

AN ANALYSIS ON THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES TO WRITE SIMPLE SENTENCES USING GERUND AT SMA N 1 KAMPUNG DALAM

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out the eleventh grade students' difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund. The design of this research was descriptive in nature. The population of this research was the eleventh grade students of SMAN 1 Kampung Dalam, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. In selecting the sample the writer used stratified proportional random sampling. The total number of the sample was 30 students, 11 students from exact science class and 19 students from social science class. The result of the data analysis showed that the percentage of the eleventh grade students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund was 25%. In detail, the findings showed that the percentage of eleventh grade students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as subject was 16.667%. The percentage of eleventh grade students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object was 38.333%. The last, the percentage of eleventh grade students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition was 55%.

Keywords: Analysis, Difficulty, Writing, Gerund

Introduction

Thornbury (1999: 1) states that all language in use can be analyzed at each of these four levels: text, sentence, word, and sound. The study of grammar consists, in part, of looking at the way these forms are arranged and patterned. One of the ways to master English is that we must comprehend and master the grammatical structure of English. Studying grammar helps students to learn about a language. Learning about a language is very different from using the language. The important

part of communicative and writing competence in learning language is grammar. Grammar is the system of rules which describes how the language sentences are formed. If people use grammatical structure correctly, they speak English fluently. Students who are good at grammar subject may easily produce correct sentence both in spoken and written language.

Gerund is one of sub topics in grammar subject. A gerund functions as a noun and may be used as a subject, an

object, or an object of preposition. Gerund is used as a “noun activity”. Gerunds have an –ing ending (Aronson, 1984: 68).

The students often find the sentences that use gerund and it is difficult for them to use verbs that are followed by gerund as subject, gerund as object, gerund as object preposition and pattern of the sentence. Basically, several students have difficulty in distinguishing the uses of gerund. One of the difficulties which is faced by them in learning gerund is lack of knowledge of the rules on adding –ing to the verb when forming gerund. Sometimes students cannot separate the understanding of using gerund and the understanding of continuous tense, it happens because both of gerund and continuous tense are using verb + ing.

Gerund has been studied by the eleventh grade students in senior high school. Relating to this, they should be able to use gerund in writing sentence. Based on the writer’s personal interview with the teacher and the eleventh grade students of SMAN 1 Kampung Dalam Kabupaten Padang Pariaman in Pariaman on November 1, 2014, the writer found that the students usually had some problems when they were instructed to write sentence using verbs followed by gerund or put a gerund as subject, gerund as object, and gerund as object preposition in a sentence. So, the writer was interested to do a research about the students’ difficulties to write simple sentence using gerund based on this problem.

In learning English, there are four integrated skills that students should learn; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to support the skills in language, we have to master grammar. For example, in writing skill students study how to write sentences, paragraph, and

essays. It means that the students also learn several language components that they should master to support English skills. They are; pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Several aspects in learning grammar are studied by students. They are tenses, count and non count nouns, modal auxiliaries, comparative forms, superlative forms, passive voice, infinitive, and gerund.

Tense is one of the aspects that must be learnt. Tense is verb form that describes the time and level complete of action. There are 16 tenses in English. One of them is simple present tense. They can be divided into using to be and using verb. Simple present tense has affirmative, negative, and interrogative form in sentence. Affirmative sentence means agreement, whereas the negative means refusing. And interrogative means a question. Question can be divided into two, they are information question and yes/no question.

Byrd and Benson (2001: 368) state that gerund is verbs followed by the –ing form. If the new word is used a noun, it is called gerund. Gerund can be used as subject, direct object, complement, object of preposition, and appositive.

Based on the identification above, the writer limited his study on the discussion about gerund as subject, gerund as object, and gerund as object of preposition, and students focused to use gerund in simple present tense only. The reason was that the senior high school students learn about using gerund in simple sentence only. The writer limited the problem about students’ difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund in simple present tense at affirmative form because the writer only wanted to know about students’ difficulty in using gerund.

The writer avoided the using of the complicated sentence.

The writer also limited the sample of this study on the eleventh grade students in SMAN 1 Kampung Dalam Kabupaten Padang Pariaman since they studied gerund in English subject.

The general purpose of this research was to find out the eleventh grade students' difficulties in writing simple sentence using gerund. The specific purpose of this study was to find out whether the eleventh grade students of SMAN 1 Kampung Dalam have difficulty in writing simple sentences using gerund as subject, using gerund as object and using gerund as object of preposition.

Research Method

This research was descriptive in nature. It was done to find out the students' difficulties in writing simple sentence using gerund. Gay (1987: 189) states that descriptive research determines and describes the way things are. She adds that it involves collecting data to test hypothesis or answer questions about people's opinion on some topics or issues. This research analyzed the students' difficulties to write simple sentence using gerund at SMA N 1 Kampung Dalam.

