

The Ability of SMP N 2 Lubuk Pakam Students in using *-s* Inflectional Ending

Noverawati¹, Bahagia Tarigan², Yulianus Harefa³

¹University of Sumatera Utara, e-mail : noverawatisitumorang@gmail.com

²University of Sumatera Utara, e-mail : bahagiatarigan@yahoo.com

³University of Sumatera Utara, e-mail : yulianus@usu.ac.id



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini berjudul “The Ability of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam Students in Using *-s* Inflectional Ending”. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan akhiran infleksional *-s* dan kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh siswa kelas dua SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode penelitian gabungan. Data diambil dari tes dan wawancara. Tes digunakan untuk mengukur kemampuan siswa dan wawancara digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi kesulitan siswa. Sumber data dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas dua SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam tahun ajaran 2019/2020. Peneliti mengambil 10% dari populasi (29 siswa). Berdasarkan hasil analisis data, persentase siswa dengan jawaban yang benar adalah 60,06%. Artinya kemampuan siswa kelas dua SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam tergolong dalam kategori sedang. Kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan *-s* Kata Benda Jamak memiliki persentase tertinggi (63%). Kemampuan siswa dalam *-s* Posesif memiliki persentase 56%. *-s* Orang Ketiga Tunggal memiliki persentase terendah (54%). Disimpulkan bahwa siswa kelas dua SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam telah memahami akhiran *-s* dalam Kata Benda Jamak tetapi belum memahami akhiran *-s* dalam kata Posesif dan Orang Ketiga Tunggal. Penyebabnya adalah kurangnya pengetahuan tentang akhiran inflectional *-s* dan kosakata.

Kata Kunci: Akhiran Infleksional *-s*, Kesulitan siswa

Abstract

The objectives of this study are to know the students’ ability in using *-s* inflectional endings and the difficulties faced by the students at the second year of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam. The method used in this research was mixed method. The data were taken from test and interview. Tes is used to measure students’ abilities and interview to identify students’ difficulties. The sources of data were the students at the second year of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam in the academic year 2019/2020. The researcher took 10% of the population (29 students). Based on the result of the data analysis, the percentage of the students’ correct answers was 60.06% and was classified as fair category. The student’s ability in *-s* plural nouns had the highest percentage (63%). The student’s ability in *-s* possessive had the percentage of 56%. The *-s* third person singular had the lowest percentage (54%). It can be concluded that the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam had understood *-s* plural nouns but did not comprehend *-s* possessive and *-s* third person singular yet. The causes were lacking knowledge of *-s* inflectional endings and vocabulary.

Keywords: *-s* Inflectional Endings, Students’ Difficulties

1. Introduction

In morphology, there are two kinds of word formation; derivation and inflection. The difference between derivation and inflection is located in their word formation. Derivation; the additional item can change their word formation by adding either suffixes or prefixes, for example “homeless (adjective)” which it comes from home (noun) + less (suffix). Inflection means by adding the suffixes, the word formation do not change their meaning. For example “hands” (noun) comes from “hand + s” which it is still noun. The use of *-s* indicate the “hand” is plural.

Based on the researcher observation, it was found that the students still made mistakes in using *-s* inflectional endings. The students did not understand how to use *-s* or *-es* ending. They

tended to simplify the question by adding -es ending into the verb as the answer. For example, most of the students answered the question of; Food is expensive. It a lot of money with "costes", while the students were supposed to choose "costs" as the answer.

Therefore the researcher is interested to discuss about the ability of students in using -s inflectional endings on:

1. -s plural nouns
2. -s possessive
3. -s third person singular

SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam is chosen as the location of the research because the students are still young and they are interested in English lesson. Moreover, the same research has never been conducted in this school.

The researcher is going to investigate the SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam students' ability in using -s inflectional endings and the reason of difficulties in understanding it.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. How is the ability of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam students in using -s inflectional Endings in English?
2. What are the difficulties faced by the students in using -s inflectional Endings in English?

Review of Literature

Morphology

Morphology is the internal structure of words and rules by which words are formed, mentioned by Fromkin et.al (2011). Words, in a language consist of one element or elements of meaning which are called morpheme. According to Haspelmath (2010:3), morpheme is the smallest meaningful constituents of a linguistic expression. In support of this, the word flowers for example can be broken up into individually meaningful part: flower + s. it means that morpheme is knowledge about smallest meaningful of a word.

