

STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING "TO BE" AT FIRST GRADE OF SMP SINTUWU MAROSO POSO

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Abstract: The aims of this research to find the first students of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso ability in using "to be". The problem formulation is: "What is the first year student's at SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso ability in using "tobe". The method in this research is descriptive qualitative. Source of this research Students' first semester at SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso consist of 24 students. The result of this research finding shows: The ability of the SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso using "to be" in English sentences was be categorized "poor". It can be seen that the ability of the first year students of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso using to be in English sentences was very less.

Keywords: *Students' Ability, Using To Be*

To be able to communicate in English, students have to master the basic language skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. It has its own grammar rules which have a great role on one's acquisition in English. Grammar is needed even in communication. In talking about grammar, there are many valuable parts that should be learnt by the students. The study of grammar can greatly enhance understanding and fluency.

Grammar is one of the components in language learning. At junior high school, grammar is an important component in learning English. By learning grammar, students can do their exercises well. Based on the syllabus of Junior High School at SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso, one of the materials at junior high school is they are learnt basic grammar, especially they are introduced about tenses. As we know, that grammar of language is the way to describe the words that can change their forms. By studying grammar seriously the learner can make the words into sentences from the word that does not have meaning into sentences that have meaning.

There are sixteen tenses in English. Among the sixteen tenses, there are some tenses that are often used in our daily activities and have taught to the first students of SMP Sinmar Poso, they are simple present tense and simple past tense. When they are learn those tenses, they have to master in using subject-verb agreement, linking verb "be", adverb and usage. The forms of the verb *to be* are called linking verbs because they link other words. These words are: *am, are, is, was, were, be, being, been*. They may be used alone or with another verb to indicate passive.

To make a good composition, the students must be able to master and apply structure correctly, especially about using *to be* in sentence. If they cannot do that, of course, error arises. Some of the students still find

problems in using *to be*, because of their limited mastery. Therefore the writer analyzed the extent of their abilities made by the first students of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso.

Purpose and Scope of English Subjects in SMP / MTs

Purpose: English Subjects in SMP/MTs intended to make the learners have the following capabilities (Depdikbud RI, 2004):

- a. Developing communication competence in oral and written form to reach the level of functional literacy.
- b. Having an awareness of the nature and importance of English to improve the nation's competitiveness in the global community.
- c. Developing the students understanding of the links between language and culture.

The scope of the subjects in English at SMP / MTs includes:

- a. Ability discourse, or the ability to understand and produce oral and or written text which is realized in the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing in an integrated way to achieve the level of literacy functional.
- b. Ability to understand and create a variety of short functional text and monologue and essay form procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, and report. Gradation of teaching materials to the use of vocabulary, grammar, and rhetoric steps.

Supporting competencies, namely linguistic competence (using the grammar and vocabulary, sound system, Grammar) socio-cultural competence (using the phrase and follow the acceptable language in different contexts of communication), competency

strategies (address issues that arise in the communication process in various ways in order to continue communication), and forming discourse competence.

Grammar

Grammar is the system of language sometimes described as the 'rules' of a language. Grammar occupies several meanings and descriptions. Harmer (2001:12) defines the term grammar as the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and be combined into sentences in that language. Or in other way to say, grammar is a set of rules by which people speak and write it can be assumed that knowledge about grammar is necessary for a language learner.

Hornby (1989:517) defines grammar as the rules in a language for changing the form of words and combining them into sentences. In short, grammar is something that people can use to find their way in getting along with others in using language.

1) Grammatical Sentence

In communication, oral or written form, the speaker or the writer has to pay greater attention of how to arrange words within a sentence, so that, the meaning will convey in his or her message can be understood by the receivers. (Edge, 1993)

Written language as a medium of communication is more formal than spoken language. It might be because writer language can be read by everyone with different situation and different educational background. It is also because written language uses the language correctly according to the rules (Evans, 1989). In written language, grammatical sentences possessed by the writer determine his or her writing. If he or she can help readers understand or get the meaning across through his/her writing and avoiding misunderstanding about the meaning intended by the writer to the readers. In other way to say, to avoid misunderstanding the writer should master grammatical sentence because misarranging of words within sentences influence the meaning of the sentence. (Gains and Redman, 1986). When one starts to write, his/her grammatical tasks become slightly more complicated. Krashen, Stephen and Tracy (1983:5) states:

Written language is often more formal than spoken language because you have no way of knowing how your readers are reaching to your words. You don't know if your readers understand what you are saying.

