Students' Ability in Using Personal Pronouns in English

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	A B S T R A C T
Keywords: *analysis, subject, object,* *possessive, reflexive*	English personal pronouns was still problem for students; especially students of Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Surya Kasih. Therefore; it was important to conduct a research on students' ability in using personal pronouns. The purpose of this study was to describe the students' ability in using subject, object, possessive and reflexive. The participants of the research were 10 students the second semester students who programmed English subject. There were 30 item tests of personal pronouns. The results of the research showed that the students' average score was 68 and the students' level of ability on personal pronouns was enough. Based on the kinds of personal pronouns showed the highest score was 72,10 which is on subject pronoun then followed by object pronoun with the score 70,20 then followed by possessive pronoun with the score 67,80 and the lowest score was 64,70 which is on reflexive pronoun. This research claimed that the students found difficulties in using personal pronoun in English due to interference of Indonesian language as their first language.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are four language skills in a language namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing. Speaking or writing without knowing the grammar of language also is nothing. Therefore as the English learner, it is important to pay attention on grammatical aspect. DeCapua (2010) defines the grammar is a set of rulers, often seen as arbitrary or unrealistic, is only one narrow view of grammar.

Basically, language has three important components; sounds, words and grammar. Every language has its own system of sounds, words and grammar. It is possible that they have different in many ways, like the pronunciation; the word formation or even the sentence construction. Harmer (2006) defines grammar as the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentence in that language. Grammar rule is one of the aspects in learning English as a foreign language. English grammar is stated as a system of patterns in which words are arranged in sentences. Since, every language is different in many ways; it might be difficult for someone to learn other language. As in English, it has tenses while other languages do not have tenses. Most students often make errors while learning English, especially when they try to arrange sentences because they could not consider the English grammar rules. Grammar is part of language. Every language has its own grammar

constructions. There is broad area of language such as pronoun, article, tenses, question words, passive voice, gerund, verb, noun, adjective, etc.

Personal pronoun is a part of English grammar. A personal pronoun is a word which is used as a simple change for the proper name of a thing or a person. The English personal pronouns describe the grammatical person, or gender. Personal pronoun is the word that refers nouns as subject, object, possessive and reflexive pronouns. The subject in English is classified into first person, and third person. The object pronouns are me, us, you, her, him, it and them. The possessive are my, our, your, her, his, its and their. The pronouns are different in the usage and form. E.g. in subject and object: **I** go to campus or *saya pergi ke kampus*. **She/he** gives **me** money or *dia memberi saya uang*. These examples of English and Indonesia are different in form, such as **I** and **me** while in Indonesia still use *saya* in subject and object. E.g., in possessive: This is **my** book or *ini adalah buku saya*. This example shows that the use of possessive in English is put before the noun while in Indonesia is put after the noun.

Royani & Sadiah (2019) analyzed grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text showed that the students still made high number of errors in pronoun. They found that verb agreement and pronoun as the most failure which students mostly did in their writing. Thus, Kamlasi (2019) analyzed the students' grammatical errors on spoken English. The research reported that the students made 14% of errors in using pronouns. It indicates that there are problems faced by students in using pronouns. The personal pronouns in English become the problems for most of the Indonesian students. They still have problems in using subject, object, possessive and reflexive. It is hard to differentiate the uses of subject, object, possessive or even reflexive pronouns in English grammar. This is serious problems for the English teachers or lecturers to pay full attention in teaching personal pronouns in English. Realizing the problems; this study finds out the solution on how to use the correct personal pronouns in English grammar. The researcher's experience in teaching English as general subject of the students Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Surya Kasih (STKIP) showed that the students found problems in using subject, object, possessive and reflexive. Therefore, it is important to assess the students' ability in using personal pronouns and to describe the kinds of personal pronouns that are still problems for the first semester students of Elementary School Teacher Study Program (PGSD) of STKIP Surya Kasih. The objectives of this research were to measure the students' ability and to describe the students' problems in using personal pronouns in English.

