UPDATING STUDENTS UNDERSTANDING ON PASSIVE VOICE

Ummi Rasyidah

English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian
Email: ummirasyidah@yahoo.com

Abstract:

Different instruction is needed to meet the different needs of learners in a given classroom. The range of instructional need within one classroom is large. The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of strategy instruction on 26 students in English Study Program at University of Pasir Pengaraian. Students were assigned to be an independent learner. Self-regulation strategies were required. The instruments were observation, interview and test. The result indicated that students were more creative in providing passive voice sentences. They also performed their understanding on passive voice in writing subjects.

Key words: *passive voice, self-regulation, strategy instruction.*

Introduction

The language learning should provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice using a language. Learning a language is not only understanding the language itself but also learning the components of the language. One of the components of language is language structure. In UPP curriculum, teaching components of language divided into several subjects. They are Structure 1, II, III and Grammar. Passive voice is a part of structure II (Kurikulum PBI UPP: 2013). Here, the students will learn how to construct passive voice.

Passive voice has been taught in senior high school. It means that the students had background knowledge about it. To update students understanding on this topic, the researcher applied self-regulation strategies.

In teaching *Structure II*, the researcher used the combination of tutorial and drill strategies. These strategies could assist the students in understanding the subject matter. The problem occurred when they had written active and passive voice separately. They were not able to comprehend all of them in the same time.

It is not surprising that students in university level know about independent learning since the concept of independent learning is not new. Independent learning is often associated with self-regulation. Moreover, these terms are different. Independent learning means learning activities and capacity to be developed while self-regulation involved independent learning activities and characteristics of all approaches learning used.

A common misconception about independent learning is the process of being an independent learner. Here, the author realized that she tend to do it too. She asked the students to learn independently and a test will be given to evaluate their understanding on certain topic. She often did not pay attention to the way or process of the students' activities. Mostly, independent learning will be assigned when she could not attend the class. In other hands, the students thought that independent learning is leaning by them. Regularly, students admitted that independent learning was not learning at all.

Being an independent learner, a careful identification of its component parts is needed. The current study investigated the effect of self-regulation strategies and students' activities in the classroom. The following research questions guided this study:

(1) Do the students applied self-regulation in learning passive voice?

(2) How is the students' ability in constructing passive voice?

(3) How are students' activities toward the strategy instruction?

Brief Review of Related Theories

Strategy instruction is a powerful strategy used by the teacher to help the students learning new concepts and skills. Strategy instructions varied depend on students' need, subjects and material. A number of strategy instructions that supported students' independent learning include self-regulation. Meyers (2008) believed that to be an independent learner, self-regulated learning is required. The processes are (1) set goals, (2) plan how to realize these goals, (3) monitor the progress and (4) assess and reflect on what have achieved.

In addition, self-regulated learning is a process that assists students in managing their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences (Zumbrunn et al, 2011:4). They also divided self-regulation strategies into eight processes include goal setting, planning, self-motivation, attention control, flexible use of strategies, self-monitoring, help-seeking, and self-evaluation.

Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2005) have suggested a four stage process. In the first stage, learners acquire self-regulatory skills and strategies most rapidly from social sources such as observing the processes being modeled, verbal descriptions and social guidance, and feedback. It is clear that self-regulation offered students learning strategies, showed students how to use them, gave students the opportunity to use them and then evaluate them.

When the students do self-regulation strategies, they control and direct themselves to reach the certain goal. To be an independent learner does not mean to learn something individually. A student might share problem with other students. She might also work with someone else to encourage and talk through difficulties she found. When a student had a problem, she might also explain it to others to clarify the issue for her.

Data Analysis and Discussion

An experimental method with one group pre-test and post test design was adopted in this study. The data were also supported by qualitative data. The quantitative data involved the measurement of students' achievement test. The qualitative discovered the students' activities during the course. The qualitative resources were gathered through students' and lecturers' interview.

The study participants were 26 students from second semester of English Study Program at University of Pasir Pengaraian in academic year 2014-2015. The researcher taught these material followed the syllabus and self-regulation strategies throughout a 4-week. Each section consisted of 90 minutes.

Observation Results

The researcher was acted as an observer at the same time. She expressed the positive attitude towards the inclusion of self-regulation strategies in the classroom. She believes that self-regulation strategy gave the students the opportunities to discover new things and be an independent learner. During the research, she found the following description.