The important thing that should be mastered in grammatical sentences are how to arrange words into sentences, and the rules of

how to relate subject, predicate, object or adverb or a sentence. By mastering those elements a writer may correct English sentences. (Evans, 1989) The subject is the thing, person, or quality (nouns) about which something is said in a clause. The subject is usually a noun or pronoun. The predicate always includes a verb. An object is something or someone forward which an action of the verb. Like a subject, an object is normally made up of a noun or pronoun. In writing, the subject and predicate of the sentences must be taken into account. The same thing should be done to the relationship between predicate and object, as well as the explanation of each element in the paragraph (Byrne, 1993).

2) Vocabulary mastery

The students' vocabulary mastery affects their writing ability and quality of writing they produced. Vocabulary mastery they have also affected their skills in listening, speaking, and reading skill. (Davies and Pearse, 2000)

Each word we produce or receive has a meaning it's convey. Misusing of words will bring different meaning. Sometimes we find one word has different meaning if the word is related different words. So, a writer should use the vocabulary mastery they have mastered with that meaning convey in his or her writing. Hall (1993), states that vocabulary is a very powerful part of a language. Students can communicate in English if they have enough repertoires (stock of vocabulary). Vocabulary proficiency affects not only the students' reading skill, but also their speaking, listening, writing and reading skill. Their vocabulary determines how clearly and accurately they can express their ideas to others.

Important of Learning Grammar

People acquired their mother tongue of the language they use for everyday activity without studying its grammar system. They speak naturally without learning the grammar rules. If they want to write the language then the story becomes different. They have to learn the grammatical rules in order to be able to communicate effectively. Let alone in a process of learning a foreign language (Tracey, 1990)

The importance of grammar lays on the role of the language elements. No matter how simple it is, every language has its own grammatical rules. Imagine one language with no grammatical rules. It will never be spoken because people will not be able to either use the language orally or written. Grammar helps people to learn a language more quickly and efficiently. This reasonable since studying

grammar is something that tells us how to speak and to write correctly. When learners understand the grammar or a system of a language, he will know how the language works. As a result, he will make sentences or statements grammatically correct and meaningful to other people (Norrish, 1983).

General concept of “To Be”

"To be or not to be..." does not express an action. It links the subject of a sentence to a complement, which gives information about subject. The complement is usually an adjective, noun, pronoun, noun phrase, noun clause or adverbs (Azar: 1993)

To be also an auxiliary verb is a verb that is used to form the tense or time of action, voice and mood or another verb. It is sometimes called a “helping” verb because it “helps out” the main verb. The primary auxiliaries are be (am, is, are, was, were, being, been), do and have and all their forms bellow show the different of forms of to be. (Dykes: 2007).

The *to be* is the fundamental verb used to indicate the existence of an entity (person, object, abstraction) or to relate an entity to its qualities or characteristics. In linguistics, it is sometimes known as a copula.

METHOD

The type of this research was qualitative descriptive The technique of data collection was test. The test gave in three kinds. The test was multiple choices consist of 10 items and True False test consist of 10 items. The data gained from the field research analyzed based on the formula states by Purwanto (1994:104) as follow:

$$S = \frac{F_x}{N} \times 100$$

Where, S = Score

F_x = the sum of correct answer
n = total number of test

The score of the students in using to be according to Purwanto (1994:104) is categorized as follows:

Interval scores	level	Criteria
90 – 100	A	Excellent
80 – 89	B	Good
65 – 79	C	Fair
55 – 64	D	Poor
0 – 54	E	Very poor

Findings

Conducted from this research, the researcher made two times research test and for the students. The first research used test by multiple choices with 10 items and second

research used test by True or False with 10 items, the researcher gave test to provide the researcher with accurate data in students’ ability using “to be”.

The First Meeting on Wednesday 11th of Juni 2014 in Students’ Response Using “to be” in SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso by Multiple choices Test.

The research using test, kind test in using “to be” by multiple choices with 10 items. The researchers gave instrument to the first grade student’s of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso about 30 minutes in the class.

