

A CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENT'S MASTERY OF PAST TENSE AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT

Ahmad Zainuddin¹, Gusti Nurhafifah², Armeria Wijaya³
Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya, Zainuddinipa4_40@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This research purposed to search and find out the correlations between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text. The method in this research used a purposive sampling technique with total sample 30 students. In this research, the data are obtained using two kinds of test namely Grammar and writing test. Meanwhile, the data were analyzed using Product Moment Pearson. The outlays of this research, the average score of past tense is 69,33 and writing score is 77,33. Thus, the final result in this research when the formula correlation is applied, the score is 0,797 or substantial. It means that the r value is higher than r table; students' master past tense influence to writing narrative text. It can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text.

Keywords: Correlation, Mastery of Past Tense, Narrative text.

English is international language that is used in the world. English is used by people to communicate each other. Most sources of issues including book, science, and technology are written in English. Brumfit states that English is international language and the most widespread medium of communication, both because the number and geographical areas of its speaker and the large number of non native speakers who use of it for part their international contact. So, this is not surprising that English is necessary for life. Most of people speak English to obtain relationship with other people who are coming from different countries. Harmer (Harmer, 2001:1) states:

“Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or ‘first’ language speakers, it has become a lingua franca. A lingua franca is defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other’s and where one or both speakers are using it as a ‘second’ language.” People who study English as second language, it is necessary because English had been the one language that used even passively or actively. By doing that, we are able to be master of English in many aspects namely in business, trade and education.

Realizing the developing of English in Indonesia as a form of communication, this is the reason why the government applies English as subject for our education system. As the name implies, it has been developed in based competence and K13; as a necessary mean to achieve a good competence. As consequence, English language teaching is aimed to achieve the competencies. This means that students must be able to obtain the competencies all of English abilities. In English competency, there are four skills namely writing skills, reading skills, speaking skills, and listening skills. Those abilities have been studied by the students in school, courses, English institute and many others so that the students find the problems. Most of the problems come from writing skills.

Furthermore, Indonesian students think that writing skills is difficult to learn because the materials must be mastered to express many kinds of meaning in text. It is supported by Richards and Renandya (2002:203) who states that writing is considered as the most difficult skills for the students because it is not only in terms of generating and organizing ideas, but also about translating these ideas into printed words that is readable. In other hand, the students have to be great at L2 background knowledge about punctuation, grammar; word choice and organization of ideas in order to clarify written points and influence the readers to understand the writer’s ideas.

Writing should be practiced and studied gradually so that the students master it well. It will take time to be able to write a good writing. It needs some proper guidance and sustained practices (Cantony

and Harvey, 1987:81). This statement above indicates that students need practice to write composition, essay, paragraph or even journal. The additional perspective, writing is necessary to enhance the skill for composing, developing and analyzing the ideas.

The theory state that, learning writing skills is difficult as it has many components to create a text. This means that the students automatically have to work with such writing components as punctuations, grammar and word choice from which the text is built. By doing that, they will master their ability in various of text. According to Derewianka (1990:17) states:

“A text is any meaningful stretch of language- oral or written. But of course not all texts are the same, [...]. One factor which accounts for differences in texts is the purpose for which the text is being used. Texts are structured in different ways to achieve its purpose.

Regarding Derewianka’s opinion, the researcher will be able to find and classify kinds of text in writing skills namely narrative, recount, procedure, descriptive, news item, explanation etc. As any of writing genre, a narrative text is also learnt continuously in every grade of senior high school level. Narrative is one of the types of text that exist in English lesson. The function of narrative text is used to entertain or amuse and to deal with problematic event which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn finds a resolution (BSNP, 2003:49). This statement indicates that narrative is type of texts which tells a past story and aimed to entertain or inform readers. Therefore, past tense should be used in writing narrative text.

Teachers complain when teaching narrative is the suspicious score that appear between narrative and simple past tense. The correlation between narrative and past tense defies the existing theory. The score of narrative text is suspiciously high and the past tense score is nonsensically low. The theory states that past tense is important to good narrative texts, which require for being past, directing indirect sentence, and regular irregular verb. The direct indirect sentence requires students to master past tense first. This suspicious score is correlation requires further researcher to be analyzed by the researcher.

The explanation above indicates that the student difficulty is a grammar. Grammar is essentials as the rules of the wording meaningful utterances. As prove is writing skills, at least students have master not only grammar but also vocabularies well. This case, verb tense has essentials role to indicate that tense is necessary to clear writing. Therefore, considering the importance of grammar in creating the text in narrative text, the researcher will investigate the correlation between student’s mastery past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text.

