

A STUDY ON MASTERY OF USING PLURAL NOUNS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the research was done with 20 students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili to answer the following questions as in the statement of the problems; (1) Have the students of Second Grade Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili mastered plural nouns? (2) What is their level of mastery? The method that used in this study was the qualitative method to describe the students' level of mastery in using plural nouns. In order to analyze the students' level of mastery, the researcher administered the test to the students with the total number of test were 40 numbers of multiply choices. Based on the data analysis of the result of conducting research showed that the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 have mastered in using Plural nouns. Their level of mastery in using plural nouns was 81.5% which classified as GOOD level. Lastly the writer would like to recommended to the local English teachers and students that the teaching and learning of English plural nouns must be taught through various types of method that makes students active in learning a foreign language. The teacher must make the list of regular and irregular plural nouns which facilitate the students easier to understand.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool of communication used by people in a particular country or society to communicate with each other's either with spoken or written language. Through language people can transfer their knowledge, express their opinions,

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feelings, ideas and experiences to each other's. Without language people cannot understand each other's.

Halliday (1989:1) says that one can convey and express ideas, opinions and thought in human activity through language". While, Douglas H. (2000, p.23) defines language as a system of arbitrary conventional vocal, written or gesture symbol that enable members of a given community to communicate intelligibility with others". It shows that language is a tool of communication which can be expressed not only through verbal and oral communication but also through non-verbal communication: written form and gesture (body language) between human being.

English is an international language to link the world. It has been established as a language of global communication and opportunities which is widely used for international relationship in communication, educational, commerce, technology, and politics.

According to Holliday, Adrian (2005:8), English is a global language or international language". As an international language it is used in various fields such as in communication, education, economy, politic, technology and so on.

In this globalization era, people are demand to have an adequate knowledge and good skills specially in English language for international relationship and cooperation between countries in negotiation, education, politic, economy and Military.

Timor-Leste is one of the new countries were declared his Independence Day on May 20, 2002. As a new country, it started to develop from the Political, Economy, Agriculture, Society and Education area. It has two official languages: Tetum and Portuguese based on the Constitutions Timor - Leste article thirteen (13). In addition, article 159 has mentioned English and Indonesian as the working language. Most of people often use Tetum and Portuguese as the language of communication in their daily activities. While English and Indonesian are widely used to write a specific papers (language of instruction), in the classroom, even both of them are required to get a job or scholarship for those who want to study abroad. Therefore, mastering these four languages has become an important necessity for Timorese people to get a job and scholarship. Also for foreigners who want to live and working in Timor - Leste.

Grammar is the ways that words can be put together in order to make a sentence. It is one of the element in English language that has an important role in the use of language. Through learning grammar, the students will know the system of language so they will be able to construct and to combine words into meaningful sentences and correctly.

According to Woodford K. and Walter Elisabeth in Cambridge Learner's Dictionary (2007:314), grammar is the way you combine words and change their form and position in a sentence, or the rules or study of this."

From all statements above, it can be concluded that grammar is a part of language skills which is important to be mastered by the students who are learning English in order to use English properly for communication in spoken and written forms.

In English grammar, the students learnt about the eight (8) part of speech such as; Noun, Verb, Adjective, Pronoun, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction and

Interjection. One of parts of speech that will be discussed is noun. Noun is a kind of part of speech that denotes a name of a person, thing, place, animal or idea. There are five (7) kinds of nouns such as: Proper noun, Common noun, Collective noun, Abstract noun, Concrete noun, Countable and Uncountable noun. In learning about noun, the students are introduced with the plural form which means that we have to talk about the number. Number is the system contrasting of singular and plural.

A plural form of nouns has been taught since junior high school. However many students still do not understand about the rules of plural nouns and how to use it properly. They have difficulties to form plural in English. As we know that, the general rule for writing the plural in English noun is to add -s to the singular (book - books). However, this rule is only used for regular plural. For word like man, child, person, etc. These are irregular plural that we do not add -s to the singular noun to make it plural but we have to change it totally. The rule is complicated that will make the students confuse and do many errors in their learning.

Based on the background above, the writer is interested in analysis the students mastery in learning plural forms of nouns under the title "A study on mastery of using plural nouns by the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019". In this writing, the writer wants to identify the students' mastery of using plural nouns. To specify the problems to be discussed, the writer formula the following questions as problems to be research (1) Have the students of second grade Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 mastered plural nouns? (2) What is their level of mastery?

