

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE MASTERY AND THEIR ABILITY IN WRITING A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMPN 3 BATANG ANAI KAB. PADANG PARIAMAN

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Abstract

This research aimed at correlating the second year students' simple present tense mastery and their ability in writing a descriptive text at SMPN 3 Batang Anai Kab. Padang Pariaman. The design of this research was correlational in nature. The population of this research was the second year students at SMPN 3 Batang Anai Kab. Padang Pariaman. The total population was 281 students. The researcher used cluster random sampling technique to take sample. The sample in this research was 32 students. Based on the result of this research, it was found that the correlation between the second year students' simple present tense mastery and their ability in writing a descriptive text at SMPN 3 Batang Anai Kab. Padang Pariaman was significant. It was proved by the fact that the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was .76 and the value of r_{table} was .35. It means that $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was higher than r_{table} . Based on findings that have already been discussed previously, it could be concluded that the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Key words: Correlational, Grammar, Simple Present Tense, Writing, Descriptive Text.

Introduction

English is a universal language of the world because it can be used to communicate with other countries. English is also important in education. In learning English, learners must master four skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills can not stand alone without English language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. By mastering both of them, the learners will be more successful in studying.

Grammar is a field of linguistics that involves all the various things that make up the rules of language. Subfields of linguistics that are considered as a part of this field include syntax, phonetics, morphology, and semantics. Grammar is also used as a term to refer to the prescriptive rules of a given language, which may change over time or be open to debate. (<http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-grammar.htm>).

In addition, Nordquist (2013:1) declares that *good* writing simply means writing that contains no *bad* mistakes--that is, no errors of grammar, punctuation, or spelling. In fact, good writing is much more than just correct writing. It's writing that responds to the interests and needs of our readers. It is also added by Tarigan (2013:1) who defines that writing is productive skills for writing an indirect communication and the nature of the character is very different from that expressed by speaking directly, therefore writing is included an ability.

Writing skill has been learned at junior high school with other language skills. The students are introduced to several types of text through the model of writing text. They are clearly taught about the social function, the generic structure and language features. So that they know and can distinguish the differences among the texts

There are many types of text that are learned by junior high school. They are procedure, narative, recount, descriptve and many others. One of them is descriptive text. According to Nugroho (2012:1), descriptive text is a kind of texts that describes the figure of someone based on their characteristic or acts, we can also describe something and someplace based on their own characteristic. Alexander

(1965:18) adds that in descriptive text, you are generally required to describe people, objects, or places. Your description may take the form of a personal impression or may be purely imaginary. Whatever the case, try to include interesting details.

In descriptive text, one of language features that is always used is simple present tense. In simple present tense, the action is simply mentioned and there is nothing said about its completeness. It is used to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general (Murphy, 1985:4). It is also added by Duckworth (2003:7) who says that the simple present tense is to talk about routines and things we do regularly.

Based on the researcher's informal interviews with some students of junior high schools around my house and school on July 10th, 2013, they still had difficulties in mastering "verb" or "to be" in a simple present tense sentence. For examples: "Dika go to school", while the correct one is "Dika goes to school" and the other "I am long hair", the correct one is "I have long hair". Automatically, it can influence in writing descriptive text because one of its language features is using simple present tense.

The general goal of this research was to find out the correlation between students' simple present tense mastery and

their ability in writing descriptive text of the second year students at SMPN 3 Batang.

Research Method

This research aimed to correlate between students' simple present tense mastery and their ability in writing a descriptive text. Relating to this, the researcher used correlational design. According to Gay (1987:230), correlational research involves collecting data in order to determine whether, and to what degree, a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. The degree of relationship is expressed as a correlation coefficient.

The population of this research was all of the second year students of SMPN 3 Batang Anai Kab. Padang Pariaman. The population was divided into nine classes. The total numbers of population were 281 students. They were selected because they have studied simple present tense and descriptive text.

In choosing the sample of this research, the researcher used cluster random sampling. The researcher applied cluster random sampling because the population was grouped into nine classes. They were selected randomly because all members of the population at each class

were homogenous. It means that, they were similar in terms of teaching materials..

