

Repetition Drill in Teaching Simple Present Tense

Tirza Kumayas

Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Manado, Indonesia

tirza.annette@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effective technique to overcome the students' problems using verbs that deal with the third person singular in the simple present tense by suggesting repetition drills as the technique. The method of this study is pre-experimental descriptive with one pretest and one post-test. The study population was the students in the second year of the English Education Department, and the sample consisted of 34 students. The finding shows that the mean score of the pretest is 4.06, and the mean score of the post-test is 7.05; this means that the post-test result is much better than the pretest. It can be concluded that the use of the repetition drill was effective in solving the students' problems.

Keywords: repetition drill; teaching; simple present tense

INTRODUCTION

Kuliahana and Marzuki (2020) stated that English is a compulsory subject that students must learn at university. If we go to a foreign country, people will use this language to communicate with us. It becomes crucial when the conversation enters politics, science, and interrelationship.

As the English language in Indonesia has been taught to students in this country as a foreign language, it should also be followed by developing its teaching methodology to make the teaching easier and easy to study without abandoning its system and structure. English is complicated due to its different structure and system from the Indonesian language (Sekeon, Rombepajung & Kumayas, 2020). Olii (2021) stated that the students should master two main aspects: language skills and language components in learning English. According to Lengkoan (2017), language skills consist of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and language components consist of vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation.

Each person who learns English has a different method. They could memorize quickly by listening to conversations, writing, or reading. If we do not master English, it could be that our learning method is wrong, and we should immediately change the way of learning. We are wasting

much time if you do not notice, so some other complicated feelings will start to appear. Learning tenses is essential, and that is the fun of tenses. If we use the wrong tenses, the interlocutor or the reader will be confused. Tenses will tell when the activity takes place. However, do not be afraid of making mistakes or finding it difficult because, at first, learning grammar and tenses is indeed tricky. Nevertheless, knowing all the tenses, their uses, formulations, and practicing sentences with the tenses, surely we will quickly master them.

The students feel that it is difficult to learn it since their local and national languages have entirely shaped them with different structures and systems (Kandati & Tatipang, 2021). For example, the English word *speak* has three verb forms, but one form, *berbicara*, in Indonesian (Pandey, Hampp, & Andries, 2022). The different forms are related to those referring to time: speak (present), spoke (past), and spoken (past participle). The process is described as "shaping" response and strengthening selective reinforcement. Repeated response occurrences form a habit, and imitation plays an essential role in repetition. The language acquisition theory is based on the view that language is behavior that results from habit (Lumentut & Lengkoan, 2021). Habits are formed by practice and repetition. There are some research has been done before related to repetition drills and repetition drills for grammar (M.N n.d.) (Aini Khoyimah, Khoyimah, and Santoso 2020) (Azarine Hanan Mardhiyah 2019). Previous studies have mainly used repetition drills in speaking skills. Indeed, from a technical point of view, improving students' speaking skills is very appropriate. In this study, the authors are interested in using repetition drills in structure. Structure in English is often complained of as the most challenging part, especially for Indonesian people who use everyday sentences are not bound in the form of tenses, with the repetition drill technique helping students structure.

According to Richards (1974), language learning is habit formation. This assumption derives from the primarily general paradigm of behaviorist psychology. Habit formation may be described in various ways that rely on principles of association: frequency, contiguity, and intensity. Stimulus and response in the occurrences of the event become a habit (Bambulu, Pelenkahu, & Sanger, 2021).

Based on an initial observation in teaching English at English Education Department, the author found that it was difficult for most students, particularly those in the English Education Department, to use the simple present tense as they find it challenging to make sentences with appropriate tenses. They were confused about using the different forms of English verbs. When given some questions, the students could not reply with the correct present tense structure. This

recent study investigates the effectiveness of repetition drills teaching simple present tense in the English Education Department.