This study is significant to prove the result as a scientific on the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 as the following benefits that will be obtained (1) For the English Teacher of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili. To let them know the useful inputs to enhance the teaching capabilities and to inform them about the students' mastery in using plural nouns, (2) for the students. This study is aimed to facilitate them to know their mastery in using plural nouns, and (3) for the writer. To enrich the writer's knowledge and learning experience in conducting language research particularly the use of plural nouns.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Noun

In English grammar, nouns are commonly defined as words that refer to the name of a person, place, thing, or idea. (Altenberg, 2010, p.3) In the other words, noun is a grammatically distinct category of words which includes those denoting all kinds of physical object, such as persons, animals and inanimate objects. (Huddleston, 2005, p.83)

Tulloch (2000:6) defines that noun can be thought of as 'names'; they denote things, people, and abstract ideas". Furthermore, John (2002, pp. 175-176) states that nouns are words like cup, democracy, game, driver, Chicago. They do not have special endings to show that they are nouns, or to show that they are subject or object. Other words, a noun is a name word, representing directly to the mind an object, substance, or idea". (Baskervill W. M. and Sewell J. W., 2004, p.6)

According to O'Shea, Stella in Cambridge School Dictionary (2008:503), noun is a word that refers to a person, place, object, event, substance, idea, feeling, or quality". For example the words 'teacher', 'book', 'development', and 'beauty' are nouns". While Ansel (2000:184), says that a noun is a used as the name of a person or thing." Other meaning of noun is "the part of speech that names people and things: artist, Pert, bathroom, attitude, vegetation". (Hughes, 1993, p.365)

Nouns have many different kinds of meaning, like refer to things, ideas and quality, action and events, and name. From all meanings above, we can summarize that noun is a one kind of eight (8) part of speech used to describe name of people, things, animals, places, or ideas, and has certain function in the sentence structure.

Kinds of Nouns

According to Sargeant Howard (2007, pp.7-8), in his book of Basic English Grammar: for English Language Learners, there are two main kinds of nouns: Common nouns and Proper nouns.

1. Common nouns: are words for people, places and things.
Examples: Chair, school, dog, driver, singer, etc.
2. Proper nouns: are the names of particular people, places and things. They always begin with a capital letter. Examples: Harry Potter, Monday, New Year's Day, Eiffel Tower, Timor-Leste, etc.

While, Hamilton Elaine and Ridout Ronald (1982:3) in their book, Effective English, there are five (5) kinds of nouns:

1. Proper nouns names individual people, countries, places, books, etc., e.g. Peter, Brisbane, and High Street.
2. Common nouns name anything considered as one of a class, e.g. name, town, road, and desk.
3. Concrete nouns name physical things, e.g. smoke, grass, donkey, air.
4. Abstract nouns name things that have no physical existence but are qualities, actions, states of mind, or ideas abstracted from physical things, e.g. bravery, idleness, speed, joy.
5. Collective nouns name collections, e.g. army, queue, core, pile.

In addition, Walker Elaine and Steve Elsworth (2000:6) in their book, New Grammar Practice: for Pre-Intermediate Students, nouns can be Countable and Uncountable nouns.

1. Countable nouns are things that can be counted: a book, two cars, three planes.
2. Uncountable nouns cannot be counted as **one, two, three**, etc.

To sum up, kinds of nouns consist of proper noun which is begun with a capital letter, common noun are words for people, places and things. Concrete noun refers to people or things that exist physically and at least one of sense can detect. Abstract noun have no physical existence. They refers to ideas, emotions and concept you cannot see, touch, hear, smell or taste. Collective noun refer to a set or group of people, animals or things. Countable noun is a noun that has both singular and plural forms and Uncountable noun is noun which does not have a plural form and cannot be used with 'a' or 'one'.

Forms of Nouns

Lacie, Christina (2008:15) states that there are many different types of nouns and many ways to use them, it what make nouns more complicated. Nouns are

classes of nouns such as common, proper, concrete, abstract, and collective. Nouns are also grouped by number, gender, case categories. Numbers nouns are singular, plural, compound and collective. Gender nouns are feminine, masculine, neuter, or indefinite.

According to Djauhari (1988:70), noun can be classified to three categorizations namely; kinds, types, and numbers. Number of nouns is the noun that is decided from the quantity of noun. This is divided into two kinds, singular noun and plural noun.

Plural form

1) Definition of Plural form

In English language, nouns are inflected for grammatical numbers, the singular and the plural. The singular nouns are words which indicate someone is speaking of one or single thing. Plural nouns are words which indicate someone is speaking of more than one certain number of things.