Review of Related Literature

Grammar, many people in this world interact with other people use their own language without mind about grammatical system. This case appears because people do not learn the rules of grammatical system; they speak naturally and natively as a habitual action whereas grammar is necessary for interacting with other people. Grammar is language system; people sometimes identify grammar as the rules of language. This means that in each conversation, people have to use a grammar correctly to make sure other people understand what they are talking about. Therefore, different expert defines the term grammar differently so that a word grammar has several meaning and description. Harmer(2001:12) assumes that the term grammar is the description the words which can change their form and can be concentrated into sentence in that language, meanwhile Cook and Sutter (1980:1) assume that people speak and write associate the grammar as the rules. The statement above shows that when they communicate each other, they attempt to avoid a misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Realizing this case, they do not aware that their expression in speaking or writing is too difficult to be understood. They still keep for defining a rule of communication. Meanwhile in education system especially in learning and teaching English as L2, Grammar is necessary to enhance the students’ writing skills. In

short, grammar is something that people can use to find their ways in getting a long with others in using languages. In addition, when people read something and write their ideas directly; it shows that there is positive progress. Finally, the writer concludes that grammar is a set of rule in language communication to create a positive progress by reading something to obtain many ideas in writing skills.

English Tenses, especially study about grammar, grammar deals with set of rule in language communication. Grammar has relationship with tenses. Tenses mean that consider with change of time and form of verb. Realizing about tenses, we have to consider about time and form of verb. In Indonesia, the form of verb does not work because the system is not appears so that it makes English subject is difficult. In English, the change of time inference the form of verb, so the change of verb depends on time. According to Frank (1972:47), tense is special verb ending or accompanying auxiliary verbs signal the time an event takes place. Discussing about tenses, we are able to find form of verb by considering about time and takes places. It will be shown any difference form of verb. Cook and Sutter states that point of present is taking places now, whereas past tense is happen in the past. Those tenses are part of sixteen tenses. To sum up above, tenses are elements of form of verb which depend on the change of time. Thus, the form of verb will show when the changing time is appear in present or past.

Past Tense, is a tense that deals with event in the past. This event means that there is significant time or definitely. Most of the people express their ideas especially in the past event using past tense. According to Frank (1972:83), the past tense indicates time terminating in the past, whether a word time is given or not. Whereas Cook and Sutter (1980:51) write that past tense is action or states that usually occurred or complicated in the past. The conclusion of the perspective above, past tense that deals with event in the past; the event is began in the past, happened in the past, and ended in the past. Additional opinion, most of grammarian classify that the form of past tense is divided by four forms namely simple past, past continuous, past perfect, and past perfect continuous.

Writing, is one of productive skills in English subject. Writing is one of ways how to communicate people' thinking about something which they obtain in their life. As prove, they are able to write anything to express their ideas. Nunan (2000:88) stated that writing is an action of inserting words or ideas in some instruments. This means that every words will be obtained with ideas and then people can conduct their ideas by writing; on the other hands, the writer must be able to organize words, ideas, sentences as good as possible so that the readers understand the writer's meaningful. Writing has an essential role in studying English because writing affect the capability of students to be master in writing skills. To be master of writing, people must enhance one of receptive skills namely reading skills because reading will help people to obtain much information. Without reading, the writing skills could not be obtained because the writing elements are in the book or passage. People will obtain many vocabularies, expression, idiom etc. Generally, writing is difficult skills to create a good result because it needs serious concentrations to practice or indicates the ideas in writing a paragraph, essay, journal even thesis. The additional perspective, the writer must arrange and organize the ideas, content, and outline. According to Myles (2002:15) that writing is developing, composing, and analyzing ideas which need much practice to create good writing. This statement above can be summarized that writing is difficult thing and effortful ability. Therefore, it is differ from other skills namely reading, speaking and listening skills.

Moreover, Nunan (1989:36) defines that writing is not naturally activity. Human being studies to speak a language. But on the other hand, people must be taught the role of writing because it is difference as well. That statement means that between spoken and written language is different. In spoken

language, the language is used for informal language. Written language is needed to be complex because the reader must be able to serious in understanding meaning.

According to the explanation above, there are some arguments of writing from some experts. This can be concluded that writing is a difficult skill beside speaking, listening and reading skills. This thing is caused that writing has an essential role for composing, arranging and analyzing even delivering ideas to the readers.

