



An Analysis of Verb Usage in Narrative Texts in 10 Bible Character Stories for Sunday School Children

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes verb usage in ten Bible character stories designed for Sunday school children, with a specific focus on how various types of verbs contribute to narrative structure and character portrayal. Utilizing a qualitative research design, the study categorizes verbs into four types: transitive, intransitive, inchoative, and stative (e.g., "be"), and examines their distribution and narrative impact. The analysis reveals that intransitive verbs dominate, accounting for 55% of verb usage, thereby highlighting actions as independent events that emphasize the characters' journeys and experiences. Transitive verbs, which comprise 40% of the total usage, underscore interactions and relationships, reinforcing themes of obedience and purposeful action. The limited presence of inchoative and stative verbs suggests a reduced focus on state changes or existential reflections, thereby steering the narrative towards dynamic portrayals of the characters' faith journeys. Overall, this research provides valuable insights into how verb choices shape the storytelling experience and enhance the educational value of biblical narratives for children.

Keywords: Intransitive verb, Transitive verb, Inchoative verb, Verb be, Bible character stories

INTRODUCTION

Language is a method of communication. Language is also used to transmit ideas and arguments to other parties, Maynard & Perakyla (2003). According to Noermanzah (2017:2) cited in Apriyanto (2020:46) explains that, "Language serves as a medium for conveying messages, typically expressed through communication in a variety of specific activities". The significance of language is prominent in numerous daily human activities, particularly in the context of English.

English emerges as a prominent global means of communication, characterized by its rich vocabulary and diverse grammatical structures, Rao (2019). As a widely spoken language, English plays a crucial role in education, literature, and everyday interactions, making it essential for learners to grasp its intricacies, Hall (2005). Understanding the foundational role of English sets the stage for exploring the specific components of this language, particularly the significance of verbs.

A verb is a part of the sentence that indicates an action, state, or event performed by the subject, Mustafa (2021). Verbs not only serve to describe action but also to create atmosphere and emotion in the narrative. In the context of Bible stories, the proper use of verbs can help describe the actions of characters and make the story more vivid. The types of verbs in biblical narratives are transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, inchoative verbs, and verbs be.

Transitive verbs are verbs that require an object to complete their meaning. In narratives, the use of transitive verbs is very important to describe the actions performed by the characters. According to Fiktorius (1985), transitive verbs can provide more information about what the subject does to the object. Example: "Dia mengutus Anak Nya yang tunggal, yaitu Yesus Kristus." The use of the transitive verb "mengutus" here helps explain the action that God took and gives the reader context about the role of the prophets. Intransitive verbs do not require an object and can stand alone in a sentence. According to Tsaqila (2024), intransitive verbs are often used to describe states or actions that do not require a direct object. In biblical narratives, examples of intransitive verbs include: "sudah berhari-hari lamanya mereka berjalan." In this example, the action "berjalan" does not require an additional object and is sufficient to describe the action performed by the subject. Inchoative verbs indicate a change of state or a process towards a certain state. According to Caha et al (2023), these verbs are often used to describe the transition from one state to another. Example: "Keindahan dunia yang diciptakan Nya telah menjadi rusak." The use of the word "menjadi" here indicates a change in the status or condition of a character in the story. The form "be" is very important in English to explain the condition or nature of the subject.

Narratives, particularly in the context of storytelling, are structured accounts of events and experiences that engage audiences and convey deeper meanings, Dahlstrom (2014). They allow individuals to share experiences and lessons in an engaging manner. The narrative form is integral to various forms of literature, including those found in religious texts, as it captivates the audience's attention while imparting moral and cultural values, .