The population of this research was the eleventh grade students of SMAN 1 Kampung Dalam, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. The writer chose the eleventh grade students as population because they have studied about gerund in the eleventh grade of senior high school at the first semester. The writer has done an informal observation and got the data from the teacher. The total number of this population was 148 students. And they were already divided into five classes. There were two classes of exact science

(IPA); XI IPA 1 and XI IPA 2, and three classes of social science (IPS); XI IPS 1, XI IPS 2 and XI IPS 3. Each class consisted of 26 to 32 students. The distribution of members of population according to the students' department and class is shown in Table.

Table of Distribution of Population by Students' Department and Classes

No	Students' Department	Class	Number
1	Exact Science (IPA)	XI IPA 1	27
		XI IPA 2	26
2	Social Science (IPS)	XI IPS 1	31
		XI IPS 2	32
		XI IPS 3	32
TOTAL			148

In this research, the writer used stratified proportional random sampling because it was identifying sub group (strata) in the population and took sample randomly. According to Clipart (2003) stratified proportional random sampling is the process of selecting a sample based on strata and departs, and it was taken proportionally under the consideration of population, a random sample is taken from each strata (subgroup) randomly. Furthermore, Gay (1987:114) says, in general, the minimum number of subjects believed to be acceptable for a study depends upon the types of the research involved. For descriptive research, a sample of 10% of the population is considered minimum. For smaller

population, 20% may be required. In term of proportion, researcher took 20% of each strata. To choose the sample, the writer chose the proportion of each depart randomly from each member of the subgroup, because the two departs were different in term of teaching material, syllabus, the teachers and motivation in learning English. The writer wrote the names of sample in pieces of paper and put them into two boxes, one box was for exact science classes and the other for social science classes, where each departs were chosen 20% from 53 students for exact science class and 20% from 95 students from social science classes. The total number of the sample was 30 students. The writer took 11 students from 53 students of exact science classes and 19 students from 95 students of social science classes by taking pieces of paper that has already mixed up with closed eyes.

The writer used writing test for research instrument. The test consisted of 15 items. The students were asked to write sentences by using verbs that have already been given on the worksheet. These verbs had to be used in the form of gerund because the writer wanted to find out students' difficulty to write simple sentence using gerund. There were 15 items. 5 items for gerund as subject, 5 items for gerund as object, and 5 items for gerund as object of preposition.

A good test should be valid and reliable. A test will be valid if it measures what is supposed to be measured (Gay, 1987: 128). One of the types of the test validity is content validity. It means the test is valid if it is appropriate with material that has been given to the students and it is appropriate with the curriculum and syllabus. According to Gay (1987: 129), content validity is the degree to

which a test measures an intended area. Items validity is concerned with whether the test items represents measurement in intended content area, and sampling validity is concerned with how well the test samples the total content area. Content validity is of prime importance for achievement test. So, the writer gave test in which the materials that had been taught by the teacher because the curriculum consists of these materials and the curriculum were used by teacher in teaching and learning process.

Gay (1987: 135) states that reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measured. To measure the reliability of the test, the writer used interrater technique. It refers to reliability of two or more assessors. The first assessor was the writer and the second assessor was Wido Aries Tyo Prabowo. The writer chose him because he got good grade at grammar and writing. The function of having two assessors was to avoid the subjectivity in assessing the test. The correlation of scores given by two assessors can be measured by using Pearson Product Moment Formula (Arikunto, 2012: 87) as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

r_{xy} = the coefficient of correlation of two assessors

n = the number of the students who follow the test

x = the number of difficulty found by the first assessor

y = the number of difficulty found by the first assessor

The degree of correlation coefficient of the test can be categorized as follows (Arikunto, 2012: 89):

.81 – 1.00 = very high correlation

.61 – .80 = high correlation

.41 – .60 = enough correlation

.21 – .40 = low correlation

.00 – .20 = very low (no correlation)

The test sheets then were corrected by the writer as the first assessor and his friend Wido Aries Tyo Prabowo as second assessor. The total difficulties from both assessors then were calculated in order to find the coefficient correlation of two assessors. From the calculation, $r_{xy} = .98$ while $r_{table} = .361$. It means that r calculated $> r_{table}$, so the test is reliable ($\alpha.02$ & 03).

The writer gathered the data by giving writing test to the students. The writer gathered the data through some procedures as follows:

1. The grammar test in the form of writing was distributed.
2. The students did the test in 60 minutes.
3. After 60 minutes, the writer gathered the answer sheets.
4. The writer gave the copies of answer sheet to the second assessor.
5. The writer (first assessor) and the second assessor gave check (\surd) on the table that indicated the students' difficulty in writing simple sentences using gerund.
6. The writer and the second assessor identified whether the students have difficulties or not based on the criteria below :

1) *Gerund as subject*

- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as subject if they did not use

gerund at the beginning of sentence.

- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as subject if they did not use verb agreement in verbal sentence and / or nominal sentence.

2) *Gerund as object*

- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as object if they did not use gerund after verb in sentence.
- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as object if they did not use verb agreement in sentence.

3) *Gerund as object of preposition*

- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as object of preposition if they did not use gerund after preposition in sentence.
- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as object of preposition if they did not use appropriate preposition in sentence.
- The students had difficulty in writing sentence by using gerund as object of preposition if they did not use verb agreement in verbal sentence and / or nominal sentence.

Findings

The test was conducted on Monday, 15 of December 2014 at 9.00 am. The test took place at SMAN 1 V Koto Kampung Dalam in Kampung Dalam, Pariaman. The data were collected by giving a writing test to write simple sentences using gerund to 30 students who were participated in the test.

The first assessor found that the percentage of students who had difficulty

to write simple sentences using gerund was 26.667%. Then, the second assessor found that the percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund was 23.333%. The summary of students who had difficulty percentage was 25%.

The percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as subject that was found by first assessors was 10% for the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence, 10% for the use of verb agreement and 20% for whole criteria in using gerund as subject. Meanwhile, the second assessor found that the percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as subject was 6.667% for the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence, 6.667% for the use of verb agreement and 13.333% for whole criteria in using gerund as subject. The summary of students who had difficulty percentage was 8.333% for the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence, 8.333% for the use of verb agreement and 16.667% for whole criteria in using gerund as subject.

The percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as object that was found by first assessors was 30% for the use of gerund after verb, 26.667% for the use of verb agreement and 40% for whole criteria in using gerund as object. Meanwhile, the second assessor found that the percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as object was 23.333% for the use of gerund after verb, 26.667% for the use of verb agreement and 36.667% for whole criteria in using gerund as object. The summary of students who had difficulty percentage was

26.667% for the use of gerund after verb, 26.667% for the use of verb agreement and 38.333% for whole criteria in using gerund as object.

The percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition that was found by first assessors was 50% for the use of gerund after preposition, 33.333% for the use of verb agreement, 53.333% for the use of preposition and 56.667% for whole criteria in using gerund as object of preposition. Meanwhile, the second assessor found that the percentage of students who had difficulties to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition was 50% for the use of gerund after preposition, 26.667% for the use of verb agreement, 53.333% for the use of preposition and 53.333% for whole criteria in using gerund as object of preposition. The summary of students who had difficulty percentage was 50% for the use of gerund after preposition, 30% for the use of verb agreement, 53.333% for the use of preposition and 55% for whole criteria in using gerund as object of preposition.

Discussion

The result of the research led us to the conclusion that the students did not have difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund. It was supported by the fact that the total of students who had difficulties was 7.5 students (25%).

The writer assumed that this happened because of gerund was studied by students in last semester. It made several students forgot how to write simple sentences using gerund. In this test the writer did not give any example since the

discussion that the writer had with the English teacher, she told the writer that example was no longer necessary. This situation made there were few students had difficulties and in classifying the students' difficulty, they were classified into had no difficulty.

As stated before, the students did not have difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as subject. It was supported by the fact that the summary of percentage of students who had difficulties was 16.667% (did not have difficulty) for the whole criteria in writing simple sentence using gerund as subject. The mistakes in using gerund as subject for the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence seemed to be problem which was had by the students. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using gerund at the beginning was 8.333%. This situation happened because the students did not read the direction of the test carefully, and the writer thought that the students did not understand about composition of sentence (subject, object, etc). The writer also assumed that the students did not do the test seriously.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the subject of a sentence!
 - *Walking*
Student's answer : I scare of walking in the night.
The correct one : Walking in the night is scary.

Students also did not have difficulty in using verb agreement to write simple sentence using gerund as subject. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using verb agreement was 8.333%. This situation

happened because the students did not understand that gerund is always in singular form, and the students did not make completed sentences in the worksheet.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the subject of a sentence!
 - *Seeing*
Student's answer : *Seeing* scenery make me happy.
The correct one : *Seeing* scenery makes me happy.

The students did not have difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object. It was supported by the fact that the summary of percentage of students who had difficulties was 38.333% (did not have difficulty) for the whole criteria in writing simple sentence using gerund as object. The mistakes in using gerund as object for the use of gerund after verb seemed to be problem which was had by the students. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using gerund after verb was 26.667%. The writer assumed that this situation was seemed happen because the students did not read the direction carefully that the writer only asked them to write simple sentence in affirmative form. The students also were seemed did not understand how to arrange the sentence using gerund as object; the gerunds have to be after verb.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the object of a sentence!
 - *Smoking*
Student's answer : Please stop smoking in this area!

