

CHAPTER II

STUDENTS' MASTERY IN WRITING PASSIVE VOICE

A. The Students' Mastery in Grammar

Writing passive voice is needed to express our ideas and to be able to understand other people's saying. According to Jordan, Carlile and Stack (2008:29) Mastery learning' involves the statement of educational objectives and their translation into learner behaviors so as to generate criteria for assessment grades at various levels in the domain. Learning foreign language especially English is a special accomplishment. Millions of people learning foreign language, but few very succeed in mastering it.

According to Baumfield, Elliott, Gregson, Higgins, Miller and Newton (2005:104) specified mastery into complex category include preceding, less complex categories. Furthermore, Herzog (2005: 154) mastery refers to 1. control; rule; 2. the upper hand in a struggle; victory; 3. Expert skill or knowledge; 4. accomplishing success in understanding something. In learning English as the first foreign language, Indonesian learners have to deal with a lot of aspects, each of which may cause problems.

The problems may deal with language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing or with language components such as structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. Among the most difficult problems to learn English is the proper use of words. Knowledge of

grammar helps us to choose and use the forms of language best suited to each particular situation. For example: She says” *He play guitar*” instead of saying *He plays guitar*. These problems show that she does not master the English grammar yet. Seeing students’ problems in learning a language, especially the grammar, the researcher concludes that learners should master the grammar itself in usage. The word grammar has several meanings which are given by different experts. As Greenbaum & Nelson (2002:1) stated that: “grammar refers to the set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units”. That is why grammar takes an important part in build and constructs a meaningful sentence. By knowing its rules the students can avoid in making mistakes to producing the correct language.

Grammar is not a collection of hard and fast rules. It is more flexible and, therefore, more useful than the rule self. Grammar gives an account of the way in which a language is used by those who use it well. Grammar used a researcher description of the rules of the language and a set of rule by which people speak and write. Grammar is the rule of a language, which will help us to understand and also help us to produce utterance spoken or written. Therefore, grammar is very important and very useful in for students to mastery, as stated by Azar et al (2003:1) that teaching grammar is the art of helping students make sense little by little of a huge, puzzling construct, and engaging them in various activities that

enhance usage abilities in all skill areas and promote easy, confident communication.

The specificity of any individual's passive voice knowledge depends on the person and the desires, and need for the words (Hatch and Brown, 1995: 369). Passive voice mastery refers to the great skill in processing words of a language. It is an individual achievement and possession. For that reason, the biggest responsibility in increasing the knowledge is in the individual-self. The success in widening the passive voice mastery requires their own motivation and interest on the words of a language.

Passive voice construction can be useful to write descriptive passages as well as give instructions. In contrast to passive construction, using active voice will background the process or the description, the focus of stage is lost and the emphasis shifts to the agent (Swales & Feak, 2008). Nevertheless, Beason and Lester (2003) argue that passive voice can lead to a dull style because it does not stress action and hides the agent doing an action. Tendency to show politeness through employing passive construction may occur, yet providing reason might be necessary. In general, instructional detail of using specific voice is not properly addressed in certain degree. This may become the result of the traditional separation of teaching grammar and teaching writing (Hinkel, 2004). The teaching of grammar covers the use of tenses and voices without relating

those to the academic writing, while, in writing instruction, the use of voice varies depending on the purpose of the author stance.

Active construction is the most common, while passive is less common and used for special discourse functions; the passive reduces the importance of the agent of the action and fulfill other discourse function (Biber, et al., 2003). There are several forms of passive, mostly are constructed in form of the auxiliary be and an *-ed* participle. However, passive can also be formed with auxiliary get, which is called the get-passive.

From the definitions above, the researcher took a conclusion that passive voice mastery is an individual's great skill in using words of a language which is acquired based on their own knowledge. Passive voice mastery plays an important role in language skill and it has to be considered that passive voice mastery is one of the needed components of language.

