

Analysis of English Verb tenses in Secondary School Students' Writings in Maradi, Niger Republic

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the use of verb tenses in the writings of senior secondary school students, learners of English as a foreign language in Niger. Three hundred and seventy (370) students randomly selected from four (4) senior secondary schools in Maradi participated in the study. The data were collected using an essay test requiring the students to express their thoughts in the present, the past, and the future tenses. The study used mixed methods research. The results showed that the students' use of verb tenses in English was very inappropriate. Furthermore, the results revealed that all the three tenses were found difficult by the students leading to verb tense errors of various types including substitutions, additions, and omissions of morphemes. Some recommendations were made to help the students use verb tenses appropriately, and minimize errors in verb tense use.

Keywords: Analysis, English verb tenses, writing, secondary school students.

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INTRODUCTION

Tense is a grammatical category used by the speaker or the writer to show the time when a situation or an event takes place with reference to the moment of speaking (Cowan, 2008; Downing, 2015; Palmer, 2003). Tense in the light of this definition is the means by which we can locate an event or a situation as being in present, past, or in future with regard to the time of speech. For this, tense is an essential part of any language grammar, and should, therefore, occupy the most important part in almost every language syllabus (Liu, 2014; Ruth, 2014). Because verb tenses have the value of helping us to express our intentions with reference to the present, past or future, the writer or speaker needs to use the verb tense forms appropriately. Without a proper use of verb tense forms, as argued by Ahmed & Javed (2013:22), 'communication remains ineffective and the reader or listener entangles into confusion with the least comprehension rate'

In view of this importance, learning to use the right verb tense is indispensable for EFL learners. This is because a successful sentence or utterance intended to convey meaning can't be made without a good, skillful use of tense and aspect (Nforbi & Siéwoué,

2016). This means, for anyone to make sense of what he or she is saying, and to be understood, he or she needs to use the proper verb tense forms. Tenses, as pinpointed by (Ruth, 2014) are the nerves center or wire of any utterance in English. Without tenses it is difficult to construct a sentence in English and make sense. Thus, any misuse in verb tense forms in English may result in ill-formed sentence or utterance which itself may lead to distorted meaning and misunderstanding by the reader or listener.

Statement of the Problem

Effective use of verb tenses is of great importance in that tenses help us to express our thoughts clearly and meaningfully. Correct verb tense use in English is the condition sine qua non to express comprehensible ideas, views, and messages. However, it is observed that, after seven (7) years of extensive exposure to English tenses, senior secondary school students in Niger are unable to express their ideas using verb tense forms appropriately when asked to write short paragraphs in English. When expressing their ideas in writing, they frequently produce sentences with malformations in the forms of English verb tenses. Many additions of unnecessary morphemes or

omissions of necessary morphemes are also found in their sentences making it difficult to understand the intended message.

This inappropriate use of the English verb tenses is very worrisome for both teachers and school administration because as pointed out by Baugh (2005), using verb tenses incorrectly, especially, in written communication may be painful for the reader and can change the meaning of the message. The writer who has taught English as a foreign language for many years in secondary schools believes that the problem needs investigation.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims at investigating the extent at which senior secondary school students use English verb tenses when writing in English. The main objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the students' use of verb tenses when writing in English.
2. Identify the types of misuses in verb tenses that hinder them from communicating well when writing in English.
3. Find out factors leading senior secondary school students in Maradi to frequently misuse verb tenses when writing in English.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the above objectives, the following questions are raised:

1. How do senior school students in Niger use the English verb tenses in their written productions?
2. What types of misuses in verb tenses do they make when writing in English?
3. What factors lead the students to some wrong uses of verb tenses when writing in English?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learners' difficulties with regard to the use of verb tenses in English have largely been investigated. Studies investigating verb tense use by second and foreign language students include that of Awang, Jusoff, Hassan & Mohamed (2011) who conducted a study to analyze and compare errors made by students in using simple tenses. Their sample consisted of one hundred and seven (370) first and third year diploma students from three different programs. The participants were required to write two essays on the same topic within six (6) months. The results indicated the students' inability to use the simple tenses and verb structure in their writings. The results also revealed the largest type of errors made by the students is the students' use of the simple present tense instead of the simple past. The writers concluded that the large occurrence of the types of errors in the writings of the students resulted from the fact that the students' L1 lacks inflections in its verb tense system.

