

CORRELATION BETWEEN PROBLEM FACED IN GRAMMAR AND WRITING ABILITY OF EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

Writing is the most difficult and complicated language skill which is learnt by almost the students in every level of education. Moreover, writing English is an inseparable part of students throughout their academic life. They commit different kinds of errors and mistakes in learning English as a foreign language which are due to poor knowledge with grammar, thus it often appears to be a difficult task for them to write. These problems are very obvious in writing composition or any other essay. Some mistakes are normally made by students when they do not understand well about the English grammar. Commonly, many of the students make grammar mistakes in their English language learning especially in productive skill such as writing. Problems in foreign language learning especially in English are unavoidable. They are difficult enough to be avoided. Therefore, this research analyzed students' problems in grammar that could be seen from their writing to see the correlation of grammar toward writing ability. It was important to do because the analysis could give some advantages for both students and lecturers as language teaching achievement. As the result, most of EFL University students had problem in grammar. They made error in using kind of tenses. The problem could be seen from their writing which used wrong verb in the sentences. And, it made their writing incorrect. Moreover, it proved that there was a significance correlation between problem faced in grammar and writing ability of EFL university students.

Key Words: *Language learning, English, Grammar,*

A. INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of communication that is used to convey feelings, ideas, and information from one person to another. It is used to

communicate both in spoken and written form. All of the skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, are to be improved in the process of teaching and learning English. That aim cannot be

successfully accomplished if the language teaching does not think about the language components such as grammatical structure, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation. Therefore, Grammar needs to be mastered by the students since it is the basic rule of language.

Grammar has been identified in different ways depending on the linguistic theory that sets the definition, either traditional, structural, transformational or cognitive theory of linguistic. According to Chowdhury, the role of Grammar in the acquisition process of the English language has been a debatable issue for the linguists, researchers and the classroom lecturers over a long period of time. Some lecturers emphasize on teaching grammar so much and to such an extent that they appear slavishly loyal to it. Others seem to ignore it so vehemently that they consider it a negative influence in the ESL or EFL learners' overall production of the integrated skills of the English language (Chowdhury, 2014).

Due to significant number of mistakes in basic grammar, good ideas, if any, are not often appreciated. Furthermore, English lecturers are also traditionally preoccupied mostly with dominant sense of grammatical accuracy rather than development of ideas. In this context, it is crucial to see what level of problem students have at their undergraduate level after many years of study in English language and more importantly, what implications it may have for teacher development to guide learners to overcome their problems in writing related to grammar.

Related to the explanation above, composition is one kind of written form. Writing composition is a task which involves the students in manipulating words in grammatically correct sentences and in linking those sentences

to form a piece of continuous writing which successfully communicate the writer thoughts and ideas on certain topic (Heaton, 1990). It means that, in writing composition, we are aware of our goal to express our idea briefly and base on the correct grammar or the main purpose of composition is to express ideas clearly with the correct grammar in the form of message written language and it must be understood by the readers so that it does not make them confused. Besides that, writing is not often treated as a skill to be developed through process. Foreign language learners, in general, memorize answers collected from popular notebooks. But in real life situations, many of them are unable to write correct sentences of their own. Despite getting expected grades, they cannot write confidently and correctly.

In another side, a large number of English lecturers usually follow the same procedures in their lessons. In traditional learning class, the teacher often presents a model passage to the learners, makes pre-writing activities and engage the students in producing the text. This study is later evaluated by the teacher, who provides feedback in various ways by correcting their writings. Once the learners get their writings back, the most challenging task for the teacher is to have the learner analyze this feedback, and to make it a positive and useful learning. Some learners find rewriting their work boring, so the teacher of English should be creative and think about possibilities to tackle this problem, then learners can achieve the course objectives. Furthermore the teacher should raise the awareness of the learners about their problems, so that they not make them again in future.

Problems in foreign language learning especially in English are unavoidable. They are difficult enough to be avoided. It is important to analyze

students' problems because the analysis can give some advantages for both students and lecturers. For students, problem faced analysis is needed to show them what aspect in grammar is difficult, to show the errors made by the students, to know the source or the cause of the problem and how the students can learn from their mistakes in order that they not make some errors repeatedly. And for lecturers, it is required to evaluate themselves whether they are successful or not in teaching English grammar.

The problem of grammar mastery is also faced by students in University. Based on the data of students' grammar score, the researcher concludes that the students' grammar mastery is still poor. It means that most of students get difficulty to master grammar and the concerning teacher confirms that tenses are the most difficult one. It is not easy for them to remember the patterns of the tenses and apply them in both written and spoken language.