Table 1. Observation Results

Meeting	Observation Results
1	Most of students did not pay attention to self-regulation strategy. Half of them answered the question related to the topic in the text book. When the researcher asked them to give passive sentence, they used examples in *dictionaries*. Only three students were able to write passive sentence
2	The students were able to identified regular and irregular verb. Most of students were able to find out the principle of passive voice. The students wrote active sentence to help them writing passive voice Ten students were able to write five passive sentences in three minutes.
3	Two students asked the researcher to check their passive sentence during learning. Three of ten students could not pronounce participle correctly. Most of students were able to write passive voice
4	The students did self-regulation without any instruction. Most of them were able to write passive sentences in different sentences. The students' sentences varied. The students were able to write passive voice of simple sentences and compound sentences. The students were able to write passive without writing active sentence as guidance. The students were able to deliver passive orally directly when the researcher asked to.

The observation showed the improvement of students' achievement and activities during the application of self-regulation strategies. In the beginning, the students did not care about these strategies. They thought that self-regulation strategieswas learning and answering the question independently. Periodically, they tried to analyze passive sentences. They found the principle of passive then applied in different sentences. At the end, they were able to write passive without active sentence as the guidance.

Students' Interviewed

As previously mentioned, the ultimate goal of Self-Regulation Strategies is to have students successfully apply strategies to help them understand about certain material. Here, to see the students activity whether they applied Self-Regulation strategies, the researched interviewed them. Structured interview were based on Meyers et al (2008) self-regulation strategies criteria of being an independent learner. The findings

of the "Self Regulation Strategies" are presented in interview analyses which provided in this part. The first stage of the study includes "Self-Regulation Strategies Responds".

The interview was conducted after the test. The first question is related to set the goal. The students responded toward the first question are below.

The Lecturer	: Do you set the goal before you learn passive voice? Why?
Student 1	: Yes, because if we understanding about passive voice, we can next to Structure III
Student 2	: Yes, I have. My target is can understand and can make a great sentence and get high IPK.
Student 8	: Yes. I try to reach that. Because passive sentences is very important in English. Structure is foundation in English. In structure, I can understand about grammar when I use English.
Student 4	: Yes. Because I want more can .... and understand that there are discussions in this lesson. Mmmmm ... and the lesson is very important.

The students said that they had their own target in learning passive voice. Although their reason varied, it can be concluded that they wanted their skill improved through their target. When a student sets a goal, she will arrange several actions to attain it. Below are the students respond to the second question:

The lecturer	: What is your planning to reach your goal?
Student 5	: planning of study passive, ... I have few steps for get the target. First, I should to developing my English and the way is I can see the film without subtitle or listening English music and from that I can improve my pronunciation too. The second one is I should search the knowledge about the study of structure and the way is from I read the book or seem the role of structure and third I need a handle from the master of English such as asking my lecturer or up semester students
Student 7	: my planning is study before start the lesson and review the subject again. But it's not easy for me. Because I can understand the item if I never learn before. Passive sentences sometimes make me could headache he eh... if I can understand I try to ask my friend and someone to make me could understand
Student 9	: I always study passive and work in the question in the book grammar and always try
Student 13	: mmmmmmmmm .... study hard, much better exercise and look for ... sources of passive.

It was clear the students planned several activities to reach their goal. Some students explained the detail planning such as completing exercises related to passive voice. Other just made a general statement which stated by study hard. For the third question, the students' responds are as follows:

The lecturer	: How do you monitor yourself whether you apply your planning or understand about passive voice?
Student 11	: Mam, I learn it. But I don't understand I will ask to my friend or look for reference in the book or internet.
Student 8	: Try to do that. Because it is difficult but it is can make me understand about structure. Try to believe myself. Why must believe with other? Must believe in my brain.
Student 21	: I make my planning in diary..... I checklist in my point I plan.... with colorful spidol.
Student 26	: I wrote several sentences at home. I confuse... I asked my lecturer about the sentences correct or not.

The students knew how to monitor themselves when applying self-regulation strategies. One wrote down her planning in her diary. She then checked whether she has applied or not. Others just believed they did their planning correctly. As a proven, she constructed several sentences at home and asked the lecturer for verification whether her sentences were grammatically correct or not. Different student searched internet and other books to help him in understanding passive voice. The students' answers for the last question in interview are:

The lecturer	: How do you assess on what have you achieved?
Student 6	: for evaluation the task for understanding I shall be ask it to the lecturer or my friend.
Student 7	: I will search the question from internet and then I will to try. How far away I know about passive and I will check the answer from internet to.