Chan (2012) also examines the performance of English tenses in Taiwanese students' writings. The main objective of the study was to determine the students' levels of difficulty in the twelve English tenses. To achieve the objective, the researcher administered a fill-in-the-blanks test to the 123 participants grouped into freshmen, seniors, and graduates. The results showed that graduate students performed better in the use of tenses than the freshmen. The study also revealed that simple aspect was found to be the easiest aspectual form for the participants. In contrast, the perfect progressive aspect was found to be the most difficult aspectual form for the three groups of participants. It was also indicated that all the participants performed better in detecting time references, while the use of the aspectual forms was found difficult for them.

Ahmed & Javed (2013) examined a corpus from 396 Pakistani ESL students with the intent to assess their performance in tenses. The participants consisting of 255 males and 141 females were selected through a convenience sampling technique. They were administered a multiple choice test focusing on five different types of tenses: present tense, future tense, past perfect tense, present perfect tense, and the past tense. The study found that the participants better performed in present tense, future tense, and the past tense than in the past perfect and present perfect tenses. The results also showed a significant difference between the performance of male and female students on one hand, and on the other between public and private school students. However, the study showed no significant difference between the performance of rural and urban school students.

Sukasame, Kantho & Narrot (2014) studied some grammatical errors in learning English structures in tenses. Their sample consisted of 31 Thai students. The data were collected by means of three kinds of instruments: a multiple choice test to examine grammatical errors, a table recording each student's errors, and an interview. The results showed the students' inability to correctly use the different English tenses involved in the study. These are: the past perfect; the past simple tense; the present perfect; the past continuous, the present simple tense; the future simple tense and the present continuous tense.

Ruth (2014) carried out a similar study on some of the problems ESL students have on tenses at the tertiary level. Her purpose was to examine the level of the students in the use of the different verb tenses in English. She collected her data from 80 undergraduate science students (level 100 and 200). The study found that the students suffered a great deal from poor knowledge of the English tense forms in their writings. The study revealed that most of the participants who were students in the faculty of science of Gombe State University, had difficulty in using tense forms in

expressing ideas correctly. They particularly failed to use the correct forms of the simple present when communicating their ideas in English.

Another relevant study on tenses was carried out by Rahman & Ali in 2015. Their study sought to examine some difficulties Bangladeshi students face in their use tense and aspect. The study also intended to show the extent to which the ignorance of lexical aspect affects the proper use of tense and aspect in English. Then, the study also sought to explore the roles teachers play in helping the learners minimize their problems on the use of tense and aspect.

The study reported that Bangladeshi EFL learners faced several difficulties in their use of tense and aspect in English. Accordingly, they failed to properly express the time of an event making mistakes on verb forms. The writers claimed that the leading causes of such mistakes were attributable to L1 interference because in Bengali language, no extra auxiliary is required to express a progressive action.

Muhsin (2016) is another study in English verb tenses worthy of review. In this study, the researcher analyzed errors committed by junior high school students in their use of the simple present tense. A total of 17 participants were selected to participate in the study. Data of the study were collected by means of a descriptive writing test. The findings showed 143 errors identified. The errors were categorized into errors of omission, addition, malformation of tenses, and errors in improper use of tenses. The writer reported that malformation of tenses was the most dominant type of errors made by the students. He concluded that students made such errors due to the transfer of the grammar rules of their mother tongue to the English language.

Nforbi & Siéwoué (2016) conducted a study on the use of tense and aspect in Cameroon's secondary schools. Their objective was to examine the challenges that French speaking learners of English face with tense and aspect. A total of 180 students from four secondary schools participated in the study. Two types of tests were used to collect data for the study. The first test consisted of a set of six exercises focusing on the students' mastery of tense morphology. It also measured the students' ability to express time through absolute tense and relative tense, as well as their ability to translate French into English with focus on interference, and interpreting aspect. The second type of test was an essay test used to check the students' use of tenses. The findings showed that the students had serious problems with tense and aspect. The results also indicated that 50% of JSS3 students and 53% of SS3 students faced difficulties in using tense and aspect in dating events.