Teaching and Learning Grammar

Grammar or structure is generally thought to be a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level. Grammar explains how the language should be structured, using various categories. Besides that, grammar is one important element, as a part of language, and there is no language without structure. To know what structure is, some definitions of structures are put forward here. Halliday (1994: 6) states that structure is, of course, a unifying relation.

Learning structure or grammar is necessary because structure is the main capital and an important element in language, and students should master it. Structure is one of the components of language besides pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary. Structure is an essential

mean in conducting communication. It is useless studying English without learning structure, because there be miscommunication and the language be acceptable if the structure is correct. Richards stresses that structure is still important to be taught in teaching English, he furthermore says that now teaching structure has controversial issues in teaching English, but in recent years, grammar teaching has regained its rightful place in language curriculum (Richards, 2008). People now agree that grammar is too important to be ignored, and that without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development be severely constrained. Swan in the Richards suggests that the teaching of grammar should be determined by the needs aims in learning English.

Moreover, Azar points out that grammar is needed for comprehension in the nature of a language. She states that if there was no grammar in language, we would have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and gestures to convey meanings. She notes that students who experience grammar instruction usually have an advantage over the students who lack sufficient grammatical knowledge. To support this belief, in the study of generation university students in the United States, Azar found that the students who had poor grammatical knowledge had difficulties in academic writing even though their speaking and listening skills were described as fluent. They did not understand how a sentence was formed and how sentences were related to one another in a paragraph. On the contrary, the students with good grammatical knowledge understood meanings behind the sentences with more ease. Only a short explanation was enough for them to understand the differences in meanings between “-ing” and “-ed” adjectives as in the sentences

“I was really bored” and “I was really boring”(Azar, 2007).

Based on the description above, teaching grammar is still important in teaching and learning process, and it has regained rightful place in language curriculum. Structure is an important element in language. It is an essential mean of conducting communication. It is useless studying English language without learning structure. The language will be acceptable if the structure is correct.

Teaching and Learning Writing

Writing is one of the main language skills. It plays a major role in expressing one's ideas, thoughts, opinions, and attitudes. Through writing, people are capable of sharing ideas, feelings, persuading and convincing others. It is supported by Hasibuan (2013:1), writing is a productive language skill. By writing, someone can express his or her through, ideas, and feelings. Then, it provides the information for his or her readers.

People may write for personal enjoyment or for some other purposes. They may address an audience of one person or more persons. Besides that, there are many different styles of writing, from formal to informal. There are many reasons to include writing in a second or foreign language syllabus. One of the important reason is that writing helps learners to learn. It helps them have a chance to adventure with the language, to go beyond what they have learned. Moreover, a good deal of writing in the English language classroom is undertaken as an aid to learning; for example, to consolidate the learning of new structures or vocabulary or to help students remember new items of language.

Related to explanation above, it can be said that writing is a social act. Even when writers are English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in a language classroom context, their texts always reflect their ability to solve a rhetoric problem, and their awareness of their own communicate goals, of the reader, and of the writing context. an essential part in our global society. Let us imagine how this world is without writing. It is begun from a letter – word – phrase – clause – sentence – paragraph – text. Through writing, someone can learn a lot of things from the simplest one such as how to make glass of coffee milk until how this earth is formed, for example. In short, writing plays a significant role in our life. It means that, being a capable person in writing is very important.

Alfaki explains that writing allows students to see their progress and get feedback from the teacher, and also allows lecturers to monitor students and diagnose problems encountered. This shows that writing plays a predominant role in language learning. However, compared to speech, effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information; a high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and a careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and sentence structures to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers (Alfaki, 2015).

Al-Khasawneh also explains that nowadays, English plays an important role in education and students are expected to communicate effectively in institutions where English is the medium of instruction. Learners face the task of mastering content area in subjects such

as mathematics, social studies, science, and business which are taught in the target language (English). In such cases, teaching and learning of English can help the students to deal successfully with their academic demands and to perform successfully in their disciplines and professional contexts (Al-Khasawneh, 2010)

In the process of writing, Oshima explains that there are roughly four steps. In the first, create ideas. In the second step, organize the idea. In the third step, write rough draft. And in the final step, editing and making revisions (Oshima, Alice & Houge, 2007). It can be said that writing is a kind of thinking process. The close relationship between writing and thinking process makes writing as a valuable part of any language course. With regard to the students, writing can help them because (1) they are encouraged to the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary they have learnt; (2) they are dealing with written language, beyond what they have learnt to speak; and (3) they are involved in the effort of expressing ideas, and the constant use of eyes and brain.

In another