TEACHING THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE THROUGH SHORT DIALOGUE

Darni[1], Anshari Syafar[2], Wahyudin[3]

Abstract

The objective of this research was to examine that the use of short dialogue can improve the students' ability in mastering the present continuous tense at SMP Negeri 19 Palu. This study applies intact group research design. The research sample was class VII C and VII D which consist of 18 students. The sample was taken throughcluster sampling tehnique. The data were collected by using test. The result of the data analysis showed that there is a significant difference between control group and experimental group. It was proved by testing hypothesis. By applying 0.05 level of significance with 17 (18-1) degree of freedom (df), the t-counted value (12.69) is higher than the t-table value (2.110). It means that the research hypothesis was accepted. In other words, the use of short dialogue is effective to improve students' ability in mastering the present continuous tense.

Keywords: Teaching; Present Continuous Tense; Short Dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

Structure as a language component plays an important role to support the language skills. The students can write English well if they have good competence in structure. Structure is essential to be taught because the students can learn the grammatical rules that are useful in mastering English well.

Many writers of English tense have defined tenses. It is done to help the learners to be familiar with English tenses. According to Paul (2005:147)"Tense marking indicates, to varying degrees of precision, the time when an event occurred or a situation existed. In other words, it specifies the situation's "location" in time"

Every sentence in English has its own structure according to the situation where it is used or time when it is happened. Ur (1996:75) states that a specified instance of grammar is usually called a structure. English tense is an expressing the time at, during, or over which a

[1]Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Tadulako – email: DarniNuraviany@gmail.com
[2]Email: binbandori@yahoo.com
[3]Email: Yudigaretta@yahoo.com

state or action denoted by a verb occurs. Gari (2012) also argues that the basic tenses in English are present, past and future. English also has perfect tenses (present tense, present perfect, past tense, past perfect and future tense, future perfect) and progressive tenses.

There are sixteen tenses in English (Azar, 2002). They are separated into four groups. They are present tense, past tense, future tense and past future tense.Present tense is used to talk about repeated action and general truth. It is divided into four types; simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tense, present perfect continuous tense. Past tense is used to describe things that happened in the past or thing that were true in the past. It is divided in to four types: simple past tense, past continuous tense, past perfect tense, past perfect continuous tense. Then, future tense, it is used to describe something that will happen in the future. This tense also divided into four types: simple future tense, future continuous tense, future perfect tense, and future perfect continuous tense.

The present continuous tense is used to express an action that occurs at the time of speaking or can be used to express the future time to explain a plan. The time signals are used now, right now, at the moment, at the present, today, this morning, this afternoon, this evening, etc. The present continuous tense or progressive tense is a tense that indicates the activities that are being done or are in progress. Azar (2002:13) points out,

> The present progressive (Present Continuous Tense) expresses an activity that is in progress at the moment of speaking. It is a temporary activity that began in the past, is continuing at present, and will probably end at some point in the future.

Dialogue is a literary and theatrical form consisting of a written or spoken conversational exchange between two or more people (Brainy, 2001). Dialogue is a short conversation between two or more people today is widely encountered in students' language textbook to practice a new language and is used by language teachers as a teaching technique to teach language in classroom activity. Brainy (2001) defines, "A conversation between two or more persons; particularly, a formal conservation in theatrical performances or in scholastic exercises". Although the sentences in the dialogue consist of fabricated sentences it can present something valuable in teaching a new language. Brainy further states, "A conversation is a dialogue, not a monologue. That's why there are so few good conversations: due to scarcity, two intelligent talkers seldom meet.

In the dialogue there are two or more people involved in the activity, meaning when practicing a language through dialogue people will have learning experience that make the class enjoyable, challenging, fresh and interesting. Meanwhile, Dobson (1975) also defines, "Dialogue as a short conversation between two people, presented as a language model". Dialogue is a social context that can be used to practice the new language. The sentences in the dialogue come to life because a dialogue represents a real communication of ideas from one person to another.

Short dialogue is an activity in which two or more people ask and give ideas or opinions related to one specific topic in a short period. The researcher interested in applying short dialogue because it is assumed that it is a good technique or device that can help students learn effectively to masters present continuous tense.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated a research question as follows: *Can the use of short dialogue improve students' ability in mastering present continuous tense?* The objective of this research is to find out whether the uses of short dialogue in teaching present continuous tense have affect on the improvement of students ability to use the tense in writing and speaking.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the researcher applied intact groups design.It is a part of pre- experimental design. Intact group design employs one group as an experimental group and one group as a control group. Both experimental and control groups were given a post-test, but the experimental group was given the treatment while the control groupwas not.

In this case, the researcher used research design adopted from Hatch and Farhady (1982:20) as follows:

$$G1 \quad X \quad T1$$
$$G2 \quad \quad T1$$

Where:

G1	:	experimental group
G2	:	control group
X	:	treatment
T1	:	post-test

The population of this research was the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu.It consisted of 18 students. The total number of the population was 76 students. In choosing the sample of this research, the researcher applied cluster sampling technique.