The correct one : They stop smoking in this area.

Furthermore, the students also did not have difficulties how to use verb agreement in using gerund as object. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using verb agreement was 26.667%. The writer assumed that this happened because several students made sentences in present continuous tense, since continuous tense and gerund have similarity in the form of verb+ing.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the object of a sentence!
- *Sleeping*
Student's answer : He is always *sleeping* in the morning.
The correct one : He loves *sleeping* in the morning.

The students had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition. It was supported by the fact that the summary of percentage of students who had difficulties was 55% (had difficulty) for the whole criteria in writing simple sentence using gerund as object of preposition. The mistakes in using gerund as object of preposition for the use of gerund of preposition seemed to be problem which was had by the students. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using gerund after preposition was 50%. The writer assumed that this situation happened because the students were confused about place of gerund of preposition. They put the preposition after gerund and made the sentences using simple present continuous.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the object of preposition of a sentence!

- *Shopping*

Student's answer : I love shopping in Basko mall.

The correct one : I am excited about shopping in Basko mall.

Another result shows us that the students did not have difficulty to use verb agreement in gerund as object of preposition. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using verb agreement was 30%. The writer thought that this situation happened because the students still did not understand about the use of verb *be* / verb for the single and plural person.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the object of preposition of a sentence!
- *Shopping*
Student's answer : She like *shopping* in the mall.
The correct one : She likes of *shopping* in the mall.

As already discussed above, the students had difficulty to use preposition in writing simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition. The summary of percentage of students who had difficulties in using preposition was 53.333%. The writer assumed that this situation happened because the students did not understand about the using of preposition and its type. They only used maximal 2 prepositions for 5 sentences that the writer asked to write. Meanwhile, they have learned several prepositions that could be used to write simple sentence using gerund as object of preposition.

Example:

- Use each of gerunds below as the object of preposition of a sentence!

- *Writing*

Student's answer : She love to writing a lot of sentences.

The correct one : She is excited about writing a lot of sentences.

Conclusions

Based on the discussion above, several conclusions can be drawn for students' difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund. In previous chapter, students' difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund was divided into two categories. They are the students had difficulties and the students had no difficulty. Generally, the students had no difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund. It was shown in the result of data analysis. It presented that the total of students who had difficulty was 7.5 students (25%).

To add more detail, the writer divided students' difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund into 3 classifications. The first was students who had difficulty to write simple sentence using gerund as subject. In this classification, there were two criteria to write simple sentences using gerund as subject, they were the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence and the use of verb agreement. The summary of students who had difficulties percentage to write simple sentences using gerund as subject was 8.333% (did not have difficulty) for the use of gerund at the beginning of sentence, 8.333% (did not have difficulty) for the use of verb agreement, and the summary of students who had difficulties percentage for whole criteria in writing simple

sentence using gerund as subject was 16.667% (did not have difficulty). The second, there was students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object. There were also two criteria in this classification; the use of gerund after verb and the use of verb agreement. The summary of students who had difficulties percentage to write simple sentences using gerund as object was 26.667% (did not have difficulty) for the use of gerund after verb, 26.667% (did not have difficulty) for the use of verb agreement, and the summary of students who had difficulties percentage for whole criteria in writing simple sentence using gerund as object was 38.333% (did not have difficulty). The third one was students who had difficulty to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition. In this last classification, there were three criteria in writing simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition; the use of gerund after preposition, the use of verb agreement, and the use of preposition. The summary of students who had difficulties percentage to write simple sentences using gerund as object of preposition was 50% (did not have difficulty) for the use of gerund after preposition, 30% (did not have difficulty) for the use of verb agreement, 53.333% (had difficulties) for the use of preposition and the summary of students who had difficulties percentage for whole criteria in writing simple sentence using gerund as object of preposition was 55% (had difficulty).

Suggestions

There are several suggestions that the writer would like to present related to the result of this research. They are:

1. The teachers are suggested to give more exercises in order improve students understanding to write simple sentence using gerund more over in the using of gerund in sentence (gerund as subject, gerund as object and gerund as object of preposition). Teachers are also expected to give more motivation to the students so that their intention to learn more about English in general would be increase.
2. The students are expected to learn more and do more exercises to write simple sentence using gerund. They are also expected to pay more attention to the use of preposition to write simple sentence using gerund.
3. The writer suggests to the next researchers to find out student's difficulty in any other tenses such as simple past tense, present perfect tense, present continuous tense and present perfect continuous tense. If the next researchers are going to do a research, the researcher suggests the next researchers include the example of the sentence using gerund on the test sheet.

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