

The Ability of Tenth Graders of SMTK Berkat Kupang in the Academic Year 2023/2024 in Using English Passive Voice

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
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Received : March, 25 th 2023 Revised : May, 19 th 2023 Accepted : June, 12 th 2023	This study aims to know the ability of tenth graders of SMTK BERKAT Kupang students in using English passive voice, identify the problems they encounter, and find solutions for these challenges in the academic year 2023/2024. The research employed a mixed method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The population consisted of 20 students from the tenth grade, as the total number of students in this grade level was fewer than 100, prompting the researcher to select all available subjects as samples. Thus, the sample that was used in this research is 20 students. Techniques that were used to collect the data were test and interview. The quantitative data obtained from the result of the test were analysed to know the level of the ability of the students in using English passive voice. Students who participated in the interview were students who were classified as poor. The result of the interview was used to get qualitative data to answer the second research question. The findings revealed that: (1) Students' ability in using passive voice was in the level of fair with the mean score is 63,3. (2) Problems that were encountered by the students in using English passive voice were the lack of understanding kinds of tenses, difficulties in changing auxiliary verb "be", and difficulty in changing the main verb that was related to the students' memories capacities. (3) Solutions for the student to solve the problems in using English passive voice were memorizing the form of passive voice, memorizing vocabulary and irregular verbs, understanding the steps in forming passive voice.
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1. Introduction

Grammar is an important part of language and it is very important for learners. According to Muhammad, et al (2017), grammar is one of the important aspects in teaching and learning process of English. Every student must understand English grammar because it has a core position in learning English. Without learning grammar, students cannot write well, including writing sentences. In addition, grammar is needed to construct grammatical sentences effectively. Grammar is the study of sentence formation and structure. According

to Williams (2018), grammar is a theory of language, about how language is put together and how it works. One of the aspects of grammar that should be mastered is passive voice.

Voice is divided into two types such as, active voice and passive voice. Scientific writing often uses passive voice to describe procedures or experiment (Alexander; 2019). Writing is a process of delivering ideas into words or sequence of sentence. According to Boas (2008), writing is a difficult and complex skill. Based on the theories, we can say that in order to convey the meaning into the correct form of language the students should master the grammar properly. If the students do not master the grammar properly, it will be difficult for them to build up the sentences and also will be difficult for the readers to understand the context of the text.

According to Tabossi (1985), grammar is the rules that show how words are combined, arranged or changed to show certain kinds of meaning. When the words are combined and arranged in a correct instruction, they will become a meaningful sentence and when the words are changed, the structure and the meaning of the sentence will be different. Voice is a grammar property where verb indicates whether the subject is doing the action of the verb or receiving the action of the verb (Christiansen, 2009). Active voice is used when the verb indicates whether the subject is doing the action of the verb or receiving the action of the verb. Passive voice is used to show interest in a person or object that is subjected to an action and not a person or object that acts.

According to Ramchand (2018), in writing passive voice sometimes the students do not understand the rules of passive voice. Sometimes they make the same mistakes. For example, in using tenses, auxiliaries, and past participle forms. Those mistakes should be avoided. In constructing passive voice, the students should understand tenses, auxiliaries like modal auxiliaries and auxiliary verb, and past participle. It is one aspect that must be considered by English teachers. In passive voice, students are usually confused with tenses. Every tense has quite a different rule in the passive voice. For example, if the active voice in the simple present tense used to be, such as is, am, are, and simple past used to be, such as was and were and followed by the past participle of the verb. Then, the object is followed by to be and past participle. Students do not understand about changing forms, such as changing infinitives into past participles of regular verbs and irregular verbs. It is essential because passive voice is used in speaking and writing.

We all agree that passive voice is more difficult than active voice because passive voice requires adding a form of the verb as an auxiliary and changing the verb to its past participle form. According to Coghill and Magedanz (2003: 109), passive voice emphasizes the result of the action or the receiver of the action rather than the actor or the action itself. Passive voice is used when the actor is unknown, unimportant, impersonal or anonymous. For example, Roger's car was stolen. In this sentence, the actor is not mentioned because the actor is unknown or anonymous. Another example is someone eats the cake. If the students do not master grammar, the passive form of sentence might be written like, the cake was eaten by someone. The form of the sentence is grammatical incorrect and it should be the cake was eaten. The agent in the sentence which is someone can be omitted because the actor is unknown and unimportant. Without mastering the form of passive voice, the students will be difficult to write a grammatical passive voice.