The sample in this research was class VII C and VII D. in this research. The research consists of two variables, namely dependent and independent variable. The independent variable is condition or characteristic that the experimenter manipulates in his or her attempt to ascertain their relationship to observe phenomena, while the dependent variable are the condition of characteristic that appear, disappear or change independent variables (Best,1981:59). The independent variable for this research is the use of short dialogue, while the dependent variable is the ability of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu in constructing present continuous tense.

In this research, test is used to obtain data about the students' ability in mastering present continuous tense. The number of item in the test and scores to each item are presented below:

Table 1:

Test Scoring System

No.	Kind of Test	Items	Score	Maximum Scores
1.	Multiple Choice	15	1	15
2.	Completion	15	1	15
3.	Sentence Transformation	10	3	30
	Total	**40**		**60**

The treatment was given to the students that applied eight meetings. The experimental class was taught present continuous tense. In this treatment the researcher applied the use of short dialogue. The treatment was given twice a week. After that, the researcher gave post test to theexperimental and control class. Post-test was conducted to measure the student's ability in present continuous tense. It was given to know the significance of the treatment.

The result of the score of the test was analyzed statistically. First the researcher computed the individual score of students. In scoring system the researcher used the formula proposed by Purwanto (1987:102):

$$NP = \frac{R}{SM} \, x \, 100$$

Where:
∑:standar score
X: sum of correct answer
N: maximum score
100: fixed score

To know the mean score of students, the researcher used the formula by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55) as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

Where:
M: mean score
∑x: obtained score
N: number of students

To calculate the deviation score between students' score in experimental class and students' score in controlclass, the researcher used the formula by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55) as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

Where:
M: mean score
∑x: obtained score
N: number of students

For getting the value of t-counted, the researcher computed the formula as follows (Arikunto,2002:275):

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N(N-1)}}}$$

Where:

t	:	test score
M_d	:	mean from experimental class and control class
Σd^2	:	sum of square deviation
N	:	number of students

FINDINGS

After applying the treatment, the researcher gave post-test to the students in order to know whether the use of short dialogue was effective in teaching present continuous tense or not. The result of the post-test is presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2:
The Students' Score on Post-test in Experimental Class

No.	Initials	Raw Scores	Standard Scores
1	SMG	55	91.6
2	STD	60	100
3	NEN	58	96.6
4	MIS	43	71.6
5	ASD	53	88.3
6	MWH	59	98.3
7	AKN	42	70.0
8	RFS	57	95.0
9	NFD	45	75.0
10	ASK	49	81.6
11	VYA	46	76.6
12	MHY	55	91.6
13	PAS	54	90.0
14	MRA	52	86.6
15	MRZ	57	95.0
16	SAY	58	96.6
17	SSS	60	100
18	MSH	59	98.3
Total			**1602.7**

The post-test result of experimental class shown in the table above indicated that the highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 70.0. After calculating the students' score in post- test, the researcher computed the students' mean scores of experimental group post-test in the following:

$$M = \frac{\Sigma d}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1602.7}{18}$$

$$M = 89.03$$

The mean score of experimental class was 89.03

Table 3:
The Students' Score on Post-test in Control class

No.	Initials	Raw Scores	Standard Scores
1	NRW	28	46.6
2	MTH	35	58.3
3	NRH	50	83.3
4	MRH	35	58.3
5	MAN	39	65.0
6	DDY	41	68.3
7	CFT	30	50.0
8	NAN	41	68.3
9	AHJ	27	45.0
10	MZT	31	51.6
11	WYD	28	46.6
12	MRN	30	50.0
13	ISW	34	56.6
14	ASW	31	51.6
15	AMY	29	48.3
16	ADY	31	51.6
17	WND	48	80.0
18	MAD	38	63.3
Total			**1042.7**

Looking at the post-test result of the control class, it was obviously found that the highest score was 83.3 and the lowest score was 45.0. After calculating the students' score in post- test, the researcher computed students' mean scores of control group post-test as follows:

$$M=\frac{\Sigma d}{N}$$

$$M=\frac{1042.7}{18}$$

M= 57.92

The mean score of controlclass was 57.92

The next step that the researcher did in analyzing data was calculating the deviation and the score deviation of experimental class and control class. The result of deviation and square deviation are shown in the following table:

Table 4:
Deviation and Square Deviation of Experimental Class and Control Class

No.	Initials of Experimental Class	Post-Test of Experimental Class	Initials of Control Class	Post-Test of Control Class	Deviation (d) (G1-G2)	Square Deviation (d²)
1	SMG	55	NRW	28	27	729
2	STD	60	MTH	35	25	625
3	NEN	58	NRH	50	8	64
4	MIS	43	MRH	35	8	64
5	ASD	53	MAN	39	14	196
6	MWH	59	DDY	41	18	324
7	AKN	42	CFT	30	12	144
8	RFS	57	NAN	41	16	256
9	NFD	45	AHJ	27	18	324
10	ASK	49	MZT	31	18	324
11	VYA	46	WYD	28	18	324
12	MHY	55	MRN	30	25	625
13	PAS	54	ISW	34	20	400
14	MRA	52	ASW	31	21	441
15	MRZ	57	AMY	29	28	784
16	SAY	58	ADY	31	27	729
17	SSS	60	WND	48	12	144
18	MSH	59	MAD	38	21	441
	Total				**336**	**6938**

After computing the deviation score between experimental group's post- test and control group's post-test, the researcher computed the mean deviation of the students' score presented as follows:

$$Md=\frac{\Sigma d}{N}$$

$$Md= \frac{336}{18}$$

Md= 18.66

After getting the mean deviation, the researcher computed the sum of square deviation shown belows:

$$\sum X^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$
$$= 6938 - \frac{(336)^2}{18}$$
$$= 6938 - \frac{(112896)}{18}$$
$$= 6938 - 6272$$
$$= 666$$

To get the value of t-counted, the researcher computed the formula as shown below:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N(N-1)}}}$$
$$= \frac{18.66}{\sqrt{\frac{666}{18(18-1)}}}$$
$$= \frac{18.66}{\sqrt{\frac{666}{306}}}$$
$$= \frac{18.66}{\sqrt{2.17}}$$
$$= \frac{18.66}{1.47}$$
$$= 12.69$$

The result of the data analysis showed that the t-counted was 12.69 by applying 0.05 level of significance with 17 degree of freedom (df) or 18-1=17, the researcher found that t-counted (12.69) was higher than t-table (2.110). It means that the research hypothesis was accepted. In other words, the use of short dialogue in teaching present continuous tense was effective to the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu.

DISCUSSION

According to the result of students post-test in control class, it can be seen that none of the students of the control group got high score. All of students got score lower than 85. The highest score was only 83.3and the lowest score was 45.0. There were 9 students who did not pass in the test. It means that many students got less in mastering present continuous tense.

The researcher found that most students still got difficulties to distinguish the tenses and they were confused to turn it into negative and interrogative sentences. Consequently, it made most students unable to answer the exercises.

During the treatment, the researcher gave treatment to experimental group using short dialogue technique. The researcher taught about the positive, negative and interrogative form of present continuous tense. The researcher used short dialogue as the technique to strengthen the students' structure. In using the technique, the researcher gave uncompleted short dialogue to the students and asked them to fill the uncompleted in that short dialogue, After that, the researcher asked them to practice the dialogue with their partner.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher administered the post-test to the students in the experimental and control class. The researcher found that most of the students could get higher scorethan the students in control class. The mean score of the post-test was 89.03 in experimental class whereas the mean score of post-test was 57.92 in control class. There was none student who did not pass in the test. It showed that the mean score of the post test in experimental class was higher than the post- test in control class. This result affirmed that the students' ability in teaching present continuous tense has been improved by using short dialogue as the technique.

There are some studies which are relevant with this research. One of them was written by Sance (2009). The result of that research showed that by using shortdialogue can improve student's progressive tense. It was proved by looking at the students' mean score from 3.8 in the pre-test to 8.07 in the post-test.

Furthermore, there was a similar research conducted by Magfirah (2009). The title was "Teaching present continuous tense to the seven year students of SMP Negeri10 Palu through substitution drill". The tense taught is the same as the current research, the different is the technique which was used. The result of data analysis showed that the t-counted (13.26) was higher than the t-table (2.031). It means that the use of substitution drill technique can improve the present continuous tense.

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the use of short dialogue can improve not only the students' mastery of present continuous tense, but also can improve their speaking. Furthermore, the present continuous tense can be improved by using other technique, such assubstitution drill.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of data analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher can draw some conclusions. Firstly, short dialogue can be applied to minimize the difficulties of the students in learning present continuous tense. It could be seen by the mean score between experimental class' post-test and control class' post-test. Secondly, the mean score of the experimental class post-test was higher than the mean score of control class post-test. It was also proved by the t-counted value which was higher than the t-table. It showed that the useof short dialogue in teaching present continuous tense have affected on the improvement of students ability in structure.

In addition, based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to provide some suggestions. The suggestions are presented as follows:

1. The teacher of English may use short dialogue as one of the solutions to overcome the students' problem in learning grammar particularly present continuous tense.

2. The teaching of English grammar, present continuous tense should be paid attentively. It means that the teacher of English should apply interesting strategies, methods, techniques, and media to stimulate the students' ability, motivation and interest in learning English grammar.

3. The teacher should give more examples by using present continuous tense in some kinds of test.

4. The teacher should motivate the students to learn English.

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