

# THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND THEIR WRITING ABILITY

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## Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah ada hubungan antara motivasi siswa dengan kemampuan menulis siswa. Desain penelitian ini adalah kuantitatif menggunakan *ex post facto designs*. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas dua di SMA Bandar Lampung. Peneliti menggunakan *sampel* penelitian sebanyak 34 siswa. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes motivasi siswa dan tes menulis. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan *Pearson Product Moment Correlation* di SPSS 16.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai *r* dari motivasi siswa dan kemampuan menulis siswa .921 dan .719. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada hubungan yang *significant* antara motivasi siswa dan kemampuan menulis siswa. Semakin tinggi motivasi siswa maka semakin tinggi pula kemampuan menulis siswa.

The purpose of this study was to find out whether there was a significant correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability. This was quantitative research applied *ex post facto designs*. The population of this study was the second grade students of SMA Bandar Lampung. The researcher used sample of 34 students. The instruments of this research were numbering of students' motivation test and writing test. The collected data were analyzed by using *Pearson Product Moment Correlation* in SPSS 16.0. The result showed that *r* of students' motivation and their writing ability was .921 and .719. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was significant correlation between students' motivation and their writing ability. The higher students' motivation, the higher students' writing ability will be.

**Keywords:** correlation, motivation, writing ability, writing test

## INTRODUCTION

Being successful in learning English is the dominant factor that the English teacher should pay attention to, especially in teaching writing. Writing is the most difficult skill out of the other language skills especially for students in Senior High School. Teaching English which is applied at school is specialized in four skill, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing ability is focused on structure of the text and also the content. The teacher does not really pay attention on how the students can get the new words (vocabulary) or be good at grammatical structure.

Writing ability receives no serious attention because many students think that writing is difficult. There are many factors that might influence the students' quality of writing such as; students' lack of grammar, vocabulary, ideas, and motivation to write. It has been known that it is hard enough to develop an idea into a long paragraph. These factors can cause the students unmotivated to start writing. Motivation is the main problem for the students to start learning the second language especially writing. In other words, factor that might influence students to write is their motivation.

In the other words, writing ability is an important part of communication. Good writing ability allows the students to communicate their message with clarity and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations. Writing is the productive ability in the written mode. It is more complicated than it seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the four skills, even for native speakers of a language. This is because it involves not only a graphic

representation of speech, but also the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way.

Writing is a means to communicate, to convey message, ideas, and feeling in a written form. Raimes (1983: 76) states that writing is a skill in which we express ideas, feeling and thought which is to be arranged in words, sentences and paragraph. Writing is also reinforces the use of sentence's structure and tenses, idiom and vocabulary correctly in order to make the reader get the idea clearly.

Writing is speaking to other on paper or on computer screen. Writing is also an action or a process of discovering and organizing their ideas, putting them on a paper and reshaping and revising them. It goes back and forth we plan a little, put words on paper, stop plan when we want to say next, go back and change a sentence, or change their minds altogether.

Writing, as one of the productive skills, is considered difficult, especially writing in foreign language. When students want to write something they should have a lot of information ideas, and thought in their mind so that they will be able to express them into sentences, paragraphs, and an essay.

According to Tarigan (1985: 5) 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 is an activity that can usefully be prepared for work in other skills of listening, speaking, and reading. These preparations can make it possible for words that have been used receptively to come into productive use. Activities is not easy to

write because writing should be able to produce something new and can give you an idea or ideas to the reader through writing.

The previous line of argument indicated that writing ability dealing mainly with expressing ideas, facts, feeling, experience, and thought in written form. In writing, the aspects include the content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. Those aspects are important to master in order to be able to produce good writing. Not only the aspects above but also motivation is needed if the students want to start writing.

However, many students did not pay attention to the teacher, playing handphone, or leaving the classroom before the class began. But some of them still paid attention to the teacher. Many of students became passive when they were faced with a writing task. This phenomenon influenced the students' writing ability achievement and as a consequence not all senior high school students' scores were good in writing. Based on the information from their English teacher at SMA Al Kautsar Bandar Lampung almost half of the students got score under 80 whereas the minimum mastery criteria was 75. As the result, their average score of writing was low. Their writing achievement was below the expectation.