Farida (2016) also conducted an error analysis study that aimed at investigating the use of the simple

past tense among polytechnic students. Her purpose was to identify, classify and describe errors that students commit when using the simple past tense. The sample consisted of 50 polytechnic students majoring in Food and Beverage study program. A test on English simple past tense was given to the participants to collect the data.

The results showed that the students' mastery of the simple past tense is poor. The committed errors consisted of misformation errors accounting for 87%, errors of addition with 8%, and omission errors (5%).

Studies in verb tenses also include that of Mencias & DeVera (2017) who analyzed errors of verb tenses in the sentences of Japanese ESL learners. The instruments they used consisted of a questionnaire and a written test. Both the descriptive and correlational designs were used to analyze the collected data.

The findings showed considerable errors in verb tenses. The committed errors consisted of errors of 'selection' on top, followed by 'omission' errors, while errors of 'addition' were found less frequent in the learners' sentences. As recommendations, the researchers advised learners to spend more time on internet in order to reduce their 'omission' errors. They also suggested that teachers should take advantage of the learners' high access to the social media to enhance their use of English tenses.

Theoretical Framework

This study bases its theoretical framework on Performance Analysis (PA) to assess the students' use of verb tense. Performance Analysis is an approach to language analysis developed due to some limitations of Error Analysis (EA). Researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) including Brown (2007); Ellis and Barkhuizen (2009), and Larsen-Freeman and Long (2014) are of the view that Error Analysis does not provide a complete description of learner language. This is because Error Analysis only focuses on what learners do wrongly, ignoring what they do correctly. In order to consider both what learners get right and what they get wrong, performance analysis is needed.

Performance analysis is broadly defined as an analysis of learner's L2 production. It is the analysis of 'learner's total language performance'; it focuses on the investigation of errors within a wider perspective considering the 'positive' or 'well-formed' aspects of the learner's performance (Brown, 2007:387). Performance analysis, similarly to Error analysis, involves a comparison between the forms produced by the learner and the target language forms (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2009). For this, some researchers in SLA (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2009; Larsen-Freeman and Long, 2014) consider error analysis as one kind of performance analysis. They believe that error analysis has a role to play in performance analysis since learner

errors are part of a learner's performance. They go further, suggesting the incorporation of error analysis into performance analysis which is an approach not limited to analyzing the errors learners committed.

The basic procedure in conducting performance analysis according to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2009: 80) are as follows:

1. Determine which morpheme is to be investigated,
2. Go through the data and identify obligatory occasions for the use of the morpheme-count the total number of occasions,
3. Establish whether the correct morpheme is supplied in each obligatory context- count the number of times it is supplied,
4. Calculate the percentage of accurate use with this formula:

$$\frac{n \text{ correct suppliance in contexts}}{\text{total obligatory contexts}} \times 100$$

= percentage accuracy
5. Repeat the procedure for the other morphemes to be investigated.

To take account of the description and classification of what the learners get wrong, Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982) as cited in James (2013) propose a system of categories, referred to as descriptive taxonomy. Descriptive taxonomy according to James (2013) is composed of linguistic taxonomy and surface structure taxonomy.

Linguistic taxonomy is a system of classification where errors are categorized into general categories. These relate to the basic structural elements of the sentence such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2009; Faisal, Mulya, & Syamsul, 2016).

Surface structure taxonomy, on the other hand, is a classification based on the ways surface structures are altered in erroneous utterances or sentences (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982 in Ellis & Brakhuizen, 2009). Four different categories are identified according to this type of classification (James, 2013:106). These include:

- (i) Omission,
- (ii) Addition,
- (iii) Misformation, and
- (iv) Misordering.

1. Omission: omission is leaving out an item that is required, (omitting a copula 'be' for example) for an utterance to be considered as grammatically correct.
2. Addition: addition in analyzing learner language, involves the insertion of an item which is not needed in well-formed utterances.
3. Misformation: misformation is the use of the wrong form of a structure or morpheme (Dulay, Burt & Krashen in James, 2013).
4. Misordering: misordering is the misplacement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance as a result of the learners' reliance on word-to-word translation of their native language structures (James, 2013; Ellis & Brakhuizen (2009).