B. Passive Voice

1. Definition of Passive Voice

One of grammar which is necessary to be mastered by the students is about passive voice. Passive voice must be learned when people are learning about grammar. Thus, It is important to define the term of passive voice based on the expert theories to support this thesis. In passive voice, the object of the action becomes the subject of the sentence.

According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:57), the passive is a way of phrasing the sentence so that the subject does not refer to the person or thing responsible (directly or indirectly) for the action. Therefore, the passive differs from the corresponding active not only in the forms of the verb phrases but also in the positions of certain noun phrases. The direct object (dO) or the indirect object (iO) of the active sentence becomes the subject (S) of the corresponding passive sentence, and the subject (if retained) appears after the verb in a *by*-phrase.

Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:58) also mention that the most common reason for using the passive is to avoid referring to the person performing the action. That may be because the identity of the person is not known or because it is felt to be unnecessary to identify the person (perhaps because it is irrelevant or obvious) or it is felt to be tactless to do so:

He *was* immediately *admitted* to the hospital.
The refrigerator door *has not been* properly *closed*.

Some – *ed* participle forms may be used as adjectives. In the following sentences the – *ed* forms are adjectives, not passive participles:

She *was annoyed* with them.
I *am worried* about Edward.
My teachers *are pleased* with my progress.

These sentences look like passive sentences, but the – *ed* words are adjectives if one or more of these possibilities apply:

1. if they can be modified by *very* (for example, *very annoyed*);
2. if they can occur with a linking verb other than *be* (for example, *became worried*);
3. if they can be linked with another adjective (for example, *angry and worried*).

The *-ed* participle form is obviously an adjective in *Many seats were unsold when I rang the ticket office because there is no verb unsell.*

It is supporting by Azar (1999:221) states that “passive voice is the object of an active verb becomes the subject of the passive verb”. While furthermore, Kroeger (2005:271-272) notices that in both cases the active verb is morphologically simpler than the passive. The terms “active” and “passive” are used primarily for clauses which contain a transitive (or intransitive) verb stem, and refer to specific patterns of Grammatical- Relation assignment. Passive voice is marked with the preposition *by*.

From the explanations above it can be concluded that passive voice is a sentence where the subject of active voice become the object in passive form which receives the action. In the passive voice we can put person or things which is not the actor in the active form as the new subject.

For example :

Active *Eko plays laptop* = Eko as the Subject

Passive *laptop is played* by Eko = laptop as the subject

2. The Formula of Passive Voice

Passive voice is normally made by using tenses of the auxiliary *be* followed by past participle. Based on the explanation before in passive voice the object of the active voice become the subject in passive form and the subject in active become the agent when it is mentioned it is started by *by*. Alexander (1990:189) states “we form the passive with a suitable form of *be* + past participle”. The formula can be seen as follow :

S + **BE (is)** + **PAST PARTICIPLE**

For example:

Active *She* buys book

Passive *Book* is bought by her

3. The Use of Passive Voice

Grammar is one of the important elements should be mastered when people are learning English. Thus, in learning grammar, passive voice takes an important part of it. Passive voice must be learned if people want to be a master of English especially passive voice is important to be mastered in scientific writing. Downing (2006:254) claims that using the passive gives us the choice of *not* stating who carried out the action. This is an important factor, because in the active clause this information cannot be omitted.

Downing and Locke (2006:8) states, linguistically, by using the passive, instead of the active voice, the Agent can be omitted altogether. For example:

Table 2.1
The Example of the Use of Passive Voice

<i>Chris</i>	<i>will be given</i>	<i>the bill</i>	<i>by Janice</i>	<i>Tomorrow</i>
Recipient	Process	Affected	Agent	Circumstance
Subject	Finite Predicator	+	Direct Object	Adjunct
Theme	Rheme			

(Taken from Downing and Locke, 2006:8)

Chris becomes the point of departure, while *tomorrow* is still in final position, with the Agent, *Janice*, nearing final position.