Seaton, Anne (2007) says that nouns can be singular or plural. When you are talking about one person, animal, place, or thing, use a singular noun". (p.21) "When you are talking about two or more people, animals, places, or things, use plural nouns. Most of plural nouns are made plural by adding -s at the end. (p.23)

According to Collins Harper in Collins Co build new Student's dictionary (1997:483), the plural of a word or its plural form is the form that is used when referring to more than one person or thing". Other words, a plural noun names or two or more people, animals, places, things, or abstractions. (Jean, 2006, p.30)

Murphy R. (1990:138) says that the plural of a noun is usually -s. Singular one, plural is two or more." While Walker, E. and Ellsworth Steve (2000:7) argues that to make a singular noun plural, add s: brother→ brothers; car→ cars; house→ houses

Types of Plural Form

There are two (2) types of plural form: Regular and Irregular. Regular plural is a plural form by adding "s" in general and has a certain formula. While irregular plural has not the exact rule and make the students remember about it.

According to Azar, B (1999:100) in her book of, Understanding and Using English Grammar, there are many ways of forming the plural of nouns:

A. Regular nouns

- 1) The plural of most nouns is formed by adding final -s.

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
song	→	songs

- 2) Final -es is added to nouns that end in -sh, -ch, -z, and -x.

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
box	→	boxes

- 3) The plural of words that end in a consonant +y is spelled -ies.

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
baby	→	babies

- 4) Some nouns that ends in -o add -es to form the plural

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
echo	→	echoes
hero	→	heroes
potato	→	potatoes

tomato → tomatoes

- 5) Some nouns that ends in -o add -s to form the plural

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
photo →	photos
piano →	pianos
zoo →	zoos

- 6) Some nouns that ends in -o add either -s or -es to form the plural (with -es being the more usual plural form)

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
zero →	zeros/zeroes
volcano →	volcanos/volcanoes

- 7) Some nouns that ends in -f or -fe are changed to -ves to form the plural.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
thief →	thieves
knife →	knives

- 8) Some nouns that ends in -f simply add -s to form the plural.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
belief →	beliefs
roof →	roofs

B. Irregular nouns.

- 1) Some nouns have the same singular and plural form:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
deer →	deer
fish →	fish
sheep →	sheep
species →	species

- 2) Irregular plural noun. Plural forms that do not end in -s.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
man →	men
woman →	women
child →	children
ox →	oxen
foot →	feet

- 3) Some nouns that English has borrowed from other languages have foreign plural.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
criterion →	criteria
phenomenon →	phenomena
thesis →	theses
curriculum →	curricula
syllabus →	syllabi/syllabuses
appendix →	appendices/appendixes
formula →	formulae/formulas
fungus →	fungi

METHOD

This study is to know about the students' mastery in using plural nouns and the level of mastery. The writer applied for case study of **"Qualitative Method"** which used to gathering the data from the informants and describes the data after collected the data. This study was conducted at Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019. There are 300 total students in numbers consist of first, second and third year. First year are 124 students, second year are 105 students and third year are 71 students in number. So the subject of the study was the second grade students of the school mentioned above. There were 20 students from one class as the informants or respondents.

The instrument used in this study is aimed to measure the students' mastery in using plural nouns. Therefore, the instrument that used in this research was in form of test which consisted of 40 numbers of multiple choices. The test was given at the end of teaching and learning process, particularly to the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019. The duration of the test was 60 minutes.

This research is analyzing and measuring the mastery of second grade students Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in using plural nouns by observation of teaching and learning process in classroom with an English teachers and then delivering the questionnaires' for students. In order to analysis of this study the writer uses means as written bellow:

1. Correcting students' answer sheets.
2. Wrong or incorrect answered by students, and
3. Divided the result based on the two ways above and multiply for 100% (Arikunto, 1997, pg. 25)

The patter used is:

$$\frac{\text{Total correct answer}}{\text{Total item test}} \times 100\%$$

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The General Description

The field research was conducted at Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili from 27 of August to 27 of September in 2019. The researcher collected the data through test items which consisted of 40 numbers of multiply choices.

The total respondents were 20 students of second grade Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019. They were selected by the researcher herself based on the information of the local English teacher that the students made mistakes in English grammar, especially how to change the singular nouns into plural nouns.

The research instrument or test items were relevant to the thesis title "A Study on Mastery of Using Plural Nouns by the Second Grade Students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019".

The Analysis of the Data Collection

The data analysis of the data collection presented as the result of the test which had been done by the researcher as in the table below;

Table I presents the students score of multiply choices.