Some studies related to pronouns were conducted recently. Kamlasi & Nokas (2017) analyzed the grammatical errors in writing of the second-grade students of SMA Kristen 1 Soe. The purpose was to describe the students' grammatical error in writing. The findings showed that verb errors were 21.16%, noun errors were 19.70, pronoun errors were 29.74%, the adjective errors were 34.27%, the adverb errors were 32.41%, the conjunction errors were 34.02% and the preposition errors was 32.94%. It indicated that the students still find problems in using pronouns in writing. They still produce significant number or errors in writing. Handayani & Johan (2018) conducted a research on Problem faced in Grammar of EFL Students. The research objective was to describe the dominant errors made by the students in writing. The results of the research showed that most problems faced by EFL students are tenses in which 80% of students that made errors in tenses. They also presented that they students also made errors in using pronoun within 30% of students. Further research on analyses the errors in students' writing composition in simple present tense conducted by (Fitria, 2019). The research

reported that the students made error in verb was 37.88%, determiner/article was 24.24%, preposition was 13.64%, noun was 13.64% and pronoun was 1.51%.

Stobbe (2008) says that pronouns are substitutes for nouns. He states that the prefix pro- in the word pronoun means "for." The word pronoun simply means for a noun or in place of a noun. On other hand a pronoun is a word that stands instead of a noun; such as he, him and them. Pronouns are used to avoid repeating noun. Furthermore, Stobbe (2008) describes the uses of pronouns. He mentions that there are four uses of pronouns namely a) a pronoun is used to replace the words for people, places, or things, e.g., **Max** for **he** and **pen** for **it.** b) a pronoun is used to introduce a question, e.g., who swims? **He** swims. c) a pronoun is used to point to a specific person, place, or thing, e.g., **this (one)** or **that (one)**, and d) a pronoun is used to refer to unnamed, nonspecific people or things, e.g., **several**. Similarly, as Azar (2002) says that a pronoun is used to place a noun. The noun it refers to is called antecedent, e.g., a) I read a **book**. **It** was good. b) I read the books. **They** were good. Stobbe (2008) notes that pronouns can be used in place of nouns to avoid monotonous repetition, e.g., Susan goes to hospital. Susan works at Lakewood Pool. The statement means that it is often to use the same noun a number of times within a connected sentence. Therefore, to avoid repetition there must be pronoun of **she** to replace Susan in the first sentence. While, Eastwood (2005) notes that we use personal pronouns for the speaker (I) and the person spoken to (you). We use he, she, it and they to refer to other people and things when it is clear from the context what we mean. In other hand, he says that personal pronouns do not always refer to people. Personal means first person (the speaker), first person (the person spoken to) and third person (another person or thing). Meanwhile, Stobbe, (2008) explains that a personal pronoun shows by its form whether it refers to the person speaking, the person spoken to, or the person or thing spoken about.

Furthermore, Stobbe (2008) says that personal pronouns refer to person. The exceptions are the pronoun "it", which refers to inanimate things, and the pronoun "they" which sometimes refers to inanimate things. In the way, Quirk et al., (2007) notes that personal pronouns refer succinctly to the speaker/writer, the addressee and identifiable things or person other than the speaker/writer and the addressee. He underlines that there are corresponding series of personal pronouns that covers possessive determiners, possessive and reflexive pronouns. The definitions clearly states that personal pronouns refer to people/thing to replace noun. It is said that a personal pronoun is represents person or thing that we are talking about. In English, personal pronoun consists of subject, object, possessive and reflexive. Stobbe (2008) noted that subject perform the action of the verb. Furthermore, Stobbe (2008) noted that object pronoun receives the action of the verb or is used as the prepositional phrase. While, Azar (2002) notes that possessive pronouns are not followed immediately by a noun, they stand alone e.g., That book is **hers**. Eastwood (2005) explains a reflexive pronoun is used as an object or complement when it refers to the same thing as the subject; e.g. I fell over and hurt **myself.**

2. METHOD

2.1 Research design

Methodology is an important clue in conducting this research. This research applied a descriptive qualitative method to describe the results of this research. (Creswell, 2014) stated qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Furthemore; he noted taht that the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the

participants' setting; analyzing the data inductively from particulars to general themes; and making interpretations of the meaning of the data.

