammatical category that indicates the time of an event, but also a linguistic tool used by speakers to construct discourse and convey temporal perspective (Michaelis 2020). This is in line with the view (Michaelis 2020) which states that tense is not only a time category, but also a linguistic resource to construct discourse and convey temporal perspective. In oral communication, the use of appropriate tense allows the speaker to convey ideas coherently, logically, and easily understood by the interlocutor. For example, the use

of past tense when telling past experiences provides a clear time context, while simple present tense is used to convey habits or general facts. Without this understanding, communication can be ambiguous and lead to misunderstandings (Joshi, 2014).

Furthermore, mastery of various tense forms also affects the speaker's confidence when speaking English. According to Joshi (2014), "tenses are the basis of sentence construction and are essential for expressing time-related ideas correctly" (p. 5). When someone is able to choose and use tenses correctly, for example, using the future tense to convey plans or predictions, they can articulate their ideas in a more structured and professional manner. Therefore, tenses are not just grammatical rules, but the foundation that underlies the fluency and accuracy of oral communication. With continuous practice and contextual understanding of the use of tenses, English speaking skills can improve significantly.

2.   Use of Simple Present Tense

Mastery of the simple present tense plays an important role in improving public speaking skills, especially in the context of conveying general information, facts, routines, or opinions. In a study conducted by (Sholihin, Pertiwi, and Lubis, 2023), it was found that mastery of grammar, especially the simple present tense, has a significant contribution to students' clarity and confidence when speaking in public. Since the simple present tense is often used in formal situations such as presentations, discussions, and self-introductions, students who understand this pattern well tend to be able to construct sentences correctly, without hesitation, and focus more on the content of the delivery.

Furthermore, the study explains that errors in the use of the simple present tense, such as subject-verb agreement, are often factors that hinder students' speaking fluency. When students master this basic structure, they become more confident in conveying ideas because they are not distracted by the fear of making grammatical errors (Sholihin et al., 2023). Thus, practice and reinforcement in the use of the simple present tense not only improve grammar skills but also support the improvement of overall speaking skills, especially in formal communication contexts such as public speaking.

3.   Function of Past Tense in Oral Narration

Although the journal of Sholihin, Pertiwi, and Lubis (2023) focuses on mastering the Simple Present Tense, their findings also show that mastery of grammatical structures in general has a major influence on students' speaking fluency. This can be related to the importance of mastering Past Tense in the context of oral narratives, especially in improving public speaking skills. Good narratives are often retrospective, namely telling past events in a coherent and logical manner. Therefore, mastering Past Tense allows speakers to convey personal experiences, important events, or inspirational stories chronologically, which are important elements in building connections with the audience in public speaking.

Furthermore, based on the findings that grammar structures support students' confidence in speaking (Sholihin et al., 2023), it can be concluded that mastering Past Tense also plays a role in building confidence when delivering oral narratives. When speakers are able to use past tense patterns such as subject + verb-2 correctly, they can convey stories clearly without hesitation or structural errors. This helps increase the credibility and appeal of the overall delivery. Thus, although the focus of the study is on Simple Present Tense, the implications support that strengthening understanding of Past Tense is also important in developing public speaking skills, especially in the context of reflective and inspirational oral narratives.

4.   The Role of Future Tense in Expression of Plans and Predictions

The use of future tense plays an important role in expressing plans and predictions in oral communication. Grammatical structures such as will and be going to make it easier for speakers to express intentions related to the future systematically and easily understood. Azar and Hagen (2009) explain that future tense is not only used to express decisions or intentions, but also to express predictions based on evidence or rational considerations. In the context of public speaking, this is very useful when the speaker wants to convey a vision, plan, or hope for the future in a more focused manner.

In addition, mastery of future tense shows the ability to think in a structured way, which greatly supports self-confidence in public speaking. Brown (2007) emphasizes that understanding aspects of grammar, including tense, is an integral part of language competence that supports effective speaking skills. Therefore, when speakers are able to use future tense correctly, they not

only construct grammatically correct sentences, but also convey ideas more convincingly and professionally, especially in the context of prospective speeches or presentations.

5. The Influence of Tenses on Self-Confidence

Mastery of tenses in English greatly influences learners' self-confidence, especially in the context of speaking and writing. A good understanding of tenses can improve students' fluency in communicating in English, because they feel more confident when constructing the right sentences according to the intended time. This happens because good mastery of tenses helps students avoid mistakes in sentence structure, which are often a source of anxiety and doubt. Conversely, learners who do not master tenses tend to feel worried when speaking or writing, which has an impact on decreasing their confidence in using English (Vacalares, 2023).

6. Speaking-Based Tenses Learning Strategy

Tenses learning should be carried out through contextual and integrative approaches such as role play, storytelling, and group discussions (Ali, 2023). The use of technology such as Grammarly and Duolingo can help learners understand tense patterns and correct mistakes independently (Hamzah & Oktavia, 2022).

The use of a systematic approach in grouping sentences based on tense shows that explicit classification based on time (past, present, future) can improve the clarity of temporal understanding in language use. This model is relevant to be applied in English learning, especially to support grammatically accurate speaking skills. By providing speaking exercises based on certain tense groups, learners can gradually develop time sensitivity in constructing communicative sentences. This is also in line with the pedagogical need to create speaking activities based on structured linguistic data (Thakur et al, 2021).

