

CORRELATION BETWEEN MASTERY OF SIMPLE PAST TENSE AND THE ABILITY IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT AT THE TENTH GRADE

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to find out the correlation between students' mastery of simple past tense and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. The research population was the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. The research sample was XD which consisted of 32 students selected by using cluster random sampling technique. The techniques of data collection were questionnaire and tests. In analyzing the data, the researcher used Pearson's – Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Significance of Coefficient Correlation formula, using 0.05 significant level with 30 (32 – 2) degree of freedom (df). The researcher found that the t counted (3.568) was higher than the t table (2.750). It means that there is a significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past tense and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue.

Keywords: Correlation, Simple Past Tense Mastery, Writing Recount Text.

INTRODUCTION

There are four skills which are taught in the teaching and learning English. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills cannot stand alone. They need language components: grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to support them. Without these language components, those skills will not be perfect. For example in writing, if a student wants to write a text, but she/he does not understand about grammar, she/he will not produce a good text.

Grammar mastery is important in writing a text. Without the correct usage of grammar, the written text will not be understood by readers because in written form we do not have direct interaction with the readers as we usually do in speaking.

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The School Based Curriculum (KTSP) is implemented at SMA Negeri 1 Torue for all subjects. The purpose of the English teaching and learning in the classroom is to develop and to master language components and language skills. Simple past is one of the materials of English lesson that has been taught at the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. The teacher has given some books to them to improve their ability in understanding grammar. The teacher also teaches the students to write many kinds of text such as recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive text, and report text. In this research, the researcher only discussed about recount text.

Recount text is one of the texts that retells us about events, experiences and actions that happens in the past (Djuharie, 2009:171). In general the tense that is often used in recount is past tense form. Azar (1999:27) states, "Simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past". It is clear that we use simple past when someone wants to express action or activity which happens in the past.

There are many problems that the students face in writing a text, especially recount text such as vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Based on the phenomena when the researcher had Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan Terpadu (PPLT/Teaching Practice) at SMA Negeri 1 Torue, the researcher found that the students got difficulties in writing text, especially recount text. Firstly, the students knew or had the ideas on what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into a good sentence. Secondly, they also could not construct a good sentence. Thirdly, they were lack of vocabulary, hence they made mistakes in spelling in their writing. Fourth, they made many grammatical errors in writing. Since the students had grammatical errors, the students could not produce a good text. It can be concluded that students who did not understand grammar would not be able to produce a good text. For example, the students were asked to write a recount text but they did not understand about simple past tense, they surely could not produce a good recount text.

Because of the problem, the researcher was interested in doing this research about the correlation between students' mastery of simple past and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. Referring to the background above, the researcher formulated the research question as follows: *"Is there any significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue?"* The objective of this research was to find out whether there was a significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue or not.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed correlation research design. According to Latief (2013:111), "Correlational research is one of descriptive research designs used to measure the correlationship between two or more continuous variables".

simple past mastery → ability in writing recount text
X → Y

The researcher chose the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue as the population of the research. The population was 288 students. The distribution is in the following table:

Table 1
Research Population

No	Class	Number of Students
1.	X A	32 students
2.	X B	32 students
3.	X C	32 students
4.	X D	32 students
5	X E	32 students
6.	X F	32 students
7	X G	32 students
8	X H	32 students
9	X I	32 students
Total		288 students

The researcher selected sample by using cluster random sampling techniques from the population. In selecting the sample, the researcher followed some steps. Firstly, the researcher prepared 9 pieces of paper for each class. Secondly, the researcher wrote the name of class on them. All pieces of paper were folded and put them in a glass. Next, the researcher picked one of the pieces of paper. The paper taken was XD which became the sample of this research.

Best and Khan (2006:167) state, "Variables are the conditions or characteristics that the experimenter manipulates, controls, or observes". It means that a variable is the fundamental aspect in research which is used by the researcher to manipulate the data of the research. In this research, there are two variables: students' mastery of simple past as variable (X), and ability in writing recount text as variable (Y).