Writing, Students must be mastered in writing skills to avoid the difficulties in writing something. The theory stated that writing is the difficult skills. Realizing that, the teachers must be mastered well to teach their students inside of school even the outside of school because the teachers are a facilitator in enhancing the student's skills. On the other hand, the teacher must give the good one to their students. Moreover, Abot (1981:142) argued that the teacher's assumption in the class is needed in teaching English. This means that teacher's instruction is needed by the students for composing the student's ideas. Teachers must learn not only how to teach writing fluency, accuracy and giving good instrument but also teachers must know how to motivate students' interests in increasing writing skills. In teaching writing process, sometimes the students felt unconfident because they consider their grammar, vocabularies, language and the right or not. It was happened when the teachers asked to the student write a paragraph for instance. It is supported by Harmer (1992:80) who argued that students think how much language the students mastered, organizing ideas and their interest in writing. The most important thing is how the teacher's assumptions to motivate and maintains them in writing process. On the other hand, the teacher must focus seriously on the students' needed to obtain same universe discourse about their writing result. In teaching process, there are some rules that must be understood by the teachers namely the teachers must be mastered in handling class to get the good situation and condition. The usage of it is to create a purpose of writing ability. Moreover, the teacher must give a chance to the students in learning process so that the students interested in writing. The chance means that the teacher must understand in timing, revising and evaluating. Beside that, the teachers make other rules or models in different materials for instance creating text (descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, etc). After conducting that, the feedback and comments are important to students because they will feel proud of to their self that their writing is appreciated. One of appreciating is giving score. According to Askew and Lodge (2000:5) feedback is the teacher's communication for indicating information to students. The statement above means that teachers effort to convey the explanations or giving comment after they finish writing. It can support them better in writing because they know and understand their mistakes. In short, the teachers have main assumptions in obtained student's ability. Teachers are main character in the class to follow the student's interest in learning writing process. Teachers have big responsibility to help students during learning writing process.

Narrative is one kinds of text which has taught in junior school and senior high school. Narrative focuses on telling the readers about chronological of history in the past event. BSNP (2004:49) defines that narrative is used to amuse or entertain the readers with an actual experience. Problematic events is also appear in narrative text, is called resolution. Students knew the parts of narrative text such as fable, folktale, folklore, myth, and legend. It has purpose to entertain the readers where the story is full with problematic. Most of students read the famous story such as snow white and Cinderella. For elementary school, students focused on the story that has relation with animals. According to explanation the above, narrative is kinds of text which tells past story and notifying something happened in the past. Thus, all issues can be obtained by reading narrative text.

Method

This research applies the correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement writing narrative text to the twelfth grade of SMAN 1 Kamal. This study is used to be quantitative research. Generally, quantitative research deals with numerical collection that taken from sample and designed from some populations. Therefore, in this research used the test method as the procedure. According to Arikunto (2002:136) stated that the easy way to obtain data and create better outlays is applied research instrument. Thus, test is applied to calculate the students' ability. To obtain the real data of the student's mastery of past tense and their achievement writing narrative text, the researcher utilized two kinds of text namely grammar and writing test. Both of them are in written test.

Moreover, the purpose of this research is search the relationship between achievement past tense and writing narrative text. Therefore, the possibilities of this study are used two or more variables or correlational design. The reason using correlational design is to prove how the mastery of past tense affects the writing narrative text.

To obtain better outlays, the researcher uses two kinds of test between grammar and writing test. In grammar test, the researcher used multiple choices to make easy for scoring. The multiple choices include incomplete statements which asked to the student chose the best answer. The number of multiple choices is 50 questions and 50 minutes for students. Meanwhile, the writing test will focus one narrative text. The tenses is proposed to be applied is past tense in writing narrative text. The writing narrative text will be conducted by students 15 sentences in 40 minutes.

Analysis and Findings

Students' Mastery of Past Tense and Writing Narrative Text

Based on the test which was administered for the twelfth grade student of Senior high school 1 Kamal, the average score of past tense mastery is 69,33. Thus, they have fair score in past tense mastery. Meanwhile, in writing narrative test, the research obtained average score 69,7 It means that they have fair score in writing narrative text. *See appendix 2.* The proved is among the sample of 30 students in writing test, there were 2 students acquired excellent, 12 students acquired very good, 10 students acquired good, 4 students acquired poor, and 2 students acquired very poor. In this research, the students who have good score in mastering past tense affected the achievement in writing narrative text. This is the fact that the students who tested of past tense and got good score, it can create good outlays in writing narrative text. Shortly, in this research there are 8 students who obtain good score in both tests. They are student number 1 who obtained 84 in past tense test and 90 in writing, student number 7 who obtained 92 in past tense test and 90 in writing, student number 11 who obtained 90 in past tense test and 80 in writing, student number 14 who obtained 94 in past tense test and 90 in writing, student number 15 who obtained 88 in past tense test and 80 in writing, student number 18 who obtained 90 in past tense test and 90 in writing, student number 21 who obtained 88 in past tense test and 90 in writing, student number 28 who obtained 90 in past tense test and 82 in writing.