Although all morphemes are units of meaning, there are various kinds of morphemes namely free morpheme and bound morpheme. Free morpheme can stand alone and cannot be broken down further into other word elements. Free morpheme do not need another lexeme to complete their word. On the other hand, bound morpheme are forms that cannot normally stand alone and are typically attached to another form, like re-, -ist, -ed, -s. In bound morpheme there are two kinds; inflection and derivation. Inflection is word formation that does not change a part of speech but derivation can change a part of speech.

Inflectional Endings

--s endings are often used for plural nouns (Six bees), third person singular present tense verb (It smells funny), possessive (Zoe's house) and contractions (It's amazing), stated by Baker and Goldstein (2008, p.115)

-s Plural nouns

Some nouns in English have the singular and the plural forms. Plural noun of regular form is added by suffix -s, e.g. lesson – lessons, worker – workers. Other noun are used only in the singular e.g. freedom, milk, progress, steel, machinery or only in the plural e.g. spectacles, billiards, goods. In writing the following rules spelling should be observed. The standard way to inflect a noun for plurality is to add "-s" or "-es." Occasionally we have to make a slight alteration to the spelling of the word to accommodate this inflection (for example, when the

noun ends in a “-y” and it is preceded by a consonant, we change “y” to “i” and add “-es”, but these are still considered regular because there is a standard rule that they follow.

-s Possessive

Note that –s here is a possessive inflection and different from the –s in verb e.g. she’s singing, it’s happened again. English has some way of indicating that a noun is the owner or possessor of another noun. To make possessive form, put an apostrophe and an (‘s) after a singular noun. For examples:

John’s book

Tina’s house

Rosa’s laptop

John, Tina, Rosa are said to own or possess their nouns or things.

-s Third Person Singular

In third person singular, -s ending is added if the subject of the sentence is he, she and it in present tense. To add –s ending to a verb, the students should follow these rules. According to Riono (2008, p.118) there are three rules to form –s ending.

When a verb ends in: ch, sh, ss, x and o add –es to the stem of the verb. For example; watch→watches, go→goes. When a verb ends in: y after a consonant, y change into ie. Then add –s to the stem of the verb. For example; study→studies, cry→cries. When a verb ends in: y after a vowel, y does not change. Then –s is added to the stem of the verb. For example; buy→buys, play→plays

2. Method

Participants

The population taken for this research was all of the second year students of SMP Negeri 2 Lubuk Pakam , the academic year of 2019/2020. The second year students of this school consisted of eight classes while the total numbers of the population was 288 students.

The reason of the researcher to use the second year students as the population was because they had studied English for years.

Because of the population of this research was more than 100, so the researcher took 10% of the population (29 students) (Arikunto (2006: 134). In determining the class, the researcher used simple random probability, so that those all second year classes would get the same chance to be the sample.

Data Collection

In this research, the researcher used test and interview to collect the data. The form of the test was multiple choice. The test consisted of 3 items. Each of the item consisted of 10 questions for –s plural nouns, 10 questions for –s possessive and 10 questions for –s third person singular. The following were the steps taken in the planning stage he steps in analyzing the data as follows:

1. Survey the total population and sample
2. Prepare the test for the participants
3. Give the test of –s inflectional endings to get data
4. Analyze the data of the test result

5. Interview was done by recording the students.
6. The writer made it into transcript, read it and took the strongest reasons based on the students' responses

The data collected and analyzed by performing descriptive technique. The steps in analyzing the data as follows:

1. The researcher checked the students' answers.
2. After that, the researcher counted the total number of students' score from the worksheet
3. The calculated the mean of students' score
4. The researcher converted the mean score into percentage
5. The researcher categorized the result of percentage into five stages based on the degree of students' ability as in the table below:

The Interval of Percentage of Ability Degree		Categories
85-100%		Very Good
75-84%		Good
60-74%		Fair
40-59%		Weak
0-30%		Poor

6. Based on the specification of the test, the researcher counted the total number of correct answer by the students divided into –s Plural Nouns, -s Possessive and –s Third Person Singular. Then put them into percentage.