Alexander (1990:184) states that first, the passive is just not a different form of the active. It has its own uses and is very common in English. Then the second one is we use the passive mainly in three ways: a. when we don't want to take responsibility for something, b. when we want to faocus on a happening, not who or what it did c. when we want to aviod "vague subjects" like one, someone, they, etc.

Azar (1999:225) states "the passive is most frequently used when it is not known or not important to know exactly who performs an action". In addition, Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:26) states "When we turn an active sentence into a passive sentence we change the subjects". The use of passive voice was have presented in table below:

Table 2.2
The Use of Passive Voice

No.	The use	Example
1.	The passive is used to describe actions:	<i>My briefcase was stolen last night. (I don't know who stole it).</i>
2.	When it is not important to know who does, or did the action:	<i>The cars are taken to Europe every week. (It doesn't matter who takes them). These televisions are made in Japan. (It doesn't matter who makes them).</i>

(Taken from Walker and Elsworth, 2000:71)

4. The Components of Passive Voice

Somathasan & Saranya (2015), states “ in passive voice transformation is taken into consideration, the passive verb has three requirements: tense, the auxiliary *be*, together with the past participle form of the main verb. From the statement, the researcher can conclude that there are three main component of passive voice, there are :

a. Auxiliary Verb

Auxiliary verb is one of the important components in constructing passive voice beside verb participle and form of the tenses. According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:21) auxiliary verb sometimes called “helping verbs,” auxiliaries are little words that come before the main verb of a sentence. A helping verb helps another verb show an action, the helping verbs are Do, Be and Have”.

Example:

- Active : How many times *do* you read a newspaper in a week?
Passive : how many times a newspaper *is read* by you in a week?
- Active : They *are* studying English at this moment .
Passive : English *is being* studied by them at this momet.
- Active : I *have* read this book.
Passive : This book *have been* by me.

b. Tense Forms in Passive Voice

Tense has various types which expresses the meaning to be used in a certain condition by using appropriate tenses. Downing and Locke (2006:352) statet “Tense is the grammatical expression of the location of events in time”. In this research the researcher limited the tense of passive voice to be concerned only on simple present, present continous, simple past and past continous . Here is the list of changing active voice into passive voice based on its tenses.

Table 2.3
Passive Voice Form

Tenses		Active form	Passive form
Simple Present	+	S + V ₁	S + (is/am/are) + PP
	-	S + do/does + not + V ₁	S + (is/am/are) + not + PP
	?	Do/does + S + V ₁ + ?	(is/am/are) + S + PP + ?
Present continous	+	S + (is/am/are) + Ving	S + (is/am/are) + Being + PP
	-	S + (is/am/are) + not + Ving	S + (is/am/are) + not + Being + PP
	?	(is/am/are) + S + Ving + ?	(is/am/are) + S + Being + PP + ?

Simple Past	+	S + V ₂	S + (was/were) + PP
	-	S + did + not + V ₁	S + (was/were) + not + PP
	?	Did + S + V ₁ + ?	(was/were) + S + PP + ?
Past Continuous	+	S + (was/were) + Ving	S + (was/were) + being + PP
	-	S + (was/were) + not + Ving	S + (was/were) + not + being + PP
	?	(was/were) + S + Ving + ?	S + (was/were) + being + PP + ?

(Taken from Swan, 1995:181)

c. Verb in passive voice

Verb is one the important components used in constructing the sentences. It is supported by Slawson et all (2010:1) who state that “a verb expresses action or a state of being and tells (in active voice) what the subject of the clause is or does and it is necessary to make a complete statement”. It is known that verb has two types called as regular and irregular verb which should be changed in appropriate tenses. Walker and Elsworth (2000:39) state that regular verbs have the same form for all persons (*I, you, he, she*, etc.)