In the opposite, the students who can not do both test well. They have poor score even very poor score. They are student number 2 who obtained 40 in past tense and 54 in writing, student number 4 who obtained 30 in past tense and 42 in writing, student number 6 who obtained 42 in past tense and 54 in writing, student number 8 who obtained 40 in past tense and 50 in writing, student number 16 who obtained 42 in past tense and 60 in writing.

By knowing the illustration above, the students who have poor score even very poor score, it can be conclude that those students is failed doing past tense test so that the sore of writing is also interference. It means that the writing score is also poor even very poor.

Based on the finding and explanations above, the students will be successful if they have fair score or at least 61 to 100 and they become failed if they have score under 61. Thus, the researcher concludes that there is a positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text.

The Correlation between Students' Mastery of Past Tense and Their Achievement in Writing Narrative Text.

This research indicates that there is significant correlation between student's mastery of past tense and their ability in writing narrative text. From the data that was acquired, there is positive correlation between student's mastery of past tense and their ability in writing narrative text. This is the proved that the value of correlation coefficient is high. It can be seen in the process below.

$$r_{11} = \frac{N}{N-1} \left(1 - \frac{m(N-m)}{Nx^2} \right)$$

Where,

R11 : Reliability

N : The number of items in the test

m : The mean score on the test

x^2 : Standard deviation of the test score

Furthermore, all requirements to find out correlation is obtained so that the value of mean is 42 and the value of standard deviations is 31,8 is inserted in this formula below

$$r_{11} = \frac{N}{N-1} \left(1 - \frac{m(N-m)}{Nx^2} \right)$$

$$r_{11} = \frac{50}{49} \left(1 - \frac{42(50-42)}{50(31.8)^2} \right)$$

$$r_{11} = 1,02 \left(1 - \frac{42 \times 8}{50 \times 1011,2} \right)$$

$$r_{11} = 1,02 \left(1 - \frac{336}{50560} \right)$$

$$r_{11} = 1,02(1 - 0,007)$$

$$r_{11} = 1,02(0,99)$$

$$r_{11} = 1,00$$

Based on the formula above, the result of r_{11} is 1,00 the researcher linked to the r table with sample 30, the value of r_{11} is 1,00. This means that the coefficients 1,00 showed high to very high .

Meanwhile, to prove and check other data namely writing test score, researcher also apply and conduct with the same step which is calculated in past tense test process. This means that researcher calculate and find out the result of mean of writing test and also search the result of standard deviations of writing test. The result of writing test will be calculated using same formula which is applied in past tense test.

Finally, because this research seek the correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text, all score of past tense and writing have to be calculated using formula correlation.

The difficulty test also influences the result of writing narrative text because if the test is too easy, it will create bad writing narrative text. Easy test means that the researcher only gave the regular verb

to the students. Therefore, the test must be real and appropriate to the students. Not only the general past tense which administered to the students but the test must be categorized in 3 aspects namely easy, medium and difficult test. To create good writing narrative test, the difficulty of test must be random. It means that the test has various one. It can be taken 20 easy test of past tense, 20 medium test of past tense and 10 difficult test of past tense, if the number of past tense test is 50. Even though the number of test is not 50 items, the researcher must manage or divide as good as possible. It means that the test must be managed well, for instance the test is 50 items. The managing of difficulty test is 20 item tests first include easy, medium and difficult test, 20 item tests second also include easy, medium and difficult test and 10 items also include easy, medium and difficult test. Thus, the positioned of difficulty test also influence the result of writing narrative text in creating correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text. Even though, the difficult test is managed well, the assessing in creating good writing narrative text is also needed because it indicates the level of difficulty of writing. This thing must appear because the researcher knowshow the students develop the ideas in writing narrative text. Developing ideas in writing supported the students enlarge their mind so that it will interfered how they organize the main idea and supporting ideas with good grammar which related in grammar feature of narrative text. Therefore, aspects in writing have to be considered such as indicating the content, text organization, vocabularies, grammar features and writing mechanism. Those items have points to indicate the scores of students' writing whether they got poor or excellent score in writing test. Therefore, in this research need to prove the result of past tense score and writing score to create the correlation.