3. Discussion and Finding

Discussion

After doing the research, the researcher then checked the student's answer and calculated the student's score. The researcher kept the English test score, the frequency and percentage of students' ability in using –s inflectional endings. The researcher had the English score from the test about students' ability in using –s inflectional endings. The average score was 60.06, the highest score was 97 with the total of 29 correct answers were gained by 2 students, and the lowest score was 20 with the total of 6 correct answers were gained by 1 student.

Based on the interval of percentage of ability degree by Nurgiantoro, the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam got 60.06%, it means the ability of the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam was fair. The following table shows the percentage of students' score and categories based on the student's score.

Data taken from test:

The Percentage of Students' Score and Classification

No	Score Range	Classification	Numb of Students	
			Numb	Percentage
1	85-100	Very Good	6	21%
2	75-84	Good	5	17%
3	60-74	Fair	5	17%
4	40-59	Weak	6	21%
5	0-39	Poor	7	24%
Total			29	100%

After the researcher analyzed the students' ability in using –s inflectional endings, the researcher counted the total of correct answers on-s plural nouns, -s possessive, and –s third person singular.

Students' Ability in Using –s Plural Nouns
Frequency of Correct Answer in –s Plural Nouns

Inflectional Ending	Item Number	Frequency of Correct Made	Percentage
-s Plural Noun	1	26	18 Students 63%
	2	10	
	3	16	
	4	21	
	5	20	
	6	21	
	7	26	
	8	9	
	9	10	
	10	25	

Based on the result of the formula above, the average of total correct answers made by the students in –s plural nouns was 63% or 18 students out of 290 estimated correct answers. The students' ability in using –s inflectional plural noun endings fell into fair category. It can be concluded that the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam had comprehended it well.

There were two patterns that the researcher could conclude regarding students' answers. First, students who understood the form of plural nouns and could answer the questions correctly. Second, students who understood plural nouns but could not answer the questions correctly, sometimes they put apostrophe (') before the –s ending or adding –es ending into the noun which was not correct. Some of them were still confused in putting the –es or -s ending.

Student's Ability in Using –s Possessive
Frequency of Correct Answer in –s Possessive

-s Inflectional Endings	Item Number	Frequency of Correct Made	Percentage
-s Possessive	1	21	16 students 56%
	2	21	
	3	23	
	4	21	
	5	27	
	6	18	
	7	14	
	8	12	
	9	3	
	10	2	

The average of total correct answer made by the students in –s inflectional ending which is –s possessive was 56 % or only 162 out of 290 chances of the correct answers. The students' ability in –s possessive fell into weak category. It can be concluded that the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam had comprehended –s possessive.

The -s possessive seemed more difficult compare to –s plural nouns. There were two patterns that the researcher could conclude regarding students' answers. First, students who understood the use of –s possessive but still made mistakes in plural forms of nouns that end in –s. Second,

students who were aware of the use of –s possessive but did not know how to put it at the right position. Third, students who did not know the use of –s possessive.

**Student's Ability in Using –s Third Person Singular
Frequency of Correct Answer in –s Third Person Singular**

-s Inflectional Endings	Item Number	Frequency of Correct Made	Percentage
-s Third Person Singular	1	20	15 students 54%
	2	13	
	3	13	
	4	14	
	5	14	
	6	16	
	7	16	
	8	20	
	9	15	
	10	16	

Based on the result of the formula above, the average of total correct answer made by the students in –s inflectional ending (–s third person singular) was 54% or only 157 out of 290 chances of the correct answers. The students' ability in using –s third person singular fell into weak category. It can be concluded that the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam did not comprehend it well.

Among the three –s inflectional endings, the -s possessive ending was seemingly the most difficult one. There were two patterns that the researcher could conclude regarding students' answers. First, students who were aware of the use of –s ending in third person singular but could not answer the questions correctly, they did not know the rule how to add –s or –es ending into the verb. Second, students who did not know the use of –s ending in third person singular. They tended to simplify the answer by just translating the word into English without adding the –s ending with the verb.

Finding

After analyzing the frequency of each item, the researcher described the students' ability based on the particular forms of –s inflectional endings (–s plural nouns, -s possessive and –s third person singular). The percentage can be seen in the following table:

No	-s Inflectional Endings	Number of Correct	Percentage
1	-s Plural Nouns	183	63%
2	-s Possessive	162	56%
3	-s Third Person Singular	157	54%
Total		502	

The table shows the students' ability in using particular forms of –s inflectional endings. It can be seen in the table that the highest percentage was 63 % or as many as 18 students who were able to understand –s inflectional ending in plural nouns which means that they can be categorized into fair category. On the other hand, the students' ability in –s possessive inflectional ending was weak. The table shows that only 56 % or 16 students out of 29 students were able to understand –s possessive. The lowest percentage was 54% or 15 students who were

able to understand –s inflectional ending in –s third person singular. Therefore, it can be classified as weak category.