A regular verb is used to form the past tense by adding a suffix *-d* or *-ed* and an irregular verb does not take the *-d* or *-ed* and the past tense for irregular verbs is formed by changing the verbinternally. The form of irregular verb was have presented in the table as follow:

Table 2.4
List of irregular verb

Infinitive	Simple Present	Simple Past	Past Participle	Present Participle
to arise	arise(s)	Arose	Arisen	Arising
to awake	awake(s)	awoke <i>or</i> awaked	awaked <i>or</i> awoken	Awaking
to be	am, is, are	was, were	Been	Being
to bear	bear(s)	Bore	borne <i>or</i> born	Bearing

to beat	beat(s)	Beat	Beaten	Beating
to become	become(s)	Became	Become	Becoming
to begin	begin(s)	Began	Begun	Beginning
to bend	bend(s)	Bent	Bent	Bending
to bet	bet(s)	Bet	Bet	Betting
to bid [<i>to offer</i>]	bid(s)	Bid	Bid	Bidding
to bid [<i>to command</i>]	bid(s)	Bade	Bidden	Bidding
to bind	bind(s)	Bound	Bound	Binding
to bite	bite(s)	Bit	bitten <i>or</i> bit	Biting
to blow	blow(s)	Blew	Blown	Blowing
to break	break(s)	Broke	Broken	Breaking
to bring	bring(s)	Brought	Brought	Bringing
to build	build(s)	Built	Built	Building
to burst	burst(s)	Burst	Burst	Bursting
to buy	buy(s)	Bought	Bought	Buying
to cast	cast(s)	Cast	Cast	Casting
to catch	catch(es)	Caught	Caught	Catching
to choose	choose(s)	Chose	Chosen	Choosing
to cling	cling(s)	Clung	Clung	Clinging

(Taken from Swan, 1995: 139-141)

Other types of verb is regular verb which verb was have presented in table as follow :

Table 2.3
List of Regular Verb

No .	V1	V2	Past Participle
1	Watch	Watched	Watched
2	Study	Studied	Studied
3	Wash	Washed	Washed
4	Play	Played	Played
5	Call	Called	Called
6	Visit	Visited	Visited
7	Help	Helped	Helped
8	Work	Worked	Worked
9	Carry	Carried	Carried
10	Arrive	Arrived	Arrived

(Taken from Alexander, 1998:124)

C. The Common Features that Students encounter in Writing Passive Voice

It is also important to know the theory of Indonesian Grammar, particularly the Indonesian passive form, since the students' first language is Indonesian language and this theory supported the problem number 1. According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:18), mention that actives are far more numerous than passive. Their relative frequency varies with register. For example, passive tense to be heavily used in formal scientific writing In the book of *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia* (1993: 279-280), there are two ways of changing the active sentence into passive sentence: (1) using a verb with the prefix *di-* and (2) using a verb without the prefix *di-*.

In mastering the passive voice, most students might have problems in the change of verbs, using the auxiliary and understanding the forms of the tense are used in the sentence. In this research the researcher was tried to overview the common difficulties of the students in mastering the passive voice.

With regard to passive voice, it is essential to know passive verb. According to Rozakis (2003:39), a verb is *passive* when its action is performed upon the subject. The examples of passive verbs are as follow:

1. A package was taken home. (The speaker is not indicated.)
2. A delicious meal was served by me.

In the passive voice, the sentence *does not* start with the subject. The first sentence starts with the object, "a package." The second sentence starts with the object, "a delicious meal."

According to Panston (2005:58), to change a sentence from active to passive:

1. Move the object to the position of grammatical subject (before the verb).
2. Insert the verb “be” as an auxiliary verb in the tense required.
3. Follow with the past participle of the main verb which must be transitive verb.
4. End with *by* and *agent*.

According to (Elmadwi. M Hakeem, 2015:37), from the results obtained and the analysis of these results, it can be said that some students still encounter some difficulties and committee errors in using passive voice in written English. These difficulties are attributed to different causes such as: intralingual transfer (over-generalization), ignorance of grammar rules, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized. And then the result From the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, the majority of teachers answered that learning the grammatical structure of passive voice is very difficult for their students.

