

A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF MADRASAH ALIYAH DAR EL HIKMAH PEKANBARU IN SELECTING CORRECT TROUBLESOME VERBS

Pahmi¹ and Novfelaningrum Edjuista²

¹Department of English Education of Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau
Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau

Jl. Tambusai/Nangka (beside Mall SKA), Pekanbaru – Riau Tel: (+62761)
35008

Fax: (+62761) 35008 e-mail: pahmi@umri.ac.id

² e-mail: novfelajuista@gmail.com

Abstract: *English mastery requires students to have sufficient knowledge about four skills, namely listening, speaking, writing and reading. In addition, other knowledge such as grammar is crucial too. Regarding grammar, students often get difficulty to use English accurately. This descriptive study aimed at finding out students' ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs. The study result showed that the level of students' ability was at mediocre level, 44.72. Furthermore, it showed that the highest score obtained by the students was 65, while the lowest score was 30. For the classification of troublesome verb, the most difficult was to differentiate the use of "bring and take" where 6 students (33.33%) were in very poor level.*

Keywords: *Study, Students' Ability, Troublesome Verbs*

1. INTRODUCTION

Mastering English requires students to learn four skills as well as the other supporting aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, etc. Grammar itself is important for English learners because it is one of the basic knowledge in order to be able to use English accurately. This is in line with what Finochiaro (1973) mentioned in which grammar is an important component in language learning. It is the study of word forms and the way

they are arranged in phrases, clauses, and sentences.

The problem is many students find grammar hard. As a result, they often make mistakes when speaking and writing. It is true that there are some rules of grammar that should be used appropriately. For example, subjects and verbs must agree with one another. Another example is there are some confusing verbs that should be understood well by students.

Some examples of the confusing verbs are *set* and *sit*, *borrow*

and *lend*, *bring* and *take*, etc. These verbs are called troublesome verb which often confuse the students and even create problems for them in constructing sentences because those verbs look alike and even sometimes the meaning is the same in Indonesian. In fact, the verbs have different usage. Many students are not familiar or get confused when trying to use the words in daily communication. As a result, they often select the incorrect one when constructing a sentence. Based on the aforementioned issues, the writer was interested in conducting a research entitled a study on the ability of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah in selecting correct troublesome verbs.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Nature of Sentence

According to Eckersly and Eckersly (1973), a sentence is a complete and independent human utterance. In addition, Swan (1982) states that a sentence is a group of words that express a statement, command, exclamation, etc. It means that a sentence is not only used to convey the idea of the writer or

speaker but also the instrument to express command or statement.

2.2 The Nature of Verb

Frank (1972) states that verb is the most complex part of speech. A verb has several unique grammatical properties in parts of speech such as tenses, moods, etc. The role of verb in a sentence is very important. Without a verb, it is impossible to construct a sentence. Swan (1996) also says that verb is word like *ask*, *wake*, *play*, *be*, *can*, which can be used with a subject to form the basis of a clause.

2.3 The Nature of Troublesome Verbs

According to McDougal (2005), troublesome verbs are verbs that might create problems for people to use correctly. They often create problems for the students in selecting the correct forms in sentences. Below is the explanation of troublesome verbs based on *Essential of English Grammar* written by McGraw-Hill (1976) and *Basic Skills in English* by McDougal (2005):

a. Sit and Set

Sit means to rest in one place. For example: I usually sit in the front seat.

Set means to place something somewhere. For example: Set the grocery bags on the counter.

b. Lie and Lay

Lay is an irregular transitive verb which means that it is followed by an object. It has a meaning of putting down carefully or putting down flat. For example, I am laying the baby down for a nap. Meanwhile, the verb **lie** is an irregular intransitive verb. We use lie when the meaning is to recline or rest. For example, she lies down for a nap on the couch every day.

Some other examples:

- a. He is lying down.
- b. My work was laid aside.
- c. The baby is lying on the couch.
- d. I am laying the baby down for a nap.
- e. Mother lies down every afternoon.
- f. Mother lay on the couch all afternoon yesterday.
- g. Mother has lain on that couch often.
- h. John laid the carpets all week.

c. Rise and Raise

Raise and rise have the same general meaning of moving upward. The main difference is that raise is a transitive verb (followed by an object). For example, my employer raised my

salary. On the other hand, rise is an intransitive (not followed by an object). For example, the sun rises in the morning.

d. Borrow and Lend

Lend means to give the use of something to someone for a short time. On the other hand, borrow means to have or use something that belongs to someone else, with the promise that it will be returned.