There were 24 students who followed the multiple test. The number of item was ten. The highest total correct answer was 9 and the lowest total answer was 3. The item most answered by the students was item no. 1. Item no 2 was answered correctly by 23 students almost all the students answered it correctly and the item was the lowest answered correctly by the students was item no 10. Item no 10 was answered correctly by 7 students only. It means from ten items number 1 was the easiest test and no 10 was the most difficult test

The criteria of student ability in answer the multiple choices in using to be, the researcher presented on the following table:

Table 1 Criteria of Students’ Score

Interval	Frequency	Criteria
90 – 100	3 students	Excellent
80 – 89	2 students	Good
65 – 79	2 students	Fair
55 – 64	8 students	Poor
0 – 54	9 students	Very poor
Sum	24	

After computed the data, the mean score was 60. The criteria of students’ mean score was poor. It meant that the ability in using to be got from the multiple choice test of the first students in SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso was poor.

The Second Meeting on Wednesday 25th Juni 2014 in Students’ Response Using “to be” in SMP Sinmar Poso by True false Test.

The second meeting using true false test with 10 items. The researcher gave information about score of true false test. There were use dichotomy scale, 1 score if the student’s correct answers the question and 0 score if the students answer incorrectly the question.

The criteria of student ability in answer the true false test in using to be, the researcher presented on the following table:

Table 2. Criteria of Students' Score

Interval	Frequency	Criteria
90 – 100	1 students	Excellent
80 – 89	4 students	Good
65 – 79	5 students	Fair
55 – 64	6 students	Poor
0 – 54	8 students	Very poor
Sum	24	

After computed the data, the mean score was 65,83. The criteria of students' mean score was fair. It meant that the ability in using to be got from the true false test of the first students in SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso was fair.

The score of the students got from two kind of test namely multiple choice and true false in using to be was presented on table below:

Table 3. The Students' Score

Students initial	Test		Total Correct Answer	Students' Score
	Multiple choice	True False		
Bn	3	8	11	55
Mn	5	6	11	55
Nk	5	5	10	50
PP	9	7	16	80
RL	6	4	10	50
Yn	6	8	14	70
RY	6	5	11	55
Md	5	7	12	60
An	3	9	12	60
Dn	4	6	10	50
Sb	6	5	11	55
Al	6	9	15	75
AR	5	8	13	65
RL	7	5	12	60
Ts	6	9	15	75
Rf	6	7	13	65
Bs	6	5	11	55
JS	4	2	6	30
KL	8	9	17	85
VK	8	5	13	65
Cr	7	9	16	80
Ag	9	9	18	90
Ks	9	7	16	80
Fr	5	4	9	45
Total			302	1510

The criteria of student score in answer the test in using to be, the researcher presented on the following table:

Table 4 Criteria of students score

Interval	Frequency	Criteria
90 – 100	1 students	Excellent
80 – 89	4 students	Good
65 – 79	6 students	Fair
55 – 64	8 students	Poor
0 – 54	5 students	Very poor
Sum	24	

After computed the data, the mean score was 62,91. The criteria of students' mean score was poor. It meant that the ability in using to be got from the true false test of the first students in SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso was poor or still low.

From students' answer in multiple choice test and true or false test in using to be the researcher found that first year students still difficult in using to be in the sentence. In this case students usually wrong to analyzed singular and plural. After that if the sentence is past tense form or present form.

Discussions

Based on the research data as described before, that the students' ability using to be at SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso still need attention and understanding because most of students incorrectly answered each question. Each table from finding research show average student mistaken in determining the use to be in kinds of test such as multiple choice and true or false (statement) from the use of a single subject and plural subject. The next students have not been able to distinguish the use simple present tense and simple past tense.

The data research also shows results of students' answers to a test score is 62,91 can be categorized first grade students' of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso ability in using to be is "poor".

The important thing that should be mastered in grammatical sentences is how to arrange words into sentences, and the rules of how to relate subject, predicate, object or adverb or a sentence. The first grade student's of SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso was the English for young learner that need to learn more in using to be, the students must be seriously and in learning English student's have to learn its grammar or structure intensively. For an example the usage of personal pronoun. In English there was many types of personal pronoun and they also have different position and function, as the first person in English used as a subject (I), object (me), possessive adjective (my), possessive pronoun (mine) and reflexive (myself). In Indonesia first person "saya" is used in any position in sentences and does not change, and it makes student confuse to use English grammar.

Conclusion

Based on the research finding, it can be concluded that most of the first grade students of the SMP Sintuwu Maroso Poso in using "to be" in English sentences was poor. From the result of the test which was done by

the students in this research, it was found that the score of the students do not reach good grade with the mean score was only 62,91. It means that their ability in using to be is not

good enough. In other words, they have poor ability in using correct to be.

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