Passive voice always uses the past participle form of verb but due to the lack of understanding the formula of the passive voice, the students are difficult to apply the construction of passive voice in writing. Another problem is the changing of the subject and the object in active voice in order to form a passive voice. When it comes to passive voice, the object in active voice becomes the subject. The students sometimes ignore the object whether the object is singular or plural and it will affect the auxiliary verbs being used in the sentence.

Considering all the problems above and the importance of passive voice in academic and scientific writing for students to avoid repetition in their writings, the researcher intends to conduct a research about student's ability in using English passive voice. He has experienced the difficulties in constructing passive voice when he had structure class and looking at the other students who also have experience similar difficulties as the researcher. The lack of grammar and misunderstanding of the formula of passive voice encourages the researcher to conduct a research about passive voice.

2. Research Method

The research design used was quantitative and qualitative research methods (mixed method). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) in Sreejesh and Mohapatra (2014), mixed method research design helps researcher to go for inductive and deductive reasoning

techniques to more accurately answer the study's research problems that cannot be completely answered through qualitative or quantitative research alone.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Research Findings

The research was conducted in SMTK BERKAT KUPANG from May 27, 2024 until May 29, 2024 with 20 students of the tenth graders of SMTK BERKAT KUPANG. In the research, the writer conducted test to know the level of ability of the students in using English passive voice. The test was conducted offline in SMTK BERKAT KUPANG. The test consisted 15 test items of essay test with scores number will be scored 6,67 as the highest score. Students are asked to change active sentences into passive sentences by giving the correct form of be and indicating which of the following sentences is the passive sentence or active sentence. Then, the result of the test was used to determine the level of the ability of the students in using English passive voice. After determining the level of proficiency, the writer took only 6 students who were classified as poor to be interviewed. The interview was conducted offline Meeting. The result of the interview was analyzed to find out the problems in using English passive voice.

Table 1. Student's Ability Score

No	Student's Initial	Score	Category
1	MAT	80,7	Excellent
2	YN	76,4	Good
3	WS	76	Good
4	MK	75,4	Good
5	LL	75	Good
6	MN	74,4	Good
7	RP	73,4	Good
8	ML	69,7	Fair
9	FB	67,7	Fair
10	AS	62	Fair

11	DK	61	Fair
12	OL	60,4	Fair
13	JL	60	Fair
14	ML	60	Fair
15	ADS	56,4	Poor
16	DS	56,4	Poor
17	WM	52,4	Poor
18	MDK	47,7	Poor
19	AT	46,7	Poor
20	GM	40	Poor
Mean Score		63,6	Fair

According to the table, the lowest score got by student was 40 and it was classified as poor, and the highest score got by student was 80,7 and it was classified as excellent. However, the students' ability was classified as fair since the average score was 63,6. After getting the individual scores and the average, the writer chose 6 students who were classified as poor to be interviewed. The interview was held to find out the problems that were encountered by the students in using passive voice during the test. The most difficulties that are encountered by the students in using English passive voice are the lack of understanding kind of tenses and the students found it difficult to change auxiliary verbs and the main verb. Moreover, detailed descriptions of difficulties encountered by the students in using English passive voice will be presented.

Problems Encountered by the Students in Using English Passive Voice.

Based on the test of the ability of the tenth graders of SMTK BERKAT KUPANG, the mean score is 63,6 which is classified as average to good. From the mean score, the ability of the tenth graders in using English passive voice was in the level of average. Since the ability was in the level of average, there were some students who were struggling hard in using English passive voice. They are 6 students who got low scores and were classified as poor. The writer interviewed the students to know the problems they encountered when using English passive voice. Based on the interview, it was found that the problems that are

encountered by the students in using English passive voice are related to the construction or formula of the passive voice such as lack of understanding kind of tenses, difficulties in changing auxiliary verb “be”, and not memorizing the past participle form of the main verb that made them difficult to change the main verb, The difficulties will be explained more in detail below.

a) The Lack of Understanding Kind of Tenses

Based on the interview, there were 6 students who participated in it and all 6 students gave the same answers that they found it difficult in understanding kind of tenses that made them difficult to construct the grammatical form of passive voice. In the interview, the writer asked the students how many kinds of tenses they know and they mentioned some kind of tenses. Based on their answers, the writer took a conclusion that they knew the kind of tenses but they did not understand. “Not understanding kind of tenses means not understanding the formula of the tenses”, said a student in the interview.