From the discussion above, the most difficult –s inflectional endings was -s third person singular. The students still got confused when it came to adding “-s ending” with the verb in the sentence. For instance, question number 4 below:

Tina is a teacher. She ... (mengajar) mathematics to Young children

According to Riyanto (2008, p. 118) there are three rules to form –s ending in third person singular, one of them is when a verb ends in: *ch, sh, ss, x, and o* add –**es** to the stem of the verb. Based on the example above, the student should answer “*teaches*”. Most of students answered “*teachs*”. This implies that the students were actually aware of the use of –s ending in third person singular but unfortunately they failed in writing it.

Students’ answers: *teachs*

Correct answer : *teaches*

On the other hand, there were some students who totally did not aware of the use of –s ending in third person singular. They tended to simplify the answer by just translating it into English. For instance, question number 2 below:

In Britain the bank usually ... (buka) at 9.30 in the morning

The sentence clearly showed that it was a present tense, therefore students should answer the verb with –s ending. However, the students were not aware of the addition of –s ending. They just translated the word “*buka*”.

Students’ answers: *open*

Correct answer : *opens*

Based on the results of qualitative data, most of the students considered that –s inflectional endings (-s plural nouns, -s possessive, -s third person singular) was a little difficult especially for those who did not know the rule. The addition of –s ending made them confused. They had no idea which word that should be added with –s or –es. It was confusing for them. This was confirmed by the most interviewee such as,

Data taken from interview:

- Student: “...It’s a little difficult, because it’s rarely discussed and t rarely used...I’m confused of the changing words, for example, *city*, we have to change *y* to *i* and add *-ies*. Then, I’m also confused which words that must be added with *-s* or *-es*. I do not know the rule. The last one, I don’t know about the irregular noun. That’s why I could not answer.””

As the result, most of them just guessed the answers. It was clearly confirmed by statement below:

- R: “But, you answered the plural of *church* correctly. How can?”

Student: “Hehe, I was just lucky. I guessed it.

In addition, the greater problem was lacking knowledge of vocabulary. Some of them did not know whether verb or noun. If students did not know vocabulary, how they would make a good sentence. As the result, they made wrong answer. It was confirmed by statement below:

- R: “Well, now please change this sentence into English:

Margaret menulis sebuah surat setiap bulan”

Student: “Margaret writer a letter every month”

There were also some students who totally did not know there was the addition of –s ending in third person singular present tense. They did not know where to put the –s. This was confirmed by statement below:

- R: “Well, we move to the last topic.”
Do you know the addition of –s ending at the end of the verb in present tense?”
S: “No, I don’t know miss”

The students’ ability in -s inflectional endings (-s plural, -s possessive and –s third person singular) was so weak especially in –s third person singular and –s possessive and fair in using –s plural nouns.

4. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher concluded that the second year students of SMP Negeri 2 Lubuk Pakam have not comprehended –s inflectional endings (-s plural nouns, -s possessive and –s third person singular) quite well. The data result showed that the ability of students in using –s inflectional endings was 60.06%. This means that the ability of the second year students of SMP Negeri 2 Lubuk Pakam was classified as fair category. The findings revealed that 5 students or 17% were grouped into fair category. The very good category was achieved by 6 students or 21%. There were 5 students fell into good category. This means that only 17 %. 21% or 6 students fell into weak category and the other 7 students or 24% classified as poor category.

Amongst the three –s inflectional endings, the student’s ability in –s plural nouns had the highest percentage (63%), the students’ ability in –s plural noun was classified as fair category. The student’s ability in –s possessive had the percentage of 56%, the students’ ability in –s possessive fell into weak category. The –s third person singular had the lowest percentage (54%). The students’ ability in –s third person singular fell into poor category. It can be concluded that the second year students of SMPN 2 Lubuk Pakam had understood –s plural nouns but did not comprehend –s possessive and –s third person singular yet. The causes were lacking knowledge of –s inflectional endings and vocabulary.

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