Maru, Nur, & Lengkoan (2020) stated that teachers must be able to encourage students to communicate in the target languages, both spoken and written. This study examines the effectiveness of repetition drills in teaching simple present tense. It can be seen that the final result brings about an achievement increase. Used as the technique in teaching simple present tense, repetition drill is a part of the audio-lingual method that is easy to use in learning (Mardhiyah, 2019). As grammar is one of the most crucial of English to communicate (Hikmah and Supeno 2020), the author simplified it by delivering it by a repetition drill technique.

Keh (2017) argued that teachers enter a classroom with pre-conceived ideas and beliefs about how languages are learned and how language should be taught. In this way, the author believed that teaching the simple present tense was easy to serve the instructional material. As it is included in grammar, the teaching also covered the rule of how the students have to construct their speaking and writing accurately. This component is essential to be mastered by the students. If they master the structure, they will correctly speak and write in English.

Grammar is a set of structured rules that govern the arrangement of sentences, phrases, and words in any language. Understanding grammar, according to Cambridge, is understanding the rules to form a sentence that can be understood in English. A collection of words can only be called a sentence if it can be understood perfectly by the listener without asking questions. Grammar is sentence structure. Tenses are part of grammar, a grammatical category that focuses on differentiating forms of verbs to express differences in time or duration of actions or circumstances.

Perlin, Sartika, and Nery (2020) stated that tense is a part of grammar that functions to describe the story that happened. Structure or grammar is one of the essential language components that students must learn (Masruddin, 2019). Tense is a grammatical expression of time relation between two events of time or situation. It is to make evident how to form the sentence according to a distinct possibility of time. Tense is divided into three significant parts:

1. Present tense (a verb points to the present time)
2. Past tense (a verb points to the past time)
3. Future tense (a verb points to the future time)s

In the English language, there are sixteen (16) tenses. In this study, the author selected simple present tense to teach through the repetition drill since the students had difficulties using it correctly in sentences.

The simple present tense is used to state (the daily activities, habitual actions, and general truth. It is used to describe what happens all the time or is repeated by or true in general. It is the tense for the description, definition, and statements of general truth (Fitria, 2019). It also describes something permanent or habitual (Allen, 1973). To form an interrogative or negative, we use the auxiliary verb do or does, which suits the subject. In negative, we put the auxiliary after subject; add to it with not, and turn the verb back to a base.

In learning the simple present tense, the teacher emphasizes the difficulties in studying the structure, which is about the verb dealing with the third person singular. The teacher guides students in making correct sentences and asks them questions they will answer adequately. Look at the following example:

Teacher: What time does your sister wake up in the morning?

Student: She wakes up at seven sharp.

Teacher: What does she do after getting up?

Student: She goes to the bathroom.

Repetition Drill

Generally, the application of learning with a drilling method is to provide practice questions to students. The students repeatedly present them in front of the class until most or even all students understand the learning materials they discuss. The drilling method presents education lesson materials by training students repeatedly and seriously in the form of oral, written, or physical activity so that students have high skills in mastering the subjects. Lina and Rosnija (2018) stated that a repetition drill is one of the appropriate techniques to deliver the meaning of the language by involving body movements. It is about a drill practice that can be used in material instruction. The students are educated on responding to a speech from direct speech or answering direct questions. "Repetition drill can emphasize important points. The teacher may repeat important words and phrases for emphasis" (Gooth, 1965).

The drilling method aims to acquire proficiency, a skill about something the child learns by doing practically the knowledge they are learning. To make an effective repetition, a professional teacher must emphasize a particular point of a word that seems complicated in the material part. This emphasis means finding a simple way for the students to catch the difficult part by following simplified pattern instruction. The students are instructed to practice producing word points of phrases emphasized repeatedly. More importantly, the students can manage little material

learning difficulties that seem more meaningful than studying more materials with little understanding.