For example, a question of passive voice in present progressive tense. The question was “The student is writing a story”. The students mostly answered the questions with, “A story is written by the student”. Meanwhile the answer should be, “A story is being written by the student” From the students’ answers, we could take conclusion that the students did not know and did not understand that kind of tense in the questions was present progressive tense. This problem becomes a significant problem for the students that affects their abilities in constructing grammatical English passive voice. It will be difficult for students to master English passive voice in the further if they do not understand kind of tense.

b) Difficulties in Changing Auxiliary Verb “Be”

The second difficulty or problem that was encountered by the students during the test was changing auxiliary verb “be” from active to passive. Auxiliary verb used in passive construction is determined by the subject. The students tended to not pay attention at the subject and object of the sentence. Since the object of the active voice becomes the subject of passive voice and vice versa, the students often ignored whether the subject and object were singular or plural. That is why they made mistake in changing the auxiliary verb “be”.

For example, the question, “They were visiting the museum last week”. The answer that was most commonly given by the students was “The museum were being visited by them last week”. Meanwhile the answer should be, “The museum was being visited by them last week”. Based on students’ answers, we can see that the students did not pay attention to the

subject and object of the sentence and it becomes a significant problem in constructing English passive voice.

c. Difficulties in Changing the Main Verb

The third problem that was encountered by the students in constructing English passive voice was changing the main verb. In the interview, the student said, "I do not memorize the past participle of the main verb that is why I found it difficult to change the main verb in constructing passive." Since the formula of passive voice uses the past participle, the students mostly made mistake in the verb such as "build", "make", and "speak". After interviewing the students, the writer took a conclusion that the students found it difficult in changing the main verb especially for irregular verb.

This problem or difficulty related to the students' memory capacity that makes them difficult in constructing passive voice. Not memorizing the verb becomes the problem that is encountered in constructing passive voice. The students should be encouraged to memorize the verb so that they can know the past participle of the main verb.

Solutions to the problems in Using English Passive Voice

Based on the interview, it was found that the problems that are encountered by the students in using English passive voice are related to the construction or formula of the passive voice such as lack of understanding kind of tenses, difficulties in changing auxiliary verb "be", and not memorizing the past participle form of the main verb that made them difficult to change the main verb. From the interview, the writer takes a conclusion that there are some solutions for the student to solve the problems in using English passive voice.

a. Memorizing the Form of Passive Voice

Memorizing the passive voice forms of all types of tenses will significantly aid students in using the English passive voice. This memorization will certainly help students avoid mistakes in their use of the English passive voice. Therefore, memorizing the passive voice forms can be one solution for students to address their lack of understanding of the various tenses.

b. Memorizing Vocabulary and Irregular Verbs

Memorizing vocabulary and irregular verbs is one solution or effort that can be done by teachers and students. Memorizing vocabulary and irregular verbs can be one strategy for teachers in teaching. Teachers can employ this strategy by encouraging the memorization of vocabulary and irregular verbs every week or every class meeting, and of course this strategy can be done independently by students at home. This strategy will certainly improve and

expand the knowledge of vocabulary and irregular verbs of students, and this strategy can be one solution to solve the difficulties in changing main verbs in using English passive voice.

c. Understanding the Steps in Forming Passive Voice

Understanding the steps in forming passive voice sentences can be one of the best solutions to solve the problems faced by students in using passive voice sentences. The steps in forming passive voice were, as follows:

- 1) Identify the object.
- 2) Check the number of the object (singular or plural).
- 3) Check the tenses (present, past, etc).
- 4) Identify past participle of the verb. Then, students are ready to form passive voice.

Understanding the steps in forming the passive voice certainly helped students avoid issues related to a lack of understanding of tenses, difficulties in changing the auxiliary verb 'be', and challenges in changing the main verb

4. Conclusion

The students' abilities showed that the ability of the tenth graders of SMTK BERKAT KUPANG was on the level of the fair because the average score was 63,6. There was 1 student who was classified as excellent, 6 students who were classified as good, 7 students who were classified as fair, and 6 students who were classified as poor. Among the categories, the category of poor has an extreme number of scores and it gave us evidence that there were still some problems or difficulties that were encountered by the students in constructing English passive voice. After knowing the level of the ability of the students based on the test, 6 students who were classified as poor were taken to answer the second research question about the problems that were encountered by the students in using English passive voice. The main challenges identified through interviews with the students were a lack of understanding of various tenses, difficulties in changing the auxiliary verb "be," and trouble in changing the main verb, especially for irregular verbs. These issues significantly hindered their ability to construct grammatically correct passive voice sentences.

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