The details can be seen below:

1. We use *borrow* to say that we take something temporarily with the intention of returning it.

For example:

- Can I **borrow** your car?
- She **borrowed** \$100 from her father.

2. We use *lend* to say that we give something temporarily with the intention of having it returned.

For example:

- Can you **lend** me your car?
- Her father **lent** her \$100.
- Her father **lent** \$100 to his daughter.

e. Bring and Take

The difference between *bring* and *take*, two important verbs, is often confused. The main point is that you should look at these verbs in reference to your or another speaker’s location. When the speaker wants something to come to him, he may ask another person to “bring” that item.

A woman hosting a dinner might ask someone to bring an appetizer. The speaker is referencing to her own place, or wherever she’s holding the dinner as a place close to her. The appetizer will be brought to her.

According to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, this is the definition of the transitive verb “bring”: “to carry or lead (a person or thing) to the place thought of as ‘here’ or to a place where the speaker will be (bring it to my house tomorrow)” (2006, p. 177).

In comparison, again according to *Webster’s*, this is the definition of the transitive verb “take,” at least in the sense being discussed here: “to escort or accompany (to take a friend to dinner)” or “to carry or transport to another location (to take a book with one)” (2006, p. 1450).

f. Say and Tell

Say can optionally be followed by an indirect object (to –

me, him, her, us, them, you, or a proper noun) and a quote.

Tell is followed by a direct object (me, him, her, us, them, you, or a proper noun) and a quote.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Design of the Research

This descriptive research tried to find out the students’ ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs. Gay (1990) says that descriptive research involves collecting data to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the status of the study. The subject of this research is the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru.

3.2 The Population and Sample of the Research

The population and sample of this research is all students at the second year of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru.

Table 1

Distribution of the Sample

Class	Total of students
XI AB 1	41
XI AB 2	41
XI AB 3	39
Total	121

Because the population is quite large, it is necessary to limit the

sample. According to Gay (1987), if the population is more than one hundred, the minimum sample taken is 15 % from the population. If the population is less than 100, the sample that can be taken is 50 %. So, the writer took 15 % from the population. The number of the sample is $121 \times 15\% = 18$. So, the writer took 18 students as samples.

The sample was taken by using cluster-sampling technique. According to Sudjana (1996) in cluster sampling, the population is divided into some groups/clusters. These clusters will be taken in random process. Every member in a cluster that has been taken randomly will be a sample.

The writer named cards based on every second year classes at MA Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru. They are Class XI AB1, XI AB2 and XI AB3. After mixing these cards for a moment, the writer took two cards randomly to determine which class is for a try out and which one is the sample of research.

Among the three classes, XI AB 3 was chosen as the try out class and XI AB 1 as the sample class. Then, by using lottery system, the writer chose 18 students from XI AB

3 to do the try-out and 18 students from XI AB 1 as the sample of this research.

3.3 Data Collection Technique

The writer used an objective test as the instrument to collect the data. The test consists of 40 items. The students were required to answer the test correctly based on the options provided in the parentheses. The test materials were adapted from several English books.

The writer provided 40 items of troublesome verbs as seen in the following table:

Table 2
The blueprint of the test items

No	Trouble- some Verbs	Number of Test Item	Number of Item
1	Sit and set	1,2,3,5,11, 18,27	7
2	Lie and Lay	4,6,7,8,15, 16,17	7
3	Rise and Raise	9,10,12,13, 14,19,20	7
4	Borrow and Lend	21,22,23, 24,25,26	6
5	Bring and Take	28,29,30,31, 36,38,39	7
		32,33,34,35,	

6	Say and tell	37,40	6
Total			40

There were 18 students taken as the sample of the test. The result was analyzed to find out the ability of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru in selecting correct troublesome verbs.

To know the percentage of the classification of the students' ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs, the following formula is used:

$$P = \frac{F}{R} \times 100\%$$

(Hatch and Farhady, 1982:43)

P = Percentage

F = Frequency

R = Total number of students

To find out the mean score of the students in selecting correct troublesome verbs, the following formula is used:

$$M = \frac{\sum f \times}{N}$$

M = Mean score

$\sum f \times$ = the summation of the respondents' scores

N = the number of respondents

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

The test was administered to the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru.