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of narrative structures, yet limited attention has been paid to the specific analysis of verbs within biblical narratives. Sunday School Children are children who attend Sunday school, which is a religious class or activity held on Sundays for children. In Sunday school, children learn about Bible teachings, prayers, hymns, and Christian values. Bible characters are people who are described in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments. They can be prophets, kings, disciples, or other figures who have important roles in the history and teachings of the Christian faith, such as Moses, Abraham, Jesus, and Mary. Narratives are stories or series of events told chronologically. In the Bible, narrative refers to stories or events told to convey a moral or theological message. Examples include the creation story in Genesis, the story of the exodus from Egypt, or the story of the birth of Jesus. In narrative texts, verbs play a crucial role in shaping the flow of the story and defining the characters' actions, states, and transitions.

The Bible, a collection of sacred texts, is rich with narratives that explore profound themes of faith, morality, and human experience. Individuals can feel a sense of belonging and connection to a larger religious community by identifying with characters in religious stories. The roles of characters in religious narratives are diverse and complex, and they form archetypes, symbolism, and moral direction (Kelsey et al., 2023). The stories of biblical characters serve not only as historical accounts but also as moral lessons that resonate across generations. These narratives provide a framework for understanding complex spiritual concepts and foster a sense of connection to the divine. This brings us to the focus of our study, which seeks to analyze verb usage within select biblical narratives, revealing how these linguistic choices enhance storytelling and engagement.

This study focuses on the analysis of verb usage within ten selected Bible character stories, aiming to uncover how different types of verbs transitive, intransitive, and inchoative

contribute to the storytelling and ultimately enhance the learning experience for children. By examining the specific verbs employed in these narratives, we can gain insights into the dynamics of the stories, the emotions of the characters, and the lessons intended for the audience. This analysis will highlight the linguistic aspects of verb usage and demonstrate how these choices affect the engagement and comprehension of Sunday school children.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to investigate: **“What are the dominant verbs used in 10 Bible character stories and what is the percentage of verbs used in 10 Bible character stories?”**

METHOD

Type of this research is descriptive qualitative. Sugiyono cited in Saragih et al, (2022) states “qualitative research is a research conducted on natural objects, where the researchers are key instruments who analyze the data”. This study uses a qualitative design to analyze the types and use of verbs in selected bible narratives, focusing on how these verbs contribute to the narratives of 10 selected bible characters. The analysis is about the types of verbs transitive, intransitive, inchoative, and be-verbs examined to understand their narrative significance. Morgan, H. (2022) explains, the data sources for qualitative research can be based on documents as authentic works. The data source for this research is 10 Bible stories for Sunday School children published online, Fadhilah (2023). These 10 Bible story documents are made available on the internet so they can be accessed by readers, especially those involved with Sunday School children.

According to Muhartoyo (2007:12), qualitative research can use inductive methods to describe general principles based on documents as research data. Data needs to be processed for analysis in qualitative research. This relies on the observation of words and complex texts. Data collection and analysis in this research are conducted according to the interactive model flow of data components analysis. The data collection follows an inductive method, analyzing verb usage within the narrative texts. As proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), this method indicates that the process of qualitative data analysis is carried out interactively and continuously until the data becomes saturated. The procedure includes: 1). Data Collection: Collecting verb occurrences from the selected bible and student written texts. 2). Data Reduction: Categorizing verbs into transitive, intransitive, inchoative, and verb *be*. 3). Data Display: Presenting the verb data in diagrams, charts, and tables to show distribution and patterns. 4). Conclusion/Verification: Drawing conclusions on the narrative function of verbs based on the analysis. Verb Types: Transitive (TV), Intransitive (ITV), Inchoative (IV), Verb *be*.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, the types of verbs contained in 10 stories of Bible characters for Sunday school children are divided into 4 parts: Transitive verbs, Intransitive verbs, Inchoative verbs, and verb *be*. The title of 10 stories of Bible characters are Kelahiran Tuhan Yesus, Sahabat Allah, Saling Tolong Menolong, Allah Mengasihi Semua Orang, Berbuat Baik dan Rendah Hati, Perjalanan Panjang, Minta Maaf dan Memaafkan, Ketaatan Abraham, Hidup yang Berbuah, dan Bahtera Nuh. The researcher found 42 sentences containing verb in the story “Kelahiran Tuhan Yesus”, 59 sentences containing verb in the story “Sahabat Allah”, 13 sentences containing verb in the story “Saling Tolong Menolong”, 10 sentences containing verb in the story “Allah Mengasihi Semua Orang”, 11 sentences containing verb in the story “Berbuat Baik dan Rendah Hati”, 37 sentences containing verb in the story “Perjalanan Panjang”, 23 sentences containing verb in the story “Minta Maaf dan Memaafkan”, 22 sentences containing verb in the story “Ketaatan Abraham”, 22 sentences containing verb in the story “Hidup yang Berbuah”, 27 sentences containing verb in the story