Applying Repetition Drill

What do the drilling questions mean? Drilling questions is one of the learning models that teachers often conduct. The material in the drilling questions are those at the previous meeting and those at the next meeting. The nature of the drilling questions can include pretests and post-tests. The application of the repetition drill increases the students' mastery of the verb used for proper sentences. The application of the repetition drill was conducted as in the following steps proposed by Clark and Star (1981). They are:

- (1) distributing the copies of the simple present tense sentences (interrogative to each student)
- (2) writing the sentence pattern (sentence rule) of the simple present tense (positive and interrogative on the blackboard)
- (3) explaining the repetition drill to the students
- (4) writing and explaining positive and interrogative sentences and the use of the verb, which deals with the third person singular in building sentences
- (5) asking the students to write the rule/pattern of the positive and interrogative sentences
- (6) drilling the students to answer the interrogative sentences
- (7) correcting the students' mistakes, if any
- (8) training the students on the way to repeating the verbs changing that seems too difficult to master how to answer the interrogative sentences into positive sentences

The Advantage and Disadvantages of Repeating the Drill

The repetition drill establishes good studying habits and self-discipline and produces efficient learning. This technique application enables the students to change their learning ways. They will be taught how to be disciplined, adapt, and leave their bad learning habits. The students will practice some exercises repeatedly to express what has been taught until they can produce it accurately according to the learning target.

On the other hand, the repetition drill takes long sessions. This means that this technique wastes much time studying the material, which seems insufficient. If the teacher is not professional in creating the material, it will lead the students to laziness. The teachers need to specify and simplify the material to let the students achieve a proper target.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

In this study, the author designed a pre-experimental of one-group pretest-posttest. One group pretest-posttest design is similar to the one-shot case study (Brown 1973). The difference is that a pretest is given before the instruction, and a post-test is given after the treatment. To summarize, there are two tests: T1 (the pretest) and T2 (the post-test). X is treatment, which was the application of repetition drill, a teaching technique. The presentation of the design is shown below:

T1 * T2

The population of this research consisted of all second-year students in the English Education Department, with 34 students as the sample. The author used written essay tests as the research instrument. For data collection, the author followed the procedures designed by Brown (1973) by administering T1 (the pretest) to measure the mean of the student's achievement in the use of the verbs dealing with the third person singular in the simple present tense sentence of a single group taught with the repetition drill. Subsequently, the author exposed the subjects to repetition drills in a period and administered T2 (the post-test) to measure the mean of the students' achievement after conducting X. T1 and T2 were distinguished to determine the difference after X exposure. Later, an appropriate statistic test was applied to determine the student's achievements.

To follow the procedures, first, the author gave the pretest and explained briefly about tense, mainly the simple present tense. The students were then asked to make examples of simple present tense sentences. Then, the evaluation was conducted by asking the students to answer the question in the simple present subject of the third person singular. The students' achievements were scored.

Second, it is doing the treatment. The following procedures were conducted. Sentence examples were with the rule on the blackboard. Each sentence was explained by stressing a particular difficulty of every sentence, followed by the sentence pattern. The difference between the verbs in the sentence and the answer was highlighted. The students' way of building the question and the correct answer was explicated. The students were asked to read each sentence (interrogative and positive) on the blackboard. The students' mistakes were corrected while the teacher re-explained the exact rules. The students read all sentences (interrogative and positive), and the teacher explained the uses of the verbs changing according to the third person singular subject. The students were asked to make sentences (interrogative and positive), and their mistakes were corrected. Finally, a post-test was given for evaluation by asking the students to answer the interrogatives, and their achievements were scored.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In collecting the data, The author used tests under the pre-experimental design. The teaching technique used as the treatment was a repetition drill. This technique was used to express some difficulties in the learning. The author has delimited the verbs which deal with the third person singular in the simple present tense. It has been tested using pretest and post-test to collect the actual data.

A frequency distribution matrix was used for precise data presentation, and the mean of the students' scores was counted, as shown in Table 1. It also shows students' scores in pretest and post-test. It is generally indicated that most students still obtained low scores compared to those with high scores due to the improper treatment. Out of 34 students, 32 students got low marks. The achievement arrangement in the post-test shows us that 21 students got good marks and 13 got better ones.

From the results of both tests (the pretest and post-test), it could be concluded that the achievement in the pretest was lower than that in the post-test; in other words, the way presenting the instructional material or the lesson was not able to make the students obtain high scores. The scores in the post-test indicate that the technique was adequate to encourage the students to get higher scores. This is also an indication that the method used in the treatment improved the students' achievement. The general understanding can be understood from comparing the results in the pretest and those in the post-test.