2.2 Setting and Participant

The research was conducted at Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Surya Kasih in Elementary School Teacher Study Program (PGSD)Kabupaten Timor Tengah Utara, Propinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur. The participants of the research were 10 students the second semester students who programmed English subject.

2.3 Instrument

The researcher used a completion test as the instrument of this research. There were 30 items of completion test. The test was about personal pronoun that cover subject, object, possessive and reflexive. The students were asked to complete the missing words by using correct subject, object, possessive and reflexive pronouns. Through this test; the students' ability in using subject, object, possessive and reflexive can be measured.

2.4 Data Analyses

To analyze and describe the data, there were five techniques applied namely correcting, analyzing, classifying, intepreting, and discussing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part provides the results of the test related to the students' ability in using personal pronouns in English.

Table 1. Student's Scores on Personal Pronouns

No	IN	Scores	Level of Ability
1	BM	67	Enough
2	KS	68	Enough
3	MIT	69,5	Enough
4	IS	73	Good
5	RM	65,75	Enough
6	KT	67,25	Enough
7	YB	69	Enough
8	MN	73,75	Good
9	DA	66,75	Enough
10	EM	67	Enough
Average		**68.00**	**Enough**

There were 10 students attended the test. To get the test scores, the students' answer sheets were corrected and counted carefully. The results of test in the form of scores between 0 to 100 are presented in the following section. This table presents the students' average score on personal pronouns in English. The scores showed that eight students got 60-69 that was categorized as enough while two students gor 70-79 that was categorized as good. The students average score was 68 and the students' level of ablity on personal pronoouns was

enough. The score indicated that the students passed the test. On other hand; students were able to use personal pronoun but they are still at the enough level. This finding was slightly similar with a research conducted by (Tussifa & Natasha, 2021). The study on students' understanding personal pronoun in reading text showed that the average of scores was 77.25 and the sum of the total scores was 85%. It means that most of the students understood personal pronouns in reading text. The research reported that the majority of the students passed the test while few students did not pass the test.

In order to know the student's score on each kinds of personal pronoun, table 2 presents the score on each kind of personal pronoun. This table presents every student on kinds of personal pronouns. In column subject shows that one students got the score bweteen 60-69. There was one student gor 70-79. Eight students got 80-99. The students average score on subject was 72,10 and the students' level of ablity was good. In column object shows that four students got the score bweteen 60-69 and six students got 70-79. The students average score on object was 70,20 and the students' level of ablity was good. This finding was different with a research conducted by (Siska, 2020). She claimed that the most mistakes made by students are in using personal pronouns as the object. She suggested using various strategies to teach personal pronoun for students and there must be more practice on using personal pronouns.

Table 2. Students' score based on kinds of personal Pronouns

No	IN	Personal Pronouns			
		Subject	Object	Possessive	Reflexive
1	BM	70	68	65	65
2	KS	75	68	67	62
3	MIT	70	70	72	66
4	IS	74	73	70	75
5	RM	70	68	65	60
6	KT	70	70	67	62
7	YB	67	72	72	65
8	MN	80	75	70	70
9	DA	70	70	65	62
10	EM	75	68	65	60
Average		72,10	70,20	67,80	64,70
Level of Ability		Good	Good	Enough	Enough

