

# AN ANALYSIS ON DISTRACTERS OF MULTIPLE CHOICES ON STUDENT WORKSHEET USED BY SMPN 2 SUMBERREJO, BOJONEGORO

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**Abstract:** *Multiple choices were one of types of tests that were often used by teachers to be given to students. Multiple choices were also contained in student worksheet so that teachers could deliver the tests to students easily. This study intended to find out how distracters of multiple choices on student worksheet used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro.*

*This study used descriptive method that focused on document analysis. The object of this study was student worksheet that was used by VIII grade in first semester SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro with title Cakrawala, Cakap Kreatif dan Berkualitas. Instrument that was used in this study was document.*

*The research findings showed that total numbers of mistakes were 3 items of 120 total items from competence test unit 1, 2, 3, 4 mid semester test and final semester test. There was 1 mistake of distracter that should be added to be, 1 mistake that used inappropriate article and 1 mistake that should be added addition –s/-es.*

**Keywords:** *distracters, multiple choice, student worksheet*

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## INTRODUCTION

Literally, test is a word from ancient French, *testum*, which has meaning plate to set a side precious metal. Generally, test can be interpreted as a tool used to measure objects toward a set of specific content or material. Cronbach, in Thoha (1970:26), stated, "A systematic procedure for observing a person's behavior and de scribing it with the aid of a numerical scale or a category system". In education, test can help teachers to measure students' knowledge indeed. Then, why do teachers need test? According to Heaton, why teachers apply test in class is to increase their own effectiveness by making adjustment their teaching process, so students can get more benefit in teaching process (1988:6). The function of test is not only to measure the students' knowledge, but also to measure the ability of teachers in teaching class. The effectiveness of approaches, methods, techniques, etc., is needed to be measured, too. It may have effect for the improvement of students' knowledge. After having a test, teachers are able to decide which part of the lesson that students are lack of understanding. In addition, by having a test, teachers can find the difficulties faced by class during the teaching and learning process. After finding the test results, teachers may change the way they to get the better test results.

There are some kinds of tests used by teachers in order to know the student knowledge. It can be matching, completion, multiple choices or sets item tests. One of the tests that are familiar to the students is multiple choices. There is no long answer for multiple choices. The only thing that students have to do in answering multiple choices is choosing the best one alternative answer from the available answers. In choosing the

answer, it is enough for students by giving a sign or a mark, such as circle, cross, check mark, etc. on the correct answer. Sometimes, students can answer directly in the test paper or in different answer sheet.

For teachers, multiple choices have a lot of advantages, especially if they want to know students ability objectively. One of the advantages of this test is easy to create. Teachers do not need long time for creating multiple choice test items. So, if teachers do not have a lot of time, multiple choices is the best test items to be given to the students. Even though there is an ease in creating multiple choices test items, teachers still have to consider many aspects in making multiple choice test items. Heaton (1988:30) states that multiple choices have to have the stem, the correct option and the distracters. It means that teachers still have to consider the rule how to create multiple choices correctly.

Besides, most teachers take students score by giving some tests which questions are taken from student worksheet. Student worksheet contains many tests in different type include multiple choices. While giving tests, if the tests are in multiple choices form, teachers will give it immediately without analyzing and looking over the stem, the correct option and the distracters. Because of it, there is a possibility that the stem, the correct option and the distracters are far from rules. For example, there may be a mistake in creating those parts of multiple choices that are grammatically not correct. So, because of those kinds of reasons, the writer make a study title "An analysis on distracters of multiple choices on student worksheet used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro". By conducting this study, the writer

wants to know in term of its grammar, how the distracters of multiple choices on student worksheet used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro grammatically are.

## TEST

In education, evaluation is always needed. Evaluation refers to the act or process to determine the value of something (Wandt and Gerald, in Sudijono 2011:1). It means that in order to know the value or ability of something, evaluation is the best way that must be taken. However, because evaluation is just a certain process, it needs a certain tool to gain the value or ability of something. Moreover, Kubiszyn and Borich (2003), stated that test is a tool that can contribute importantly to the process of evaluating pupils, the curriculum and teaching methods.

There are so many types of tests. One of them is types of tests based on the way how to score the students' answer. There are two kinds of tests for this type, subjective and objective test (Heaton, 1988)

Subjective test is a test whose answer is in the form of free expressions. It can be in sentence, paragraph, complete description or essay forms (Djiwandono, 1996). This test is usually used for writing subject in form of essay test. It is suitable for this subject, because, students can say, write and express their idea as good as possible. Constructing subjective test relatively does not take long time, but, teachers need much more times to score. It is because there are so many different ways of scoring to all the students' answer (Heaton, 1988).

Objective test is intended to measure students' abilities individually. By answering this kind of test, students are demanded to think independently without help from anyone else. Commonly, objective test is also called as short-answer test, because the way to answer this test is simple. It is only by giving a certain sign or pairing on the right answer. Objective test has some different types. According to Witherington, in Arifin (2010:135), there are many varieties of the new test, but four kinds are in the most common use, true-false, completion, matching and multiple choice.

