

**Past Tense Verb-Form Errors Made By Primary Six Students At S.K. (A)
Datuk Haji Abdul Kadir Hassan, Petra Jaya, Kuching, Sarawak**

**Prepared for:
Madam Roselind Wee
University of Technology Mara,
Kota Samarahan, Kuching, Sarawak.**

**Prepared by:
Roslan Bin Sebi
EDU220, TESL Off Campus Programme,
Student's I.D no. 2000675671**

Date of Submission: April, 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Illustrations.....	v
Abstrak.....	vi-vii
Abstract.....	viii-ix
 CHAPTER 1	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1-4
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	5-7
1.4 Significance of the study.....	7
1.5 Statement of hypothesis.....	8
 CHAPTER 2	
2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
2.1 The importance of English.....	9-11
2.2 Development in education.....	12-13
2.3 The linguists' view.....	13-17
 CHAPTER 3	
3.0 METHODOLOGY	18
3.1 Subjects.....	18-19
3.2 Instruments.....	19
3.3 Procedures.....	20-23
 CHAPTER 4	
4.0 DATA ANALYSIS	24
4.1 Distribution of errors in questionnaire.....	24-30
4.2 Distribution of errors in narrative essay.....	31-39
 CHAPTER 5	
5.0 CONCLUSIONS	40-43
 CHAPTER 6	
6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	44-46
 APPENDIXES (1-10)	-
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	-

ABSTRACT

This analysis reflects the students' weaknesses in using past tense verb-forms for writing English sentences. This is the major problem that they face and suggestions need to be implemented immediately by the school administrators and teachers.

The students' weakness highlighted in this analysis is the inability to distinguish and differentiate the past tense verb-forms correctly. This problem can be seen in both task 1 (questionnaire) and task 2 (narrative essay). The majority of them still cannot discriminate between the present and past events and they tend to be confused and make errors in using past tense verbs in writing English sentences.

As a result, the students are still weak in using past tense verb-forms. They have to be well-prepared and exposed to lots of practices before they are able to write essay questions in Section C (Question 22), in the final examination (UPSR).

From this analysis, the best way to assess the students' errors is to follow Dulay and Burt's Scheme (1982). This scheme provides the most appropriate method to check and collect the students' past tense verb-form errors in writing English sentences. Here, students' errors are categorized into four areas: omission, addition, misformation and ordering. Each category reflects the students' errors that they often make in writing past tense sentences.

The subjects consist of a group of 29 students from Year Six Saidina Abu Bakar with the majority of them of average ability or are intermediate learners. The instruments consist of task 1 (questionnaire) and task 2 (narrative essay).

Most of the students made 'errors of misformation, that is, using the present tense verbs for past events.

**Types Of Written Past Tense Verb-Form Errors Made By Primary Six Students At SK
(A) Datuk Haji Abdul Kadir Hassan, Kuching**

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

SK (A) Datuk Haji Abdul Kadir Hassan is situated at Jalan Sultan Tengah, Petra Jaya, Kuching. The majority of the Year Six students are not much exposed to English Language at home and its surroundings but at school, there are only seven periods of English per week. Therefore, the students are still weak in grammar especially in using the past tense verb-forms to write correct English sentences. Although most of their parents can afford to buy reference materials from the shops, the children apparently only depend on their English teachers to learn English.

Most of the students come from average families in which the majority of the parents work as government servants, for example, teachers, clerks, doctors, policemen, postmen, and so on. Therefore, the students should not face many problems in English subject but from previous school semester examinations, the English result showed that action needs to be taken by the school administrators and teachers to improve the students' standard of English.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 The Importance of English

To improve the students' standard in English, long-term goals must be set, for example, the latest five-year school project targeted 100% passes in English. This is in collaboration with the Education Department's aim to inculcate a responsible and educated society. Not only the school aims to upgrade the students' performance in schools within this period but also to make them excellent in English oral communication and to produce quality English learners in and outside the classroom vicinity.

“*Grammar* is one of the three dimensions of language that are interconnected. Grammar gives form of the structure of the language themselves, but those form are literally meaningless without a second dimension, that of meaning/semantic, and a third dimension, pragmatic. In other words, grammar tells us how to construct a sentence (word order, verb and noun systems, modifiers, phrases, etc). *Semantic* tells us something about the meaning of words and strings of word-or, one should say, meanings, which may be several. Then *pragmatic* tells us about which of the several meanings to assign given the context of a sentence.” (Larsen-Freeman 1991).

This statement points out the importance of grammar usage in writing especially in English Language that has three functions such as:

- a) Form _ the structure of the language or how to construct a sentence. The students have to make use of the English tenses appropriately so that they learn to be able to construct English sentences correctly.