“Bahtera Nuh”. The classification of 4 types of verbs from 10 stories of Bible character stories will be explained as follows:

Kelahiran Tuhan Yesus

The data in "Kelahiran Tuhan Yesus" reveals a notable emphasis on intransitive (ITR) and transitive (TR) verbs, which make up the majority of verb types used, with 62.3% (38 occurrences) for ITR and 37.7% (23 occurrences) for TR. Intransitive verbs, which do not require direct objects, are more frequent, indicating a focus on actions as self-contained events. This suggests a narrative style that captures unfolding scenes and actions as independent occurrences. Transitive verbs, while less frequent, still play a significant role by requiring a direct object to complete their meaning, emphasizing interactions between characters and their surroundings. The absence of IV and BE verbs implies minimal focus on states of being or existential verbs, suggesting that the text favors action-oriented descriptions to create a vivid and immediate portrayal of the events.

Sahabat Allah

Based on the data from the table and diagram, the story of Abraham heavily utilizes transitive verbs (TR), which appear 40 times, constituting 64% of the total verb occurrences. This high frequency of transitive verbs indicates that most actions involve direct objects, emphasizing Abraham's active involvement in performing tasks that align with God's commands. Intransitive verbs (ITR) follow with 21 occurrences, making up 34% of the data, highlighting activities that do not involve a direct object, which adds depth to Abraham's responses to divine guidance. Meanwhile, imperative voluntative verbs (IV) and be verbs (BE) each appear only once, contributing minimally at 2% collectively. With the overwhelming presence of transitive verbs further emphasizing Abraham's responsiveness and obedience in his relationship with God. The data reflects a clear portrayal of Abraham as a dedicated and compliant figure who follows divine instructions with commitment, as shown by his active and frequent engagement in tasks that involve a direct object. This distribution of verbs underlines the story's theme of faith through action, portraying Abraham as a character defined by his trust in God and his willingness to act accordingly.

Saling Tolong Menolong

The data in "Saling Tolong Menolong" shows a strong emphasis on transitive (TR) and intransitive (ITR) verbs, which make up the majority of verb types used, with 68% (15 occurrences) for TR and 27% (6 occurrences) for ITR. Transitive verbs, which require a direct object to convey the full meaning, are slightly more prevalent, highlighting the emphasis on actions that involve a direct impact on another entity. Intransitive verbs, while not requiring a direct object, are also frequently used, indicating a dynamic use of verbs that reflect direct and independent actions. In contrast, verbs in the IV and BE categories are hardly used, with the BE category representing only 6% (1 occurrence) of the total. This distribution suggests that the text prioritizes verbs that do something directly or convey an independent action, which contributes to the active and descriptive style of the narrative.

Allah Mengasihi Semua Orang

Based on the analysis of verb usage, there are 2 Intransitive verbs (ITV), 12 Transitive verbs (TV), 1 Inchoative verbs (I), and 0 be verbs. Transitive verbs are the most dominant, accounting for 80% of the total, indicating that the story focuses on actions involving direct objects, reflecting interactions between characters. Intransitive verbs appear only 13% of the time, meaning actions without direct objects are less significant in this story. The be verbs are used 0% of the time, means np indicating some descriptions of the characters' state or condition. Meanwhile, inchoative verbs are 7%, meaning there is focus on changes of state or transitions in this story. The dominance of transitive verbs reflects a narrative centered on concrete actions involving objects or others.