This kind of test usually consists of the statement which students have to decide whether it *True (T)* and *False (F)*. Meanwhile, Green and Robert (2010:189) said, "True-false items provide a statement, also referred to as a proposition, and the students must determine whether the statement is correct or incorrect." Heaton (1988:114) divided this test into two types: Type 1. Commonly, the statement of this type consists of general truth, so, for the teachers, this type is easier one to construct. Type 2, mostly, this type is used for advanced level because it takes more understanding in choosing the right option. For example, if it is in reading test, there is always a certain text consisting of a certain paragraph for students to read and comprehend.

Matching item is a kind of objective test that require students to identify an item in one column with closely associated item in a second column (Musial, 2009). Therefore, Arifin (2009) asserted that matching items are collection of questions and answers that both are collected at different column. This test is appropriate for testing students' knowledge of terms and definition, dates and important events, and other numerical information.

Multiple choices are form of test in which students are asked to select the best possible answer among the available options. It does not like true-false item tests whose option are only two. It has more than two options. Djiwandono (1996) stated that test which provides more than two options is called as multiple choice item tests.

The rules for constructing multiple choice items are relatively complex, indeed. And it is time-consuming type of test (Heaton, 1988:27). However, Heaton added that this test is an easier to score-test and the most widely used types of items in objective tests. While Heaton stated so, Green and Robert (2010:188), stated that multiple choice items take less time to complete and can be answered quickly, because the answers are provided so that students just have to choose the best one.

Heaton (1988) divided the elements of multiple choice become three main parts, stem, correct option and distracter. Stem is an incomplete statement or question from multiple choice items and it becomes the premise of multiple choice items (Green and Robert, 2010). Heaton (1988) added that stem is also known as the initial part of each multiple choice items.

The function of distracter is to distract the majority of poor students (those who do not know the answer) from the correct answer (Heaton, 1988). Every multiple choices item tests have to have good distracters. Then, Heaton (1988) determined the rules in constructing distracters:

- 1) Each distracter should be reasonably attractive and plausible. According to Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary, plausible means seeming likely to be true. It means that distracter should be likely correct, but, it is still incorrect.

- 2) Distracters should not be too difficult nor demand a higher proficiency in the language than the correct option. If they are too difficult, they will not work out for good students who will actually know the correct option easily.

The current literature that likely has the same object is a research titled "*An Assessment of Functioning and Non-Functioning Distracters in Multiple-Choice Questions: A Descriptive Analysis*", written by Marie Tarrant, James Ware and Ahmed M Mohammed in 2009 from Hongkong, China. The purpose of this study was to investigate non-functioning distracters in teacher-developed tests in one nursing program in an English-language university in Hong Kong.

The study above has the similarity to this study. Both focus on the distracters of multiple choice items. However, in previous study, the writers tested the multiple choice items to the respondents to get the data, while in this study, the writer just analyze the distracters, especially for its grammatical criteria.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used qualitative method because it allowed the writer to analyze data in verbal descriptions or words form. The writer wanted to analyze distracters of multiple choice of student worksheet used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro grammatically. The object of this study was student worksheet used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro with title *Cakrawala, Cakap Kreatif dan Berkualitas*. This student worksheet was for English subject used by VIII grade in first semester. This student worksheet consisted of 4 units which each unit had one competence test. In this student worksheet tests that were in

multiple choice form are in competence tests, mid and final test. Each competence test consists of 20 items, while mid semester and semester test each of them consists of 30 items; total items that were analyzed are 120 items.

## FINDINGS

The research findings showed the result of data analysis from 4 units of competence test, mid semester and final semester test, but not all units contained mistake in writing distracters grammatically. After analyzing, the writer found that the mistakes in writing distracters grammatically were just in the competence test unit 2 and mid semester test.

In the competence test unit 2, there were 2 item numbers, item number 4 and 20, which contained grammatical mistake on their distracters as the following table below. In item number 4, the mistake was in the option D. The verb must be added addition *-s*. In item number 20, the mistake was the article. The word *horrified* should use article *a* instead of *an*.

**Table 1.** List of Distracters in Competence Test Unit 2

Item Number	Items	Options	It should be
4.	Why is Aldi looking for Lisa?	A. They want to make a study group.	
		B. She invited Aldi to come on her birthday. (Correct Option)	
		C. To know her house	
		D. Aldi <i>want</i> to return Lisa's glasses	D. Aldi <i>wants</i> to return Lisa's glasses
20.	Laila : Did both of you enjoy yourselves at the party? Jane : Yes we did. We really had ...	A. A saddening time	
		B. <i>An</i> horrified time	B. <i>A</i> horrified time
		C. A wonderful time (Correct Option)	
		D. An awful time	

Furthermore, the writer also found one mistake in the Mid Semester Test in item number 5. The word *hooded* in the option B functions as an adjective, so there must a *to be* between *She* and *hooded*. The appropriate *to be* was *is*.

**Table 2.** List of Distracters in Mid Semester Test

Item Number	Items	Options	It should be
5.	Which of the statements is NOT TRUE about Mrs. Ikawati?	A. She is kind.	
		B. She hooded.	C. She <i>is</i> hooded.
		D. She has a big size body.	
		E. She dresses neatly.	