METHODOLOGY

This study is a mixed methods research (MMR) which combines both quantitative and qualitative research. This design is favored in this study because it allows the researcher to be flexible in analyzing and interpreting the data. Using both approaches can provide the researcher with an opportunity to explaining quantitative results looking at them qualitatively. The combination of both perspectives according to Creswell (2015) may minimize the limitations of both methods and reduce the risk of research bias that can affect the findings of the research. Additionally, using qualitative analysis to explain quantitative data is a way of making them more comprehensive, and illustrative for their better understanding. This can also make the findings of the study more reliable than when a single method is used. Then, the choice of the MMR in this study is a way to showing that the two methods can be used to complement each other, rather than contradict each other. As highlighted by Brown (2015: 79), 'if a research project does not use qualitative and quantitative methods systematically and in complementary manner, such that they reinforce each other, it is not MMR'. Thus, the intent of the use of mixed methods design in this study is to have the qualitative method explain in a more detailed way the quantitative data for their complete understanding.

The participants in this study consist of 370 students randomly selected from four (4) schools in Maradi municipality. They have all been studying English as a foreign language for six years. Table1 bellow shows the distributions of the sample in this study.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Schools	Population	Percentage	Proportion
CES Bourja	455	23	85
CES Jinguile	256	13	48
CES Bagalam	351	18	65
LDB	923	46	172
Total	1985	100	370

The instrument consists of an essay test on six (6) distinct topics designed to measure the three tenses, namely: the simple present tense, the simple past tense, and the future tense. The students were instructed to write on one of the following topics: Your country is holding its presidential elections.

1. Describe the type of president you want to elect for the development of your country.
2. 'Describe the man or woman you admire the most? Why do you admire him/her?
3. 'Describe the most interesting place (s) you visited last vacation'.
4. 'Describe the most exciting film you watched one day'.

5. 'Tell what things you like to do when you finish school'.
6. If you are given the opportunity to visit two countries in the world next vacation, which ones will you visit, why?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question1: How do senior school students in Niger use the English verb tenses in their writings?

Table 2 below summarizes the mean scores and the standard deviations of the students.

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviations of the students in the use of tenses

No	Schools	N	Mean	SD
1	BOURJA	83	36.06	14.20
2	LDB	169	35.51	14.54
3	BAGALAM	63	33.54	11.18
4	JINGUILE	46	33.32	12.23

As illustrated in table 2 above, none of the schools performed satisfactory in the use of tenses. This suggests that the performance of senior school students in Maradi is poor considering that the expected mean score is 50.

Research Question 2: What types of misuses in verb tenses do they make when writing in English?

Several types of verb tense mistakes were found in the writings of the students. They ranged from malformations in the tense forms, substitutions of one tense for another, additions of unnecessary morphemes, to the omissions of some needed morphemes as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Distribution of errors by their types

Rank	Error type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Misformation	1338	48.1
2.	Substitution	677	24.36
3	Omission	410	14.36
4	Addition	198	7.11
5.	Others	158	5.7
	Total	2781	100

As table 3 above indicates, the most committed errors in the use of tenses were misformations with a total of 1338 errors representing 48.1% of the errors. They were followed by substitution errors representing 24.36%. Omissions were ranked third with 14.36% followed by addition errors 7.11% and other forms of errors accounted for 5.7%. The following examples illustrate the types of errors committed by the students.

Misformations

- 1) *The first time I *leaved* home. (It was the first time I left my village/town.)
- 2) *We *eaten* and drink. (We ate and drank.)
- 3) * Second she *don't* want dust. (Second, she doesn't want the dust.)
- 4) * She *has not* problems. (She doesn't have any problem.)

5) * I will bought a new moto, a new celphon, a new television. (I will buy a new motorcycle, a new cell phone, and a new television.)

6) *Finally I will building a house for my father and my mother. (Finally, I will build a house for my father and my mother.)

Substitutions

7) *Last year I *visit* my friend in market sabon Gari in Kano, Nigeria. (Last year, I visited my friend in Sabon Gari market, in Kano Nigeria.)

8) *Last year, I *have visited* my friend Sani at Niamey.(Last year, I visited my friend Sani in Niamey.)

9) *When the car *has arrived* at Niamey, I saw Sani is already arrived.(When the car reached Niamey, I saw that Sani had already come/ was already there.)