In order to find out the individual score of the students, the writer divided the number of the correct answers of each student with the number of items and then multiplied it to one hundred (100). The description of the students' scores can be seen in table 3:

Student	Correct answer	Score	Level of ability
1	26	65	Good
2	23	57.5	Mediocre
3	23	57.5	Mediocre
4	20	50	Mediocre
5	19	47.5	Mediocre
6	19	47.5	Mediocre
7	18	45	Mediocre
8	18	45	Mediocre
9	18	45	Mediocre
10	17	42.5	Mediocre
11	17	42.5	Mediocre
12	17	42.5	Mediocre
13	16	40	Poor
14	16	40	Poor
15	15	37.5	Poor
16	15	37.5	Poor
17	13	32.5	Poor
18	12	30	Poor
Mean score	$322/18 = 17.7$	$805/18 = 44.72$	Mediocre

Table 3 shows that the mean score of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru in selecting correct troublesome verbs is 44.72. From that score, it can be concluded that the students' ability is at *mediocre* level. The highest score obtained by the students is 65, the lowest score is 30.

Based on the result of the test, the ability of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru in selecting correct troublesome verbs can be classified into some categories as presented in table 4.

No	Score	Freque ncy	Percen tage (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	0	0	Excellent
2	61-80	1	5.55	Good
3	41-60	11	61.11	Mediocre
4	21-40	6	33.34	Poor
5	0-20	0	0	Very poor

Table 6 shows that no student is at the *excellent* and *very poor* levels. 1 student (5.55 %) is at *good* level, 11 students (61.11 %) are at *mediocre* level, and 6 students (33.34 %) are at *poor* level.

After finding the individual scores of the students in selecting correct troublesome verbs, the writer

also wants to find out their ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs based on the classification of the questions as stated in the blue print of the instrument. It is an important indicator if we want to know whether the students have comprehended the troublesome verbs or not.

The Classification of the Students' Ability in Selecting Correct Troublesome Verbs is explained as follows:

Table 5
The classification of the students' ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs of *sit* and *set*

No	Score	Freque ncy	Percen tage (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	0	0	Excellent
2	61-80	2	11.11	Good
3	41-60	10	55.55	Mediocre
4	21-40	5	27.8	Poor
5	0-20	1	5.6	Very poor

Table 5 shows that from 18 students, none is at the *excellent* level, 2 students(11.11 %) are at *good* level, 10 students (55.55 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 5 students(27.8 %) are at the *poor* level, and 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *very poor* level.

Table 6
The Classification of the Students’
Ability in Selecting Correct
Troublesome Verbs of *lie* and *lay*

No	Score	Freque ncy	Percen tage (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	1	5.6	Excellent
2	61-80	0	0	Good
3	41-60	10	55.6	Mediocre
4	21-40	6	33.33	Poor
5	0-20	1	5.6	Very poor

Table 6 shows that from 18 students, 1 of them (5.6 %) is at the *excellent* level, none is at the *good* level, 10 students (55.6 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 6 students (33.33 %) are at the *poor* level, and 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *very poor* level.

Table 7
The Classification of the Students’
Ability in Selecting Correct
Troublesome Verbs of *rise* and *raise*

No	Score	Freq uenc y	Percenta ge (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	1	5.6	Excellent
2	61-80	1	5.6	Good
3	41-60	9	50	Mediocre
4	21-40	4	22.22	Poor
5	0-20	3	16.7	Very poor

Table 7 shows that from 18 students, 1 of them (5.6 %) is at the *excellent* level, 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *good* level, 9 students (50 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *poor* level, and 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *very poor* level.

Table 8
The classification of the students’
ability in selecting correct
troublesome verbs of *borrow* and
lend

No	Score	Freq uenc y	Percenta ge (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	4	22.22	Excellent
2	61-80	4	22.22	Good
3	41-60	3	16.7	Mediocre
4	21-40	4	22.22	Poor
5	0-20	3	16.7	Very poor

Table 8 shows that from 18 students, 4 of them (22.2 %) are at the *excellent* level, 4 students (22.2 %) are at the *good* level, 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *poor* level, and 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *verypoor* level.

Table 9
The Classification of the Students’
Ability in Selecting Correct
Troublesome Verbs of *bring* and
take

No	Score	Frequen cy	Percent age (%)	Classificatio n
1	81-100	1	5.7	Excellent
2	61-80	1	5.7	Good
3	41-60	5	27.8	Mediocre
4	21-40	5	27.8	Poor
5	0-20	6	33.33	Very poor

Table 9 shows that from 18 students, 1 of them (5.7 %) is at the *excellent* level, 1 student (5.7 %) is at the *good* level, 5 students (27.8 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 5 students (27.8 %) are at the *poor* level, and 6 of the students (33.33 %) are at the *very poor* level.