Total numbers of mistakes based on the research finding were 3 items of 120 total items from competence test unit 1, 2, 3, 4 mid semester test and final semester test. The comparison between the total mistakes with the total items was quite far, 3/120 or 1/40. Even so, there should be an improvement in constructing elements of multiple choices, starting from the stem, the correct option to the distracter.

Distracter is one of important element of multiple choices, so it has to be considered if teachers want to take and use it. Distracter has criteria in its creating. According to Heaton (1989:32), each distracter should be grammatically correct on its own and only becomes incorrect when inserted into the stem.

The grammatical mistakes on distracters of multiple choices used by SMPN 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro were different. There was 1 mistake of distracter that should be added *to be*, 1 mistake that used inappropriate article and 1 mistake that should be added addition *-s/-es*.

In table 1 Competence Unit 2, there were 2 item numbers consisting grammatically mistake on distracters.

## a. Item number 4 option D

Actually, there were two possibilities to correct this distracter. The word *want* could be added either *-ed* or *-s/-es*, but before selecting the correct option, looking back the questions was advised. It was to make sure what tenses was used of the questions. The question of this item number was in Present Progressive Tense, so option *Aldi want to return Lisa's glasses* was grammatically incorrect. The word *want* was a one of verbs that could not be used or changed into progressive tense form, called stative verbs. The other stative verbs are *understood, know, hate, love, remember, etc.* It means the word *want* still in its form. Considering the option was in Present form, so *want* should be added *-s* becomes *wants; Aldi wants to return Lisa's glasses*. It was caused *want* was preceded by *Aldi* as third person singular subject.

## b. Item number 20 option B

*Horrified* was a noun. It means that in the beginning of sentence, it had to use an article. The word *horrified* was different from *hour* in term of pronunciation. *Hour* was pronounced /aʊr/. Because this word had vowel initial sound, so this word had to be added article *an; an hour*. The word *horrified* was pronounced /'hɒr.ɪ.faid/. Its initial sound was consonant, so the appropriate article for this word was *a; a horrified*.

From table 2 Mid Semester Test had 1 mistake as well, item number 5 options B, *She hooded*. This sentence was grammatically incorrect. Actually, hooded was an adjective. Nouns and adjectives had to be prefixed by *to be* if there was a subject in front of them. For example *I am a student* or *you are*

*clever*. There should be *to be* between *she* and *hooded*. By inserting *is*, *she is hooded*, this sentence would grammatically correct.

There were so many reasons why there were mistakes in creating distracters of multiple choices on student worksheet, for example:

- a. The author of student worksheet forgot the grammar. Student worksheet that was analyzed was created by Indonesian people whose first language was Indonesian language. In English, there were *to be* and *articles* which in Indonesian there were not. It means that, the author might be forget to use *to be* and *articles* in English.
- b. The author was not good enough in mastering grammar. If the author did not master grammar well, it means that he or she could make mistakes in creating multiple choice items, especially in creating distracters.

Although it was out from the problem that had to be concerned in this study, the writer also found that there was a mistake in stem writing. As the initial part of multiple choice items, of course it had its own rules in its constructing. As Heaton (1989:30) stated that the stem should usually contain those words or phrases which would otherwise have to be repeated in each option. There are 4 mistakes as the following tables.

**Table 3.** Competence Unit 2

Item Number	Item	It should be
15.	Where is he from? A. He is from England. B. He is from Europe. C. He is from America. D. He is from Canada.	Where is he from? He is from ... A. England B. Europe C. America D. Canada
18.	Why is he lovable? A. Because he is handsome. B. Because he is friendly. C. Because of his role. D. Because he has wavy hair.	Why is he lovable? Because ... A. He is handsome B. He is friendly C. Of his role D. He has wavy hair

**Table 4.** Competence Unit 4

Item Number	Item	It should be
19.	Why was the writer afraid? A. Because it can't be cured. B. Because the writer was weak. C. Because malaria can cause death. D. Because the writer was calm.	Why was the writer afraid? Because ... A. it can't be cured. B. the writer was weak. C. malaria can cause death. D. the writer was calm.

**Table 5.** Mid Semester Test

Item Number	Item	It should be
12.	What will a rhino do if there is another animal coming? A. It will attack. B. It will drive the corner. C. It will keep quiet. D. It will chase.	What will a rhino do if there is another animal coming? It will ... A. Attack B. Drive the corner C. Keep quiet D. Chase

Good item writing will help students to understand the item easily, so that students can solve the item easily as well. By following the rules how to create a certain item, the possibility of error in writing of item can be avoided.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research finding of this study, the writer concluded that student worksheet used by SMP Negeri 2 Sumberrejo Bojonegoro contained grammatical mistakes on distracters of multiple choices. There were 3 mistakes on 3 item numbers. In competence test unit 2, there are 2 item numbers; item number 4, one of the distracters needed to be added addition *-s*; item number 20 that used inappropriate article. The last was in Mid Semester Test in item number 5 that one of distracters should be added to be *is*.

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