Students Codes	Multiply Choice	Correct Answer	%	Incorrect Answer	%	Total
A.S.M	40	40	100	0	0	100
E.M	40	40	100	0	0	100
E.S.G	40	40	100	0	0	100
I.A.M	40	40	100	0	0	100
I.P.C	40	40	100	0	0	100
J.A	40	40	100	0	0	100
N.H.C.J	40	40	100	0	0	100
S.S.C	40	40	100	0	0	100
V.R.N	40	40	100	0	0	100
R.A.A.C	40	38	95	2	5	100
A.F.B.F	40	36	90	4	10	100
C.S	40	32	80	8	20	100
E.J.S	40	32	80	8	20	100
G.G.C	40	28	70	12	30	100
J.M.S	40	26	65	14	35	100
A. C	40	20	50	20	50	100
A.J.M.C	40	20	50	20	50	100
E.C.M.R.S	40	20	50	20	50	100
J.X.B	40	20	50	20	50	100
N.D	40	20	50	20	50	100
Total	800	652	1630	148	365	2000
Average		81.5		18.5		

The percentage column 3 is derived from:

$$\frac{\text{Total correct answer}}{\text{Total item test}} \times 100\% = \frac{652}{800} \times 100\% = 81.5\%$$

The percentage column 5 is derived from:

$$\frac{\text{Total incorrect answer}}{\text{Total item test}} \times 100\% = \frac{148}{800} \times 100\% = 18.5\%$$

It means that the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili have mastered in using plural nouns because the level of mastery is **81.5%** which is classified as **GOOD** Level.

For example: Students' nu 1

Note: percentage in column 4 is derived from:

$$\frac{\text{Total correct answer}}{\text{Total item test}} \times 100\% = \frac{40}{40} \times 100\% = 100\%$$

This is also means that the correct answer is 40 which is divided to total correct answer and incorrect answer is 40 multiply with 100%.

Table II presents the Distribution of Students' Mastering level.

Standard of Measurement	Frequency	Level	Percentage
10	9	Excellent	45%
9	2	Very good	10%
8	2	Good	10%
7	1	Fairly good	5%
6	1	Average	5%
5	5	Below average	25%
4		Poor	

3		Very poor	
2		Bad	
1		Very bad	
Total	20		100%

In this table II describes that; there were nine (9) students got score 10 or 45% at excellent level, two (2) students got score 9 or 10% at very good level, two (2) students got score 8 or 10% at good level, one (1) student got score 7 or 5% at fairly good level, one (1) student got score 6 or 5% at average level and five (5) students got score 5 or 25% at below average level.

Based on the distribution of table above, there were 20 students attended the test and all the students could pass the test because it is indicated none of the students got blow or very low level.

Table I presents the students' score of multiply choices test of plural nouns shows that 20 students' of second grade Escola Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 got the total correct answers 652 divided with 800 multiply 100 is **81.5%** which classified as **GOOD** level.

Table II presents the distribution of students' mastery level that there were all 20 students attended the test who could pass the test all as the following descriptions;

- Nine (9) students got score 10 or 45% was excellent level.
- Two (2) students got score 9 or 10% at very good level.
- Two (2) students got score 8 or 5% at good level.
- One (1) student got score 7 or 5% are fairly good level.
- One (1) student got score 6 or 5% at average level.
- Five (5) students got score 5 or 5% at below average level.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, the writer concludes the result of conducting research with the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 have mastered in using plural nouns.

As the standard of measurement that is being used by the local school, the level of mastery in using plural nouns by the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 was **81.5%** which is classified as **GOOD** level.

Based on the conclusion that has been mentioned above, the writer suggest some alternative solution to improve some incorrect answer that have been done by the second grade students of Escola Técnico Vocacional de Hospitalidade e Turismo Becora - Dili in the school year 2019 as follow;

- Teaching grammar especially in plural nouns must be taught through games that makes students learn active and never boring.
- English teachers have to teach English Grammar especially in plural nouns with various types of method and strategy. They should apply the appropriate method in teaching and learning process to make the students easier to understand.
- The teacher can use any media to support the student in teaching and learning process to make the class more interesting and interactive among the students.

- English teachers must be forbidden to be absent in the class when they have English subject class.
- English teachers should be able to create a good situation and motivation during teaching and learning process.
- The teacher should give more exercises in order to develop more their understanding. For the students
- The students must be in the class during teaching and learning process.
- The students must be active in learning process.
- The students must pay attention to the teacher explanations during the teaching and learning process in the classroom.
- The students must be ready to get more opportunity during learning process.
- The students must do their homework.

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