Student 17 : *I will make some exercises to make me understand. If I have finished the exercise I will check in the matery of subject again. And if not same with matery, I will look for the other summary until I understand and always learning again.*

Student 20 : *Lecturer scored my exercises. Not me.... if I have 80 I understand about passive ... because I only make little mistake.*

In assessing their achievement on passive voice, the students had different way. Students no 6 said that she asked the lecturer and other friends. Other used technology to help him in evaluating his progress. It is known that technology (internet) supported education in it. The students can do online exercise where they can monitor their progress through online scoring. Last, a student made exercises and answered by herself.

Lecturer's Interviewed

Four lecturers were interviewed to support the data about students' self-regulation. They were reading lecturer, writing lecturer, speaking lecturer and listening lecturer. In reading class, several students classified passive and active sentence. Then they answered the question with active sentences or vice versa. Significant improvement could be seen through their writing. After interviewing the writing lecturer, the researcher could conclude that the students who usually write active sentence in their writing tried to combine with passive. Two up five sentences were written in passive. Different to speaking and listening, the students did not show their understanding on those skills specifically. In listening, for example, the students did not show their performance in understanding passive voice progressively.

Test

Tests were provided in the beginning and in the end of the learning process. The tests consisted on 7 items in each six tenses. The students constructed passive voice based on active sentences given. The data are as follows:

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Before	64,93	26	14,85	2,91
	After	91,67	26	7,45	1,46

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

	Paired 1 Before-After		
Paired Differences	Mean		-26,74
	Std. Deviation		14,62
	Std. Error Mean		2,87
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower	-32,65
		Upper	-20,84
T			-9,33
Df			25
Sig. (2-tailed)			.000

The hypothesis is:

Ho = There is no significant effect on the students' understanding on Passive voice of the experimental group.

From the table 3. *Paired Sample Test*, it showed that the sig. was 0.000. Meanwhile u was 0.05. Based on the fact sig. (0.000) was smaller than u at 0.05, it can be concluded that **the null hypothesis is rejected**. It can be concluded that there is a significant effect on the students' understanding on Passive voice of the experimental group.

Students' Self Regulation Strategies

To assess if knowledge about self-regulation strategies are maintained, the lecturer asked students to explain the self-regulation strategies used and reiterate their basic steps. The students can do this; it is likely they are using the strategies effectively.

Successful self-regulation strategies require certain responsibilities or roles of students. It is useful for students to periodically review self-regulation strategies and communicate as to whether each feels the other is fulfilling their share of the responsibility. To be an independent learner requires a deep approach to studying, in which students must understand ideas and be able to apply knowledge to new situations.

The application of self-regulation strategies was not maximal in the beginning. The researcher found that the students did not apply all self-regulation strategies stages. It could be explained through the observation. The students did not understand how to apply self-regulation strategies effectively that the researcher had explained to them. As a result, their understanding about passive voice was unsatisfied yet.

In contrast, when the interview took place, all students stated that they apply self-regulation strategies. The analysis was strengthened by the students' respond toward the questions. They had different planning and activities to reach their goal in learning passive voice.
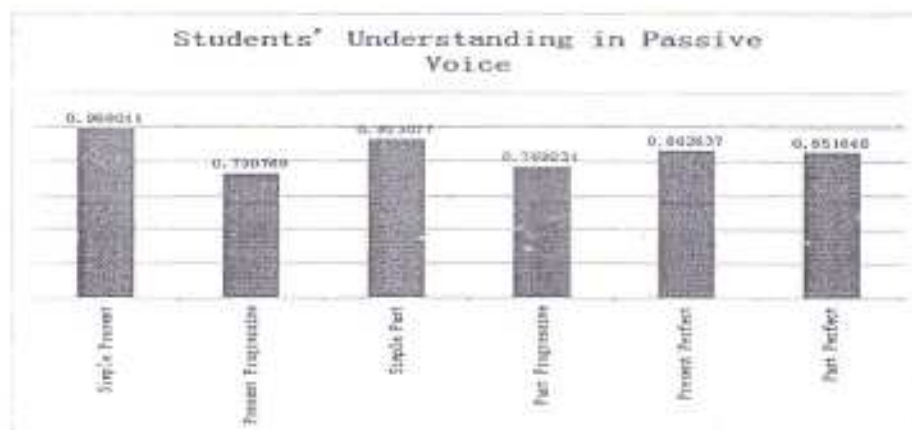
Students' Ability in Constructing Passive Voice