According to Larrivee (2006: 231), motivation is defined as "emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals". In the classroom, teachers strive to guide students towards goals. This can pose problems when the students' emotional tendencies are against learning and reaching these goals. It is said by Cocks and Watt (2004) that "students with mastery goals are intrinsically motivated to strive to develop competence by learning as much as they can about

a subject, focusing on their development of skill and competence relative to the task". A teacher can alter a child's intrinsic motivation with appropriate and valued academic constructs that the child will perceive as worthwhile. It means that motivation can stimulate students to write in order to improve their quality in evolving a text and it makes them become creative researchers.

Motivation is very important in second language learning. The primary motivation for learning a language is being able to communicate in the target. The students also have to pay attention whether they motivated from outside or inside. As it has been known that there are two types of motivation that can affect the students' willingness in learning English especially in employing writing skill, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsically motivated students are bound to do much better in classroom activities, because they are willing and eager to learn new material. Their learning experience is more meaningful and they go deeper into the subject to fully understand it. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is external factor to the individual and unrelated to the task they are performing. The examples are money, good grades, and other rewards. Extrinsically motivated students may have to be bribed to perform the same tasks.

From those definitions above, the researcher is interested in investigating the correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability.

## METHOD

This research aimed to find the correlation between students' motivation their writing ability. This research was about correlation research. To conduct the research, the researcher used a co-relational design of *ex post facto designs* (Setiyadi, 2006). Here, the researcher administered the tests to know the level of students' motivation in their writing ability. So, there was no treatment or experiment of any kind to subjects. The researcher gave the test about motivation and writing. After that, the data gained from the test which analyzed to see whether students' motivation related to the students' writing ability or not. The researcher used quantitative method to analyze the result of research. This method was used to find the correlation between students' motivation and their writing ability.

In this research there were two variables; dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable was students' motivation and independent variable was students' writing ability. The score showed a data about students' motivation and their writing ability which can be used to identify the correlation between students' motivation and their writing ability. The population of this research was all the students of the second grade of SMA Al Kautsar Bandar Lampung. There were 8 classes of the second grade students that consist of 29 to 35 students for each class. . The students were divided into 2 groups, XI MIA and XI IIS. From those numbers of the students, the researcher chose one group that was XI MIA. Then, the researcher had chose XI MIA 2 through random sampling as a sample for try-out class in order to find the validity and reliability of each tests. After

getting a good test items, by the random sampling technique, the researcher used XI MIA 1 at the SMA Al Kautsar Bandar Lampung as the subject to collect the data.

In this research, the researcher used some instruments for conducting the research. The instruments were test of motivation and test of writing. So, the researcher gave 25 items of motivation test and test writing is in form of developing a paragraph (descriptive text). The test conducted 45 minutes for motivation and 45 minutes for writing.

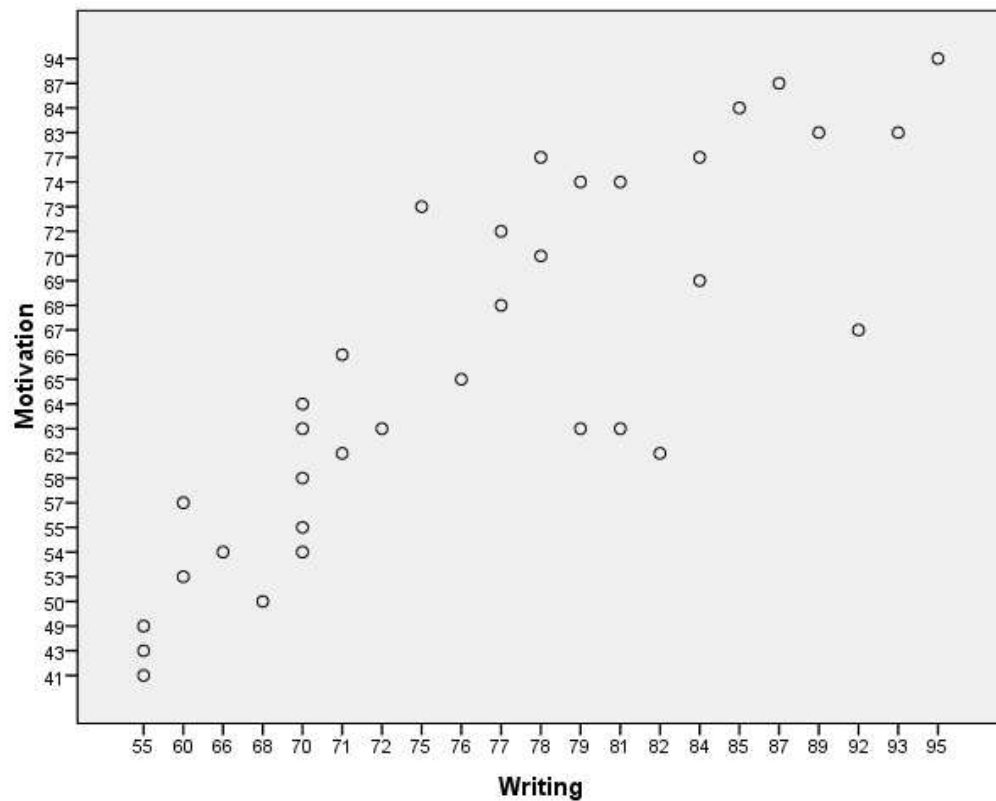
The researcher analyzed the data by using Correlation in SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Science) 16.0. The researcher collected the data by looking at the result of test of students' motivation and writing ability to find out the result of students' motivation in their writing ability. The result of the test was in form of score or interval data. After getting the result, the researcher analyzed the correlation between students' motivation and their writing ability.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **The Correlation between Students' Motivation and Their Writing Ability**