In choosing the sample, the researcher chose two classes as sample by writing the number of the classes (VIII.1, VIII.2, VIII.3, VIII.4, VIII.5, VIII.6, VIII.7, VIII.8, VIII.9) on small papers and put them into a box. Then, the researcher mixed them and took two of them with closed eyes. The first taking was VIII.7 as the sample of try out test. It consisted of 32 students. The second taking was VIII.1 as the sample of real test of this research. It also consisted of 32 students.

In this research, there were two instrumentations. First, grammar test used to collect the data of simple present tense mastery in multiple choice form. The researcher firstly gave the try out test to the students out of sample. The try out test consisted of 50 items include 16 items for positive form (8 items for verbal and 8 items for nominal), 17 items for negative form (9 items for verbal and 8 items for nominal), 17 items for yes/no question form (9 items for verbal and 8 items for nominal). The researcher gave one point for each correct answer.

The criteria of good instrument is valid and reliable. To see the validity of the test, the reseacrher used content validity. Relating to this, the test was constructed based on the curriculum and syllabus used

at SMPN 3 Batang Anai. To get reliability of the test, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula as suggested by Arikunto (2012:87) as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Then, to determine the reliability of the total test, the result was analyzed by using Spearman Brown formula (Gay, 1987:139):

$$r_{ii} = \frac{2 r_{xy}}{(1+r_{xy})}$$

The coefficient correlation of the test was .92.

The second, a writing test was used to collect the data of descriptive text. It was at least two paragraphs that consisted of identification and description. The time allocation was 60 minutes to do the test. Before giving the tests, the researcher did a try out test to the students out of the sample. In this case, the researcher tried out the instruction of the test to find out whether or not the students understand what they did with the test and whether or not the time allocation was enough.

To validate the test, the researcher used content validity in which the test materials would be constructed based on the curriculum and syllabus used at SMPN 3 Batang Anai. To find out the reliability

of the writing test, the researcher used inter-rater technique. To calculate the coefficient correlation of students' score of two assessors and to find out its reliability, the researcher used the Pearson Product Moment Formula as suggested by Arikunto (2012:87) as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

The coefficient correlation of the test was .97.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the procedure as follows:

1. Presenting the raw score of two variables (writing score and simple present tense score).
2. Correlating the total scores of two variables by using Pearson Product Moment Formula as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

The researcher compared the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ with the value of r_{table} on the level of significance 95% ($\alpha .05$) and the degree of freedom (df) 32-2 (30). It was found that $r_{\text{calculated}}$ (.76) was higher than r_{table} (.35). It can be concluded that the correlation between simple present tense mastery and writing descriptive text ability was significant. It means that the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Finding and Discussions

Based on the result of the tests, it was found that the lowest score for simple present tense test was 24 and the highest score was 36. For writing a descriptive text test, it was found that the lowest score was 40 and the highest score was 92.

Finding

To find out the correlation between simple present tense mastery and the ability in writing a descriptive text of the second year students at SMPN 3 Batang Anai, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula. From the data analysis, it was found the value of r between simple present tense and descriptive text was .76.

Discussion

Based on the result of testing hypothesis and the result of data analysis, the correlation between simple present tense mastery and writing descriptive text ability was significant. It was found that the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was .76. In relation to the classification of correlation elaborated by Arikunto (2012:89), the correlation of two variables (simple present tense and descriptive text) could be classified as high. Relating to this, it was interpreted that an increasing grade in simple present tense mastery has relationship with an increasing grade in ability to write a descriptive text.

Conclusions

Based on finding as already discussed in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that there was a significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and the ability in writing a descriptive text of the second year students at SMPN 3 Batang Anai. It was proved by the value $r_{\text{calculated}}$ that was higher than r_{table} . It can be concluded that the grade of simple present tense mastery can influence the grade of writing descriptive text.

Another conclusion that the correlation between simple present tense mastery and the ability in writing a descriptive text of the second year students at SMPN 3 Batang Anai was categorized as high correlation. It means that, simple present tense gives much effects in writing a descriptive text.

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