In conducting the research, the researcher used two kinds of instruments. They were questionnaaire and tests. The researcher used the questionnaire to get support information to the data. It consisted of ten (10) questions that related to simple past and

writing recounttext. The result of questionnaire was analyzed by using the formula proposed by Sutomo (1985:123) as follow:

$$P = \frac{F}{n} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = percentage

F = frequency

n = number of students

The researcher used test as the main instruments of this research. Test was used to measure the knowledge of students. The researcher used test to get the objective score. The test were objective test and subjective test. Objective test was completion test (12 items), multiple choice test (10 items), while subjective test was essay writing test (1 item). The information about the test distribution is presented in the following table:

Table 2
The Scoring System of Simple Past Tense Mastery

Type of Test	Number of Items	Score per Item			Maximum Score
		Correct	Almost Correct	Incorrect	
Completion Test	12	2	1	0	24
Multiple Choice	10	2			20

In determing the students' score of objective test, the researcher classified the data into percentage rate. The score analyzedusing the formula by (Sutomo, 1985:123) as follows.

$$Score = \frac{\text{the obtained score}}{\text{the maximum score}} \times 100$$

In scoring subjective test, the researcher used the scoring system which was suggested by Weigle (2002:116) as follows:

Table 3: The Scoring System of Writing

NO	Elements of Writing	Score
1	Organisation	0. No apparent organization of content. 1. Very little organization of organization. Underlying structure not sufficiently controlled. 2. Some organizational skills in evidence, but not adequately controlled. 3. Overall shape and internal pattern clear. Organizational skills adequately controlled.
2	Vocabulary	0. Vocabulary inadequate even for the basic parts of intended communication. 1. Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or repetition. 2. Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution. 3. Almost no inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
3	Grammar	0. Almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate 1. Frequent grammatical inaccuracies 2. Some grammatical inaccuracies 3. Almost no grammatical inaccuracies

The researcher measured the correlation between two variables. To find out that the two variables had a correlation, the researcher used Pearson's Product Moments coefficient of correlation in Sugiyono (2009:183).

The formula is:

$$R_{xy} = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(N(\sum x^2) - (\sum X)^2)(N(\sum Y^2) - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

Where:

- r = product moment correlation
- x = simple past tense
- y = writing
- $\sum X$ = the sum of scores in X distribution
- $\sum Y$ = the sum of scores in Y distribution
- $\sum XY$ = the sum of the product of paired X and Y scores
- $\sum X^2$ = the sum of the squared scores in X distribution
- $\sum Y^2$ = the sum of the squared scores in Y distribution
- N = the number of paired X and Y scores

To interpret the result of the coefficient value of the correlation of two paired variables, the researcher used the crude criterion for evaluating the magnitude of a correlation coefficient by Best and Khan (2006:388) as follows:

Coefficient (<i>r</i>)	Relationship
0.00 – 0.199	negligible
0.20 – 0.399	low
0.40 – 0.599	moderate
0.60 – 0.799	substantial
0.80 – 1.000	high to very high

In testing the significance, the researcher used significance of coefficient correlation formula which was determined by Sugiyono (2009:184) as follows:

$$tr = \frac{r\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

Where:

r = the coefficient correlation

n = the number of sample

Remark = *tr* becomes *t*-counted

The criterion of testing hypothesis are that if the *t*_{counted} is higher than *t*_{table}, it means that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. In other words, there is a significant correlation between the two variables. However, if *t*_{counted} is lower than *t*_{table}, it means the hypothesis is rejected. There is no significant correlation between the two variables.

FINDINGS

The researcher had given questionnaires which consisted of 10 (ten) items to the students. It was used by the researcher to get students' opinions or comments about teaching and learning process which they had done in the class. The results of the questionnaire were used by the researcher as supporting data to support the result of the test.

After the researcher gave the questionnaire, the researcher gave objective test to find out the students' competence in using simple past. The objective test consisted of 12 items completion test and 10 items multiple choice test. All of the students could answer those questions although several students answered incorrect.

Furthermore, the researcher gave subjective test to find out the students' competence in writing recount text. In the subjective test, the students chose one of four topics which were provided or the students used their own topic to be written down.