10)*When we *were entering* the in the General Seyni Kountché I *have saw* so many things. (I saw so many

things when we entered General Seyni Kountché stadium.)

11) *At two o'clock we *were eating* the lunch. (We ate lunch at two o'clock.)

12) *I *had visited* some places in Nigeria last vacation. (I visited some places in Nigeria last year.)

Omissions

13) * He *like* helping people. (He likes helping people.)

14) * Mohamed never *insult* anyone. (Mohamed never insults people.)

15) * First of all, I *will* USA because I like to visit over there. (First of all, I will visit /go to USA because I like to go there.)

16) * Finally I *will* happy Nigeria because is a country big. (Finally, I will be happy to go to Nigeria because it is a big country.)

17) * She *make* me enjoy with people. (She makes me be enjoyed by people.)

18) * Finally my mother *help* me in my studies. (Finally, my mother helps me in my studies.)

Insertions

19) I *was visited* many places last vacation. (I visited many places last vacation.)

20) * All my family *was participated*. (All my family participated.)

21) * The friends of the boy *did came* in our house. (The boy's friends came in our house.)

22) * One of them *are came* on car, motors, and bicyclette. (Some of them came by cars, motorcycles, and bicycles.)

23) *My brother with his friends *are put* their best cloth. (My brother and his friends put their new clothes.)

24) * My sister *was went* to see his brother. (My sister went to see her brother.)

The above committed mistakes by the students indicate that the students have poor knowledge of the English tenses. One of their difficulties is that they were unable to appropriately form tenses when expressing their thoughts as highlighted in the examples. Another difficulty lies in the fact that the students failed to use these verb tenses correctly. They were not able to describe actions and events using the appropriate English verb tense. This has resulted in several substitutions as revealed in the above examples.

The findings in this study disconfirm Ahmed & Javed's (2013) study which revealed that the participants better performed in the present, the future, and the past tenses. However, they show agreement with Free-man, Kuehn & Haccius (2002) who pinpointed that verb tenses in English are one of the most problematic areas in English grammar for ESL/EFL students to understand and use. They also confirm the findings from Ruth(2014), Sukasame, Kantho & Narrot (2014), and Abdullah (2013) whose

findings showed that the students were unable to appropriately use verb tenses in their writings.

Research question 3: What factors lead the students to some wrong uses of verb tenses when writing in English?

The students' wrong uses of verb tenses were linked to the students' first acquired language, their inadequate knowledge of the rules governing English verb tenses, the difficulty of grammatical rules in English, as well as the inadequate teaching received by the students.

The Students' First Language

One of the leading factors that made the participants err when writing in English resulted from the interference of their first acquired languages. The participants, who are mostly Hausa speakers, transferred negatively their knowledge from Hausa on English. This has resulted in producing sentences as.

a. *He *like* helping people, instead of he *likesto* help people.

b.* She *make* me happy, instead of she *makes* me happy.

The cases of the omission of 's' by the students is not very surprising because tenses in Hausa have no inflection of the stem as opposed to English. Thus, the absence of inflection is the reason why students produced such sentences.

Expressing ideas using negations were also found problematic for the students because each of the two languages structures negation differently.

a. Peter *don't* have time instead of Peter *doesn't* have time, and

b. She *has not* problems instead of she *does not have* some problems.

In these examples the students were unable to use the correct negative constructions due to the fact that negations in English and in Hausa are different. In English, especially with the simple present tense negation requires 'do' or 'does', both of which are not parts of the affirmative sentence, while Hausa simply adds 'ba'. Thus, the equivalent of the above sentences Hausa will give:

c. Peter ba shi da lokaci.

d. Ba ta da matsala.

Remarkably, students whose L1 is Hausa would have problem in forming negative sentences if they directly transfer this knowledge from Hausa into English because the 'ba' remains unchanged regardless to person, number or gender. Another major factor responsible for the student's poor performance as revealed by the analysis of the students' essays is the students' little knowledge of the rules governing the use of tenses in English.

The Students' Ignorance of the Grammatical Rules

Many constructions in the students' essays were the result of the students' ignorance of the rules governing the use of verb tenses in English. Examples illustrating the students' poor knowledge of the rules of verb tenses include:

- a. I *will* happy in all my life instead of I *will be* happy for all my life.
- b. Finally I *will* happy Nigeria because is a country big, instead of finally, I *will be* happy to go to Nigeria because it is a big country.
- c. First of all, I *will* USA because I like to visit over there. (First of all, I *will visit* /go to USA because I like to go there.