Based on the description above, the researcher concluded that there are tree main difficulties in learning and constructing passive voice, they are following :

1. The Difficulty in the change of Auxiliary

In constructing the passive voice from the active has become the common problems of the students. In passive voice, auxiliary verbs have

the important aspects to be understood beside verb participle and the form of the tense. According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:17) “auxiliary also called a helping verb helps another verb show an action, the helping verbs are Do, Be and Have”. The common mistakes might be as follow :

- a) The tempuyaks is made by me- it should be the tempuyaks are made by me
- b) English *is* studied by them at this moment – it should be –English is being studied by them by them at this moment.

2. The Change of Verbs

The second common difficulty of the students in mastering the passive voice is to understand the changes of verbs. Before changing the active verb into the passive, the students was have problems how to differentiate between regular and irregular verbs. As discussed in previous part, regular should be added by –ed/d to form the passive voice as the past participle but for the irregular verbs, there are various form to replace the active into passive voice. The forming verb seems not having the rules.

For example :

- a). Mr. Arif sings a famous song to his students
- b). Tom made kerupuk

From sentence above sentence (a) and (b) refer to the use of irregular verb. Sentence (a) refers to the use of irregular verb in present

tense and sentence (b) in past tense. The common mistakes might be as follow:

a). A famous song is singed to his students – it should be “a famous song is sung to his students”.

b). kerupuk were maded by Tom – it should be – “ kerupuk were made by Tom”.

The use of singed in the sentence above sentence (a) might happen because the students think that this verb should be added by *-d/ed*. Generally, it is hard to remember the changes of irregular verbs from presents into past or past participle because the process is not regular it is also same the sentence (b). The students sometimes difficult to change the *TO BE* into were that is referred to the past form in plural.

3. Understanding the English Tense

English has a various forms of tenses that might not be mastered by the students at all. According to Greebaum and Nelson (2002:55) mention that tense is a grammatical category referring to the time of the situation; the tense is indicated by the form of the verb.

The number and the use of the tense also make the students confused to use them in constructing the sentence both active and passive. Based on the explanation in constructig thepassive voice, understanding the tenses is important to help the students to identify the changes of auxiliary verbs.

According to L.G. Alexander (1990), “for regular verbs the past participle has the same form as the simple past tense: e.g., arrive, arrived, and arrived. For irregular verbs the simple past and the past participle can be formed in a variety of ways: e.g., drink, drank, drunk

To have clear explanation about the tense the researcher explained about the tenses which have been focused in this research there are simple present, present continuous, simple past and past continuous.

a). Simple present

according to Azar (1999:13) states “simple present the simple present expresses events or situations that exist *always, usually, habitually*; they exist now, have existed in the past, and probably will exist in the future”.

Example :

- It *snows* in Alaska.
- Tom *watches* television every day.

(taken from Azar , 1999:13)

b). Present Continuous

also stated by Azar (1999:17) “present continuous is an activity in progress at the present time, and probably will continue”.

Example :

- Tom *is sleeping* right now.

(taken from Azar, 1999:17)

c). Simple Past

in other hand Azar (1999:13) states “simple past is an activity at one particular time in the past, this happened. It began and ended in the past”.

Example :

- It *snowed* yesterday.
- Tom *watched* television last night.

(taken from Azar, 1999:13)

d). Past Continuous

Azar (1999:17) states “past continuous is an activity in progress at a particular time in the past”.

Example :

- Tom *was sleeping* when I arrived.

(taken from Azar, 1999:17)

From the explanation above, tense is the time signal when something takes place and it is used in appropriate tense. So that, tense is very important to understand by the students to have good grammar and to help them in constructing the passive voice well.

D. Previous Research on Passive Voice

The researcher finds the previous research on the difficulty in passive voice done by Lina Suhartini (2010). The title is “*An Analysis on the Difficulty Faced by the Students in Passive Voice in Simple Present Tense*”. The research only focuses on the difficulties in making sentence of simple present tense by changing the sentence from active to passive. On this occasion, the researcher found all the students’ difficulties encountered by the students in passive voice constructions.