Table 1 shows the scores presented in comparison, giving a foundation of judgment to the reader. It implies an increase in student achievement after the repetition drill in their learning of simple present tense. The students had a better structure mastery as the repetition drill could create a thorough practice and a good atmosphere motivating them to understand and use the correct simple present tense.

Table 1. Students' gaining scores

No	Pre-test	Post-Test	Gains	No	Pre-test	Post-Test	Gains
1	4	6	2	18	5	7	2
2	5	8	3	19	2	6	4
3	5	6	1	20	5	7	2
4	3	8	5	21	2	8	6
5	5	7	2	22	5	8	3
6	4	8	4	23	5	6	1
7	5	6	1	24	5	7	2
8	2	7	5	25	5	8	3
9	2	6	1	26	4	6	2

10	6	8	2	27	5	7	2
11	3	6	3	28	7	8	1
12	1	6	5	29	6	9	3
13	4	8	4	30	7	8	1
14	2	8	6	31	6	7	1
15	4	6	2	32	6	7	1
16	1	8	7	33	3	7	4
17	5	6	1	34	3	6	3

It is shown generally in Table 1 that the students gained some outstanding scores. One student gained score 7, two students gained 6, three students gained 5, four students gained a 4 score, six students gained 3 scores, nine students improved their achievement by 2 score, and eight students gained 1 score.

Table 2. The Frequency Distribution Matrix of T₁.

X	Tally	f	P	%	cf	Cf%
7	III	3	0.0882	8.82	34	100
6	III	3	0.0882	8.82	31	91.18
5	III III II	12	0.3259	35.29	28	82.36
4	III	5	0.1471	14.71	16	47.07
3	III	4	0.1177	11.77	11	32.36
2	III	5	0.1471	14.71	7	20.59
1	II	2	0.0588	5.88	2	5.88

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution matrix of the scores obtained by the students in the pretest. Out of the 34 students, the highest score was 7 achieved by three students (8.82 %); three students (8.82 %) obtained 6; twelve students (35.29 %) obtained 5; five students (14.71 %) got 4 score; and four students (11.77 %) got 3; five students (14.71 %) got 2. The rest two students (5,88 %) got 1.

Table 3. The Frequency distribution matrix of T₂.

X	Tally	f	P	%	cf	Cf%
9	I	I	0.0295	2.95	34	100
8	III III II	12	0.354	35.4	23	97.35

7	IIII	9	0.2655	26.55	21	61.95
4	IIIIII	12	0.354	35.4	12	35.4

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution matrix of the post-test students' scores. The lowest score is 6, and the highest score is 9. The analysis shows that of thirty-four students involved in the post-test, one student got 9; twelve students (35.4 %) got 8; nine students (26.55 %) got 7, and twelve students (35.4 %) got 6.

The findings showed that their achievement increased with the treatment. In the analysis, it can be seen that by comparing the pretests and post-tests, it is clear that the achievement in the post-test is higher than that in the pretest, where the higher score is 8. In quantification, the scores shown in the previous section tables guarantee that the students had better progress after using the repetition drill in class. Their mastery of simple present tense improves due to the continuous exposure to the pattern of the structure. The students became familiar with the structure and could automatically use it in a simple sentence. This means that the use of the repetition drill was effective in improving the students' mastery of simple present tense.

CONCLUSION

The experimentation with the repetition drill in increasing students' mastery of simple present tense concludes that the repetition drills help the students to understand and use the verbs, which deal with the third person singular in the simple present tense, especially in answering the question. The test result shows that the scores of the students' achievement in the post-test were generally higher than those in the pretest. The advantages of the drill method are as follows: First, students' understanding is broader through repeated practice. This weakness illustrates that by using the drill method, students participating in learning will have a broader understanding because the exercises are carried out repeatedly. This means that repetition drills could increase the students' mastery of the verbs that deal with the third person singular in answering the question correctly. The repetition drill enables the students to overcome some difficulties in verb changes of the third person singular subject in the simple present tense.

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