Meanwhile, the figure below shows difference score based on the kinds of personal pronouns. The graph shows that the highest score is 72,10 which was on subject pronoun then followed by object pronoun with the score 70,20 then followed by possessive pronoun with the score 67,80 and the lowest score was 64,70 which was on reflexive pronoun. This means that reflexive pronoun was the most difficult kinds of personal pronouns for students.
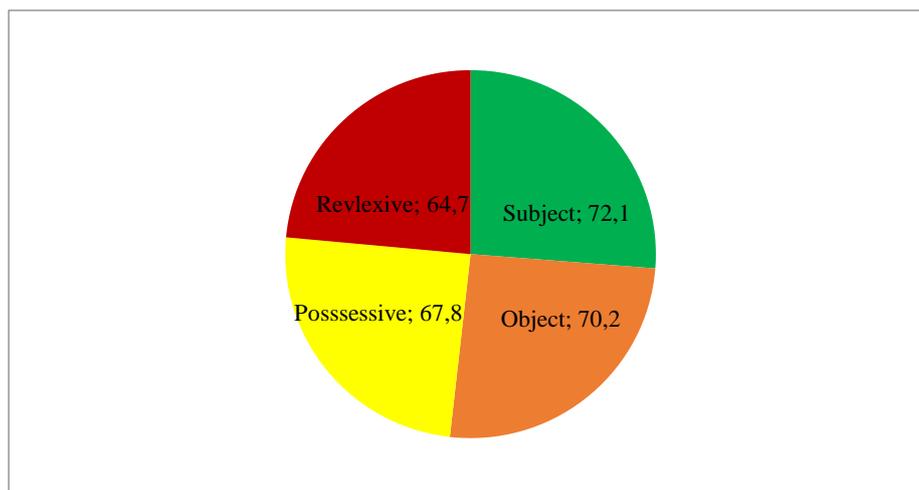
Figure 1. Average score based on kinds of personal pronouns

The following section presents the students' errors in using personal pronoun in terms of subject, object, possessive and reflexive.

a) Subject

Incorrect	: I have one sister. **He** is a student.
Correct	: I have one sister. **She** is a student.

The example above indicated that the student cannot differentiate the subject **she** and **he**. In English, the subject **she** stands for female and **he** stands for male. This error was caused by the interference of Indonesian language in which **dia** stands for both she and he.

b) Object

Incorrect	: I have a wonderful family. I love **it**
Correct	: I have a wonderful family. I love **them** very much

The example above showed the students' errors in using personal pronoun especially object. The student found difficulty to differentiate the word *family* as group which consists of father, mother and children. So; here family is more than one. So; the use of **it** in the sentence cannot place object of family.

c) Possessive

Correct	: I have a pet. **It's** name is Doggy.
Incorrect	: I have a pet. **Its** name is Doggy.

The example showed that the student cannot use the possessive pronoun. The student cannot differentiate the word **it's** and **its**. The use of it's followed by noun or verb-ing. Thus; **its** is used for possessive; such as its name; its color, etc. Possessive pronoun shows relationship or ownership.

d) Reflexive

Correct	: The children drew a picture of **them**
Incorrect	: The children drew a picture of **themselves**

The example showed an error in using reflexive pronoun. The student used the word them as an object. While; a reflexive pronoun as object or complement when it refers to the same thing as the subject; e.g. I love **myself**. Therefore; the children stands for **they.** So, the correct sentence is "The children drew a picture of **themselves**"

4. CONCLUSION

English personal pronoun has different functions in term of subject, object, possessive and reflexive. Each kinds of personal pronoun can change the form according to the function; such as *I,* is used as subject pronoun and *me* is used as the object pronoun. While in Indonesian language *saya* is used as the subject pronoun and object pronoun. The findings of this research showed that eight students got 60-69 that was categorized as enough while two students gor 70-79 that was categorized as good. The students' average score was 68 and the students' level of ablity on personal pronouns was enough. Furthermore; based on the kinds of personal pronouns showed the highest score was 72,10 which is on subject pronoun then followed by object pronoun with the score 70,20 then followed by possessive pronoun with the score 67,80 and the lowest score was 64,70 which is on reflexive pronoun. This means that reflexive pronoun is the most difficult kinds of personal pronouns for students. It was concluded that the students were able to use personal pronouns but they were at the enough level while they still have problems in using reflexive pronouns. This research claimed that the students found difficulties in using personal pronoun in English due to interference of Indonesian language as their first language.

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