Berbaik Hati Dan Rendah Hati

Based on the analysis of verb usage, there are 4 Intransitive verbs (ITV), 13 Transitive verbs (TV), 1 Inchoative verbs (I), and 0 be verbs. Transitive verbs are the most dominant, accounting for 72% of the total, indicating that the story focuses on actions involving direct objects, reflecting interactions between characters. Intransitive verbs appear only 22% of the time, meaning actions without direct objects are less significant in this story. The be verbs are used 0% of the time, means np indicating some descriptions of the characters' state or condition. Meanwhile, inchoative verbs are 6%, meaning there is focus on changes of state or transitions in this story. The dominance of transitive verbs reflects a narrative centered on concrete actions involving objects or other.

Perjalanan Panjang

The data in "Perjalanan Panjang" reveals a strong emphasis on transitive (TR) and intransitive (ITR) verbs, which make up the vast majority of verb types used, with 50% (29 occurrences) for TR and 46.55% (27 occurrences) for ITR. Transitive verbs, which require direct objects to convey a complete meaning, are slightly more prevalent, highlighting an emphasis on actions involving a direct impact on another entity. Intransitive verbs, while not requiring a direct object, are also frequently used, indicating a dynamic use of verbs that reflect both direct and independent actions. In contrast, verbs in the IV and BE categories are scarcely used, each representing only 1.72% (1 occurrence each) of the total. This distribution suggests that the text prioritizes verbs that either act upon something directly or convey self-contained actions, contributing to an active and descriptive narrative style.

Minta Maaf dan Memaafkan

This text contains variations in the use of verb types. Transitive verbs (TV) are the most dominant verbs, appearing 16 times or 46% of the total verbs analyzed. Followed by intransitive verbs (ITV) which appear 14 times (40%), then the verb be which appears 5 times (14%), and inchoative verbs (I) for which there is no data. The dominance of transitive verbs shows that this narrative describes more actions involving direct objects, such as "offering", "bringing", and "approaching". The use of the verb "to be" significantly shows the many descriptions of circumstances or conditions in the story. Meanwhile, intransitive verbs are used to express action without a direct object, and inchoative verbs are not found, meaning there is no focus on changes in circumstances or transitions in this story. The dominance of transitive verbs reflects narratives that center on real actions involving objects or other people.

Ketaatan Abraham

Based on this data, the story of "Ketaatan Abraham" shows that the action verbs in each sentence are categorized into four types: ITR (19 instances), TR (18 instances), IV (0 instances), and BE (1 instance). These categories indicate the actions and roles Abraham and Sara undertook in following God's guidance. The frequency of ITR verbs (52.8%) reflects the narrative's focus on physical actions and movements, while TR verbs (47.2%) emphasize God's promises and commands. This distribution highlights the active and faithful responses in their journey, showcasing the strong adherence to God's instructions and their commitment to each other.

Hidup yang Berbuah

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the text about the story are various types of verbs with differing frequencies. Intransitive Verbs (ITR) are used 5 times, or approximately 25% of the total verbs. Transitive Verbs (TR) appear most frequently, occurring 14 times or about 62%, making them the most dominant verb type in the text. Inchoative Verbs (IV) appear only 2 times, or around 13%, while Verb Be (Be) is not used at all (0%). The dominance of Transitive Verbs indicates that the text contains many actions that require direct objects, reflecting a narrative rich in interaction and concrete actions. The

significant use of Intransitive Verbs adds variety in describing states or actions without objects. Although few in number, the presence of Inchoative Verbs brings a nuance of change in state within the story.