7. The Effect of Sentence Tense Accuracy on Interlocutor Understanding (Past Tense, Simple Present, Future Tense)

The accuracy of the use of tenses in oral communication plays an important role in ensuring that the message conveyed can be received clearly and does not cause misunderstanding. Sentences that are structured according to the context of time will help listeners better grasp the speaker's intent. As explained by Hansopaheluwakan et al. (2024), mistakes in choosing tense can lead to

ambiguity of meaning, especially in spontaneous conversations that require clarity and accuracy of language structure (p. 87).

The findings are in line with research conducted by Calder et al. (2021), which showed that an explicit learning approach to the use of past tense has proven effective in improving the communication skills of early school-age children with language disorders. This intervention helps them construct sentences that are more appropriate in time, making it easier for the other person to understand the content of the message. This confirms that mastery of tenses, especially past, present, and future, is not only important in grammatical aspects, but also crucial in forming effective and meaningful communication in various contexts.

8.   Application of Sentence Transformation in Mastering Tenses for Speaking

The sentence transformation technique, which is changing sentences from one tense form to another, can help students understand sentence structures based on time contexts in more depth. This exercise trains accuracy and flexibility in speaking, especially in the context of public speaking. (Hidayati, 2020) stated that sentence change activities encourage students to think actively and adjust language structures according to communication situations, so that improve interpersonal speaking skills. Thus, the application of this method can strengthen interpersonal relationships between students and increase their confidence in communicating effectively. In line with that, (Winanda (2024) found that one of the main challenges for students in public speaking is their uncertainty about the sentence structure used, especially in the use of tenses. Therefore, getting used to sentence transformation not only strengthens grammatical understanding, but also becomes a concrete strategy to overcome doubts and increase self-confidence when speaking in public.

9.   The Role of Tenses in Speaking Skills

In oral communication, mastery of tenses plays a very important role in conveying information in a timely and logical manner. Sentences formed with the appropriate tense not only clarify the meaning, but also make it easier for the other person to understand the speaker's intentions. (Putri et al. 2025) emphasized that "students who master tenses tend to speak more fluently and accurately because they can construct sentences with the correct time reference," which shows that speaking ability is greatly influenced by the accuracy of the use of tenses. In

addition, (Purwaningsih et al. 2024) explained that "tenses are fundamental elements in speaking that enable learners to express actions or events clearly based on time," so without a good understanding of tenses, the delivery of ideas can be unclear or confusing. Thus, tenses are not only learned as grammatical rules, but also as important tools in constructing effective and communicative speech.

10. Past Tense and Simple Past Tense Teaching Strategies to Improve Speaking

Teaching past tense, especially simple past tense, needs to be designed communicatively so that students are able to convey past events confidently and accurately. (Hermansyah et al. 2024) stated that "mastery of tenses trained through public speaking practice can increase students' confidence and fluency in conveying past experiences." Approaches such as speaking exercises, paired dialogues, and narrative activities can help students internalize tense structures through real use.

In addition, (Arindri et al 2024) emphasized that "the best way to teach tenses is through repetition, examples from daily conversations, and guided sentence practice," which shows the importance of repeated practice in relevant contexts. Theoretically, (Priest (1987) emphasized that "understanding tense is not only a matter of grammar, but also of meaning and intention in communication," so that the strategy for teaching tenses not only focus on structure, but also must be directed at the use of appropriate time meanings in the context of oral communication.

11. Application of Digital Media in Speaking-Based Tenses Learning

The integration of digital media in tenses learning has a positive impact on improving students' speaking skills. Through digital platforms such as grammar practice applications, students can practice using the correct tense forms in the context of speaking directly. Interactive exercises, audio, and auto-correction features allow students to understand mistakes and correct them independently. According to (Judijanto et al. (2025), digital tools can help students apply tense-based sentence structures more confidently and accurately in oral communication.

In line with that, (Hojanto (2013) stated that public speaking practice will be more optimal if supported by technology, because technology provides a means of practicing intonation, sentence structure, and speaking skills as a whole. Therefore, the use of digital media not only

enriches the tenses learning process, but also increases the effectiveness of speaking practice practically and contextually

CONCLUSION

Mastering tenses is a fundamental aspect that significantly influences effective English-speaking ability. This journal emphasizes that an accurate understanding of tenses such as *simple present, past tense*, and *future tense* is crucial, not only for ensuring grammatical accuracy in conversation but also for enhancing the clarity of the message conveyed. Errors in tense usage can lead to confusion and misunderstanding, whereas their correct application allows speakers to present ideas and narratives coherently and logically. Furthermore, this research highlights that tense mastery directly correlates with an increase in learners' self-confidence. When students are able to construct sentences with the correct temporal structure, they tend to speak more fluently and without hesitation, which in turn boosts their credibility and the appeal of their delivery. The journal also suggests that the most effective tense learning strategies involve contextual and integrative approaches, such as role-playing, storytelling, and group discussions, supported by the utilization of digital media for interactive practice. Thus, tenses serve not merely as grammatical rules but as essential tools for building strong, meaningful, and persuasive oral communication in various contexts.

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