In order to find out the significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past tense and the students' ability in writing recount text, the researcher presented both of the results in the following table:

Table 5
The Score of Objective Test and Subjective Test

No	Initials	Variables		Squares		Cross Products
		X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
1	AAIN	97.06	66.67	9420.42	4444.44	6470.59
2	ANM	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
3	AH	94.12	66.67	8858.13	4444.44	6274.51
4	ADM	94.12	55.56	8858.13	3086.42	5228.76
5	GSD	94.12	66.67	8858.13	4444.44	6274.51
6	HHNL	55.88	44.44	3122.84	1975.31	2483.66
7	HADP	100.00	66.67	10000.00	4444.44	6666.67
8	ID	100.00	66.67	10000.00	4444.44	8888.89
9	MSN	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8366.01
10	MW	94.12	88.89	8858.13	7901.23	8366.01
11	NLNL	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
12	NP	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
13	NY	100.00	77.78	10000.00	6049.38	7777.78
14	PIK	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
15	PDNK	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
16	RNGA	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
17	RSIB	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
18	RV	91.18	77.78	8313.15	6049.38	7091.50
19	RIM	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
20	SAM	100.00	77.78	10000.00	6049.38	7777.78
21	SSDNL	100.00	88.89	10000.00	7901.23	8888.89
22	SNNM	88.24	44.44	7785.47	1975.31	3921.57
23	SIN	97.06	77.78	9420.42	6049.38	7549.02
24	TBNY	94.12	88.89	8858.13	7901.23	8366.01
25	TNL	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
26	UIM	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
27	WWNM	94.12	77.78	8858.13	6049.38	7320.26
28	WDI	100.00	55.56	10000.00	3086.42	5555.56
29	WIM	88.24	66.67	7785.47	4444.44	5882.35
30	YRNM	100.00	66.67	10000.00	4444.44	6666.67
31	YNK	91.18	77.78	8313.15	6049.38	7091.50
32	YSIK	97.06	77.78	9420.42	6049.38	7549.02
Total		3041.18	2400.00	291020.76	184938.27	229803.76

After gathering all of the data of the objective and the subjective tests, the researcher used Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula to find out the significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past as (X) and the ability in writing recount text as (Y). The formula is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
r_{xy} &= \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{N(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2\}\{N(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2\}}} \\
&= \frac{32\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{N(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2\}\{N(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2\}}} \\
&= \frac{32 (229803.76) - (3041.18)(2400)}{\sqrt{\{32(291020.76) - (3041.18)^2\}\{32 (184938.27) - (2400)^2\}}} \\
&= \frac{7353720.32 - 7298832}{\sqrt{(9312650.24 - 9248775.79)(5918024.64 - 5760000)}} \\
&= \frac{54888.32}{\sqrt{(63874.45)(158024.64)}} \\
&= \frac{54888.32}{\sqrt{10093736966.449}} \\
&= \frac{54888.32}{100467.591} \\
r_{xy} &= 0.546
\end{aligned}$$

The result of the computation above shows that correlation coefficient between students' mastery of simple past as (X) and the ability of the students in writing recount text as (Y) is 0.546. It means that there is positive correlation between simple past mastery and ability in writing recount text because alternative Hypothesis (H_a): $r = 0$. When this result is consulted with standard critical value of Pearson's Product – Moment Correlation (r), this result is categorized substantial.

Furthermore, the researcher determined the degree of freedom (df) as follow:

$$Df = N - 2$$

$$= 32 - 2$$

$$Df = 30$$

After obtaining the value of degree of freedom (df) of 30, the researcher would find out the significance of coefficient correlation by using the formula as follow:

$$\begin{aligned}
tr &= \frac{\sqrt[n]{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}} \\
&= \frac{0.546\sqrt[0.546]{32-2}}{\sqrt{1-(0.546)^2}} \\
&= \frac{0.546\sqrt[0.546]{30}}{\sqrt{1-0.298}} \\
&= \frac{(0.546)(5.478)}{\sqrt{0.702}} \\
&= \frac{2.990}{0.838} \\
tr &= 3.568
\end{aligned}$$

DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to find out whether there was a significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past and the ability in writing recount text. The researcher limited this research on the correct usage of simple past tense and the components of writing, that is, organization, grammar, and vocabulary.

At the first step, the researcher gave the questionnaire on 5th May 2015. The questionnaire consisted of ten (10) questions relating the simple past tense and recount text. From the result of questionnaire, the researcher concludes that most of the students argue that by learning simple past would help them to write down a recount text.

Next, the researcher gave objective relating simple past tense. It consisted of 12 items of completion test and 10 items of multiple choice. Based on the result of the objective, the researcher used the Percentage of Student's Achievement. In the objective test, the researcher found that there was 90.62% students getting scores 91-100 which categorized as excellent. There was 6.25% students getting scores 81-90 which categorized as very good. It can be said that the result of objective test was classified excellent. The researcher also calculated the students' error in simple past tense. The researcher found that there was 53.12% of the students had error in simple past tense. It is proved by looking the students' score, where 17 of 32 students getting correct answer on all objective test items.