In order to know the coefficient correlation between students' motivation and their reading writing ability, the researcher calculated the data by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in SPSS 16.

Based on the calculation, the researcher found that the coefficient correlation between the students' motivation and their writing skill was 0.873. It meant that the correlation between the students' motivation and their writing skill was high.



The chart above described that there were 10 students who had high motivation and they also got high score in writing test and there were 2 students who had low motivation and they also got low score in writing test. When motivations' bubble risen, so did the writing test line. It meant that both of them correlated. While, the rest of the students who had high motivation, they did not get high score in writing test and vice versa.

Also the result showed  $p$  was 0.000 and it meant that the result was significant because  $p < 0.05$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Sign \* on SPSS calculation meant that correlation was significant at level 0.05 (5%) which described confidence level was 95%. It meant that from 100 probabilities which reject null hypothesis, there were 5 probabilities were wrong and 95 probabilities were right. (Setiyadi, 2006: 97-98). If  $p < 0.05$   $H_0$  is rejected (Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 84). It meant that null



hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) was accepted. The result of this research showed that the students' motivation significant correlates with their writing ability. It indicated that the students' motivation and writing ability cannot separate each other.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The main finding of this research was whether there is significant correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability. Based on the table of correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability, it showed that motivation influenced writing ability. There were three possibilities from the graphic if two variables positively correlated each other. First, when first variable rises, the second variable also rises. Second, when first variable rises, the second variable falls. The third when first variable rises, second variable can be raise and fall. From those tables, it could be seen that the first variable (motivation) rises and the second variable (writing ability) also rises. It means that two variable correlate each other.

Based on the data gained from the result, there were 14 students who had high motivation and they also got high score in writing test and there were 2 students who had low motivation and they also got low score in writing test. In relation to the studies above, it was clear that motivation correlated significantly with writing ability and became one important factor in second language learning. The result of the research which was done by the researcher also showed that there was a significant correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability. By looking at the result the researcher assumed that motivation influenced the

students' writing ability and the students who had higher motivation tended to have better writing ability.

There were two factors that could influence the students' writing ability besides motivation and they were related to one another, they were: internal factor and external factor. The internal factor meant the factor which was came from the writer himself/herself or usually known as personal factor, because the factor has existed inside the writer. This factor dealt with self-motivation and interest.

The external factor had close relationship to the writing ability test and also the teacher. They were related to one another. The students' achievement in writing depended on the level of the difficulty of the text. Thus, it could influence the students' achievement if the text given was not at the right level of the difficulty of the writer. The teacher should have been careful in choosing topic for the text and giving the tasks because they were related to the students' writing ability or the students. However, motivation itself could not be ignored in teaching learning process. Motivation played a role in decision to write. From the analysis of result it showed that motivation was one of factors influencing writing ability improvement.

## **CONCLUSION**

There is significant correlation between the students' motivation and their writing ability. It means that the higher students' motivation level, the higher students' get achievement in their writing ability.

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