Table 10
The classification of the students’
ability in selecting correct
troublesome verbs of *say* and *tell*

No	Score	Freque ncy	Percen tage (%)	Classificat ion
1	81-100	4	22.22	Excellent
2	61-80	4	22.22	Good
3	41-60	7	38.9	Mediocre
4	21-40	3	16.7	Poor
5	0-20	0	0	Very poor

Table 10 shows that from 18 students, 4 of them (22.22 %) are at the *excellent* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *good* level, 7 students (38.9 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *poor* level, and none of the students is at the *very poor* level.

4.2 Discussion

As it has been discussed, the writer tried to find out the ability of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru in selecting correct troublesome verbs. After analyzing the data, The first one is about the classification of the students’ ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs. Among 18 students, none is at *excellent* and *very poor* levels, 2 students (11.1%) are at *poor* level, 14 students (77.8%) are at *mediocre* level, 2 students (11.1%) are at *good* level. The second one is about the mean score. The mean score of the whole students in selecting correct troublesome verbs is 49. It means that the ability of the second year students of Madrasah Aliyah Dar El Hikmah Pekanbaru is at *mediocre* level.

Since the research dealt with troublesome verbs, conclusions for

each classification of troublesome verbs can be drawn as follows:

The first one is for troublesome verbs of *sit* and *set*. Among 18 students, none is at the *excellent* level, 2 students (11.11 %) are at the *good* level, 10 students (55.55 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 5 students (27.8 %) are at the *poor* level, and 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *very poor* level.

The second one is for troublesome verbs of *lie* and *lay*. Among 18 students, 1 of them (5.6 %) is at the *excellent* level, none is at the *good* level, 10 students (55.6 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 6 students (33.33 %) are at the *poor* level, and 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *very poor* level.

The third one is for troublesome verbs of *rise* and *raise*. Among 18 students, 1 of them (5.6 %) is at the *excellent* level, 1 student (5.6 %) is at the *good* level, 9 students (50 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *poor* level, and 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *very poor* level.

The fourth one is for troublesome verbs of *borrow* and *lend*. Among 18 students, 4 of them (22.2 %) are at the *excellent* level, 4 students (22.2 %) are at the *good* level, 3

students (16.7 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *poor* level, and 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *very poor* level.

The fifth one is for troublesome verbs of *bring* and *take*. Among 18 students, 1 of them (5.7 %) is at the *excellent* level, 1 student (5.7 %) is at the *good* level, 5 students (27.8 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 5 students (27.8 %) are at the *poor* level, and 6 of the students (33.33 %) are at the *very poor* level.

The last one is for troublesome verbs of *say* and *tell*. Among 18 students, 4 of them (22.22 %) are at the *excellent* level, 4 students (22.22 %) are at the *good* level, 7 students (38.9 %) are at the *mediocre* level, 3 students (16.7 %) are at the *poor* level, and none of the students is at the *very poor* level.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the result of the data analysis, some conclusions can be drawn. The students' ability is at *mediocre* level. It can be seen from the mean score of the students: 44.72. The highest score obtained by the students is 65, the lowest score is 30. For the

classification of troublesome verb, the most difficult seems to be the use of “bring and take” where 6 students (33.33%) were in very poor level.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the result of this study, the writer would like to give some suggestions dealing with teaching and learning English grammar especially about troublesome verbs.

The suggestions are as follows:

1. In teaching grammar, the teacher needs to be friendlier so that the students can enjoy the lesson and understand the teaching materials well.
2. The English teachers should give more explanation and more exercises of troublesome verbs in order to improve the students' ability in selecting correct troublesome verbs.
3. The students should use their free time to practice the use of troublesome verbs either in speaking or writing.
4. The students should be able to know how to use and select correct troublesome verbs.

REFERENCES

- Eckersley, E.M., and Eckersley, J.M. 1973. *Comprehensive English Grammar; For Foreign Students*. Hongkong: Merrie Publishing Company.
- Gay, L.R. 1987. *Education Research*. USA: Merrie Publishing Company.
- Glencoe/McGraw-Hill. 1976. *Glencoe Language Arts: Grammar and Language Workbook USA*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hatch, E. and Farhady, H. 1982. *Research Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics*, Massachusetts: Newburry House Publisher, Inc.
- McDougal, Littell. 2005. *Basic Skills in English*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McDougal. 2005. *Essential of English Grammar*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Swan, Michael. 1996. *Practical English Usage*. New York: Oxford University Press.