Passive voice is not a new thing. Students learned it since Senior high school. This research focused on updating students' ability in passive voice by using self-regulation strategies. The table below indicated students' ability after applying self-regulation strategies:

Table 4. Students' Understanding in Passive Voice

Passive Sentences	Items	Correct Answer	Percentage
Simple Present	7	180	98,9%
Present Progressive	7	133	73,1%
Simple Past	7	168	92,3%
Past Progressive	7	140	76,9%
Present Perfect	7	157	86,3%
Past Perfect	7	155	85,2%
Total	42	933	

Graph 1. Students Understanding in Passive Voice

It is clear that students got high achievement in constructing passive voice. Self-regulation strategies help the students to identify their weaknesses and devote extra time and energy to be aware to make an improvement. It is not then surprising that findings from recent studies suggest that self-regulated learners also perform better on academic tests and measures of student performance and achievement (Schunk & Zimmerman. 2007; Zimmerman, 2008). Labuhn et al. (2010) found that learners who were taught SRL skills through monitoring and imitation were more likely to elicit higher levels of academic self-efficacy (i.e., confidence) and perform higher on measures of academic achievement compared to students who did not receive SR instruction.

Students' Activities toward Strategy Instruction

Two activities underlined in the present study, they are learning in structure II and other subjects that are related to English skill. Students were more actively studying passive voice in *Structure II* class rather than other classes. These findings came from the result of the interview. In line with the finding, Zimmerman et al.'s (2005) model features a fourth level of self-regulatory skill development which arises when complex situations demand higher levels of self-regulatory competence in which learners systematically adapt their learning strategies to changing personal and contextual situations. Self-regulation means the students can control themselves to reach the goal. This statement was supported Alexander,

Graham, & Harris (1998) who stated that a strategy can be defined as a set of operations or actions that a person consciously undertakes to accomplish a desired goal.

During teaching and learning process, the students showed their enthusiasm. It can be seen through their activities in the classroom. Although in the first meeting several students took a part, in the end of treatment, all students tries to answer and respond the teacher's question. Otherwise, when they did not understand about something, they directly asked the lecturer.

In conclusion, positive responses and comments appeared on the use of self-regulation strategies that influenced students' participation and activities during treatment. It was clearly stated by the lecturer's observation note that the students progress in participation improved significantly. In the beginning of the first meeting, the strategy cannot be accepted quickly by the students, so it becomes obstacle in teaching and learning process. Then when they were familiar with the strategies, they got involve in learning process independently.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Considering the research findings and the students' understanding implications, it can be concluded that self-regulation strategies have a significant effect on students' achievement in passive voice. These strategies also promote students critical thinking skills. It is suggested for the English lecturer to use self-regulation strategies to teach English. It can be effective if the lecture provides each student with a log to document each time she or he uses a strategy and record ways she or he modified it for new tasks. It is also extremely beneficial to collaborate with other lecturers to determine if the strategy is being successfully generalized. A further research about students' attitudes toward self-regulation and independent learning are needed.

References

Alexander, P., Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (1998). A perspective on strategy research: Progress and prospect. Educational Psychology Review, 10, 129–154.

Labuhn, A.S., Zimmerman, B.J., & Hasselhorn, M. (2010). Enhancing students' self-regulation and mathematics performance: The influence of feedback and self-evaluative standards. Metacognition and Learning.5 (2), 173-194.

Mayer, R. E. (2008). Learning and Instruction (2nd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: PearsonMerrill Prentice Hall

Schunk, D. & Zimmerman, B. (2007). Influencing children's self-efficacy and self-regulation of reading and writing through modeling. Reading & Writing Quarterly, 23(1), 7-25

Tim Penyususn Kurikulum. 2013. Pedoman Akademik Bahasa Inggris Universitas Pasir Pengaraian. Rokan Hulu. Universitas Pasir Pengaraian.

Zimmerman, B.J.,& Kitsantas, A. (2005). The hidden dimension of personal competence: Self-regulated learning and practice. In A.J. Elliot, C.S. Dweck, & S. Carol (Eds.), Handbook of Competence and Motivation (pp.509-526) New York: Guilford Publications.

Zimmerman, B. (2008). Investigating self-regulation and motivation: Historical background, methodological developments, and future prospects. American Educational Research Journal, 45(1), pp. 166-183.

Zumbrunn, Sharon, Joseph Tadlock and Elizabeth Danielle Roberts. (2011). Encouraging Self-Regulated Learning in the Classroom: A Review of Literature. MERC. Virginia Commonwealth University.