Shortly, based on explanations above, the data which was proved and all data was obtained from calculation of mean, standard deviation, reliability values, the outlays of this research showed that there is positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text. The value of r_{xy} has substantial value. The value of r_{xy} is 0,797. Thus, when it linked to r table with $N = 30$, it created that the value of r_{xy} is substantial or higher than r table. This outlays explains that the student's mastery of past tense influence to their achievement in writing narrative text. This means that they correlate each other because the past tense score and writing score were high. To create the correlation in this research the students' score of both tests may not fewer than 61. The students obtained high score because they conduct both tests seriously and they were master of past tense. It can see in the result of past tense score. Among of them obtained good performance in both tests. Therefore, in this research students' mastery of past tense and writing narrative text correlated each other.

Conclusion

This research is aimed to find out whether or not there is correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text. Based on data is obtained, the result of this research as follows: The average score of past tense is 69,33.7 students acquired very good, 10 students acquired good, 5 students acquired fair, 2 students acquired poor, and 6 students acquired very poor; The average score of writing narrative text is 77,33. 2 students acquired excellent, 12 students acquired very good, 10 students acquired good, 4 students acquired poor, and 2 students acquired very poor.

In this research, it is proved that there is a positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing narrative text. It is caused by some factors such as their moody, their health, and their assumption in learning English and the difficulty of test. Other words, to create the correlation between students mastery of past tense and writing narrative text, it is also supported by the assessing of writing and how organize both test between past tense test and writing test well, so that

the effectiveness of tests create a substantial research or 0,797. This means that r value is higher than r table. Thus X values and Y values were correlated each other or $H_1 = XY = \emptyset$.

References

- Abbot. 1981. *The Teaching of English as an International Language: A practical Guide*. Great Britain: William Collins Sons and Co.Ltd
- Anderson, Mark and Kathy Anderson. 1997. *Types in English*. Sidney: Mac Millan Education Australia PTY LTD
- Arikunto, S. 2002. *Dasar-DasarEvaluasiPendidikan*. Yogyakarta: RinekaCipta
- Arikunto, S. 2002. *ProsedurPenelitian: SuatuPendekatanPraktek*. Yogyakarta: RinekaCipta
- Askew, S.D. & Lodge, C. 2000. *Feedback for Learning*. USA: RoutledgeFalme
- Azar, Betty Schramper. 1992. *Fundamentals of English Grammar: Second Edition*. New Jersey: Prentice- Hall
- Azmi, Ulul. 2011. A Correlation between Students' Mastery of Past Tense and Their Ability in Writing Recount Text. Jakarta. Universitas Islam Negeri Jakarta
- Best, J. W. 1981. *Research in Education: Fourth Edition*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall International
- Brown, H. D. 2004. *Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practice*. New York: Longman.
- Brumfit, J. Cristopher. 1981. *English for International Communication*. London: Pergamon Press
- BSNP.2003. *StandartKompetensi Mata PelajaranBahasaInggris SMA dan MA. In Kurikulum 2004*. Jakarta: Depdiknas
- Cantony and Harvey. 1987. *A Practical Guidline: An Essay to write*. New York: Prentice Hall regrents
- Cook, J. and W. Suter. 1980. *The Scope of Grammar*. New York: McGraw – Hill.
- Derewianka, Berverly. 1990. *Exploring How Text Works*. Marlborough: Australian Print Group
- Donals, A. 1985. *Introduction to Research in Education*. New York: CBS Collage
- Hidayah, Evi. 2007. *A Correlation between Students' Mastery of Past tense and their Achievement in Writing Recount Text*. Semarang. UniversitasNegeri Semarang
- Frank, Marcella. 1972. *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall
- Harmer, J. 1992. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*: Pearson Education Limited
- Harmer, J. 2001. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman
- Harmer, J. 2012. *Teacher Knowledge*. England: Core Concepts in English Language Teaching. Pearson Education Limited
- Harris, D. P. 1979. *Testing English as a Second Language*. New York: McGraw - Hill Book Company.
- Heaton, J. 1988. *Writing English Language Test*, New Edition. New York: Longman
- Meyles. 2002. *Teaching and Researching WritingSkill*. London: Longman
- Nunan, D. 1989. *Designing Task for Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Nunan, D. 2003. *Practical English Language Teaching First Edition*. Singapore: McGraw - Hill Education
- Richards, J. C & Renandya, W.A. 2002. *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tarmizi. 2009. *A Correlation between Students' Mastery of Past tense and their Achievement in Writing Recount Text*. IAIN Ar-Raniri Banda Aceh