After giving objective test, the researcher gave subjective test in order to know the students' ability in writing recount text. It consisted of 1 item relating essay writing test. From the result of the subjective test, it can be seen that there was 28.12% of the students

getting score 81-90 or very good, 37.50% of the students getting 71-80 or good, 25% of students getting scores 61-70 or fair, 3.12% student getting 51-60 or poor, and 6.25% students got scores less than 50 or very poor. From the percentage, the researcher concludes that the students' achievement in the subjective test is classified as good. Good means some students had errors of grammar or word order which do not, however, interfere with comprehension. The researcher calculated the students' error in components of writing relating the research's scope, those are, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. The researcher found that there was 56.25% of the students had error in organization, there was 53.12% of the students had error in vocabulary, and there was 81.25% of the students had error in grammar. Considering these percentage, the researcher comes to the conclusion that most of the students had problem in grammar rather than two components those are organization and vocabulary.

Based on the result of objective and subjective test, it can be seen that the students were easier to answer objective test than subjective test. It happened because in their school, the students was taught deeply about grammar. Therefore, the students' score in objective test was greater than subjective one.

After the researcher gathered both results, objective test and subjective test, by applying Pearson's-Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) formula, the researcher found the coefficient correlation between students' mastery of simple past and students' ability in writing recount text is 0.546. It means there is a positive correlation between both variable X and variable Y because the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): $r = 0$. When this result is consulted with standard critical value of Pearson's Product – Moment Correlation (r), this result is categorized substantial. Best and Khan (2006:379) state "A perfect positive correlation is +1.00. A perfect negative correlation is -1.00. A complete lack of relationship is zero (0)".

Concerning to the result above, the researcher carried on to find out the significance of the coefficient correlation between both the variable X and variable Y. By using the formula of significance of coefficient correlation, the researcher found that the t_r is 3.568 which would become t table. Best and Khan (2006:408) state "The rejection or acceptance of a null hypothesis is based on some level of significant (alpha level) as a criterion".

Furthermore, the researcher used 5% (0.05) significant level in critical value of Student's Distribution (t) with 30 degree of freedom to obtain t table. Then the value of the t table is 2.750 while the value of t counted is 3.568. It means that the t counted is higher than the t table. The researcher concludes that there is a significant correlation between students'

mastery of simple past and ability in writing recount text. The better the students in simple past, the better they will write a recount text. This is highly relevant to what Andrews (2006) stated about grammar and writing, that the effect of grammar teaching on writing development: Grammar teaching to young learners of English is a good thing; that it will improve their written English. From this statement, the researcher concludes that grammar, is one of the language components that support writing, like simple past tense in writing recount text.

The results above are also related to the previous studies. The research was conducted by Ferawati (2007). She found that both variables (vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension) had a significant correlation at the second year students of SMP Negeri 2 Banawa". It means that vocabulary mastery has a strong influence to reading comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on finding as already discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher points out the conclusions. First, there was a positive correlation between students' mastery of simple past tense and the ability in writing recount text of the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. It was proved by the result of correlation coefficient between variable (X) and variable (Y) was 0.568 and Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): $r = 0$. Second, there was a significant correlation between students' mastery of simple past tense and the ability in writing recount text at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Torue. Significant means the t table has big difference from t counted. It was proved by the value of r table at significant level of 5% (0.05) with 30 degree of freedom (df) was 2.750 while the result of t counted was 3.568. It means that t counted is higher than t table. By looking the result with standard critical value of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (r), the researcher found that the result was categorized substantial. It means that simple past tense gives contribution in writing recount text. This is also supported by the content of simple past tense and recount text. Simple past tense is tense that used to explain something that happened in the past and recount text is a text that tells the readers about what happened in the past. From these two explanations, the researcher can draw a conclusion that simple past tense is closely related to recount text.

Some suggestions need to be addressed to the students and the teachers in order to make a better improvement in the future. Firstly, students should study harder. Even though

their simple past test result is excellent, they still need to learn more about grammar. Teacher should give more explanation about tenses relating the kinds of text like simple past and recount text as well as the function in a sentence. They also should motivate, stimulate, and give more chances to the students in teaching learning process in order to make the students get significant improvement in mastering grammar and writing.

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