In all these examples, the students were unaware of the fact that for any construction in English to be grammatical, it must incorporate a verb. The lack of verbs in the sentences implies that the students were ignorant of the crucial role that verbs play in sentences. Other examples showing the students' ignorance of the grammatical rules are:

- d. I *will educated* my children instead of I *will educate* my children.
- e. It *were* so sweet for me instead of it *was* so sweet for me.
- f. These places *is* Katsina and Kano in Nigeria. (These places *are* Katsina and Kano in Nigeria.)
- g. I help *she* going to the bush. (I help *her* to go to the bush.)

An assessment of the above sentences shows gross violations of the rules of agreement between verbs and subjects. This reveals that they have very inadequate knowledge of the rules regarding the basic grammatical concord in English.

Some faulty constructions observed in the written productions of the students are the result of the complex nature of some rules in the grammar of the English language.

Complexity of some rules in English Language

Difficulties in the use of verb tenses by the students as identified in the data also stemmed from the complexity of some rules in the grammar of the English language. This is highlighted in the examples below:

- a. The day of the ceremony I *waked* up at 5:00. (The day of the ceremony, I *woke* up at 5:00.)
- b. The first time I *leaved* home. (It was the first time I *left* my village/town.)

The above examples show the inability of the students to appropriately use the correct form of irregular verbs in English. This is because it could be very difficult for an EFL learner to easily understand why some verbs make their past forms in 'ed' while others make them differently. The use of irregular plural nouns also posed a lot of problems for the students wondering why nouns without an 's' could be

considered as plural nouns since they were basically taught that the plural of nouns in English is formed by adding 's' to a singular noun. Examples showing this problem involve the following:

- c. Their children *was* very educated, while the correct form is their children *were* very educated.
- d. I gave the breakfast to people who *was* there, instead of I served breakfast to people who *were* there.

The complexity of certain rules such as the use of 'there' has also made it difficult for the students to appropriately express their ideas in constructions with 'there'. This has resulted in producing sentences such as:

- e. There *is* exam, quiz and so on. (There *are* exams, quizzes, etc.)
- f. In this university there *is* so much rooms and so much teachers. (In that university there *are* so many rooms, and teachers.)

The rule for constructions with 'there', where verbs agree not with 'there', but with the subject that follows it immediately could be complicated, difficult, and even confusing for the students. They may find it hard to locate the subject as in normal constructions with subject and the predicate (SP) since the subject is inverted. The teachers and the teaching methods used often account to the students' lack of knowledge regarding the use of verb tenses when conveying their ideas in writing.

The Inadequate Teaching

The data analysis shows that some wrong uses of the verb tenses were blamed on the teachers who teach English without qualification. In Niger Republic, due to the shortage of English teachers and the growing number of secondary schools, many teachers are recruited to teach English without any training in both the English language and pedagogy. Wrong uses of verb tenses such as 'I tries my commerce in Wambai market' or 'we eated and drink' are indications that the students are not taught properly the basics of tenses in English.

CONCLUSION

Considering the above findings, it can be concluded that the use of verb tenses by senior secondary students in Niger Republic is inaccurate. It is observed that the students were unable to use the correct verb tense forms when expressing their thoughts in written communication. They were not also able to make appropriate use of verb tenses when describing actions or events with reference to the present, past or future time. They wrongly used the present tense describing events referring to the past, while they mistakenly used the past tense to describe events relating to the present. This has naturally led to verb tense errors of various types including: misformations, substitutions, additions of unnecessary morphemes as

well as omissions of necessary morphemes in the verb tense forms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to help students use English verb tenses appropriately and make sense when writing, it is recommended that:

1. Teachers make their students know that using verb tenses in English is both a matter of knowing how they are formed and how they are used. For this, when introducing tenses, teachers should clearly show how each tense is formed.
2. Since mastering English verb tenses is more than knowing their forms, teachers are advised to also show to their students the different situations where a particular tense may occur.
3. Teachers should work on tenses which make the students be easily confused.

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