Bahtera Nuh

The data in "Bahtera Nuh" reveals a strong emphasis on transitive (TR) and intransitive (ITR) verbs, with TR verbs accounting for 53.8% (14 occurrences) and ITR verbs at 46.2% (12 occurrences). Transitive verbs, which require direct objects, slightly outnumber intransitive verbs, highlighting actions with direct impacts on entities or objects within the narrative, such as "diciptakan" (created), "memusnahkan" (destroy), and "membawa" (bring). Intransitive verbs, although less frequent, are also prominent, emphasizing events occurring independently, such as "berkelahi" (fight) and "turun" (descend). There is a near absence of IV verbs and a single instance of BE, indicating minimal focus on states of being. This distribution suggests a narrative that prioritizes dynamic actions and interactions, portraying events and instructions as impactful and directive, which suits the story's theme of survival and divine instruction.

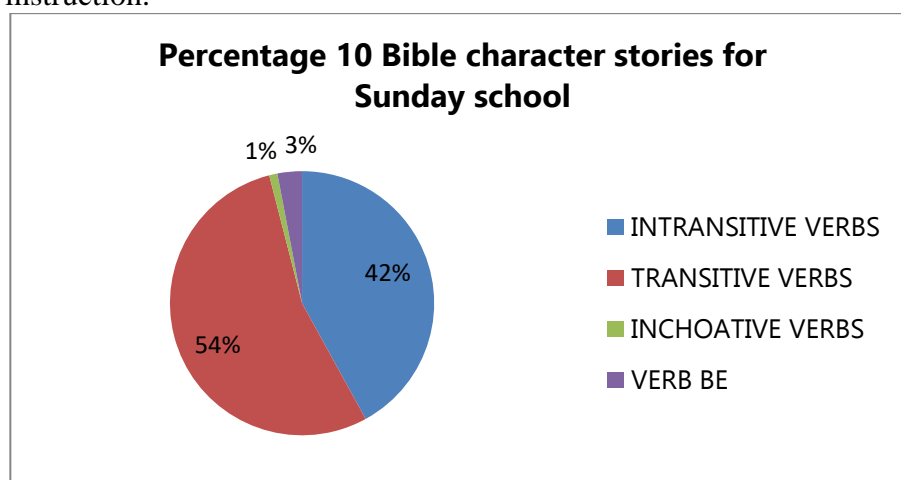


Figure 1. Types of Verbs in 10 Bible Stories for Sunday School Children

The analysis of verb usage in 10 Bible character stories for Sunday school children shows a predominant use of intransitive verbs (ITR) at 55%, reflecting actions as independent events that emphasize characters' journeys and experiences without direct objects. Transitive verbs (TR) make up 40% and highlight interactions and relationships within the stories, reinforcing themes of obedience and purposeful action. In contrast, inchoative verbs (IV) and verb BE are minimal at around 3% or less, suggesting limited focus on states of being or transitions. This dominance of ITR and TR verbs underlines a narrative style that presents faith as an active journey, with actions and direct interactions illustrating.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of verb usage in the 10 Bible character stories for Sunday school children reveals insightful patterns that contribute to the narrative style and meaning. Intransitive verbs (ITR) were the most frequently used, constituting approximately 55% of the total verbs across the narratives. This dominance highlights a focus on actions that stand as independent events, reflecting the characters' personal journeys and experiences that unfold without directly involving other entities. This verb choice suggests a narrative that emphasizes each character's faith as a self-contained journey, showcasing moments of movement, change, and personal reflection. Transitive verbs (TR) accounted for about 40% of the verbs, signaling a substantial emphasis on actions involving direct objects and interactions. These verbs demonstrate how actions performed by the characters frequently impact others, underscoring themes of obedience, duty, and relationships within the stories. The frequent use of transitive

verbs reflects a narrative that values purposeful interactions and concrete actions, portraying characters as actively engaged with their surroundings and fulfilling divine commands. In contrast, inchoative verbs (IV) and the verb "be" were minimally represented, each appearing in around 3% or fewer of the total verbs. This limited use implies a lesser focus on state changes or existential statements, steering the narrative away from static descriptions and toward a dynamic portrayal of events and actions. The overall distribution of verbs underlines a narrative style that presents faith as an active journey, with verbs shaping a vivid portrayal of characters as they respond to divine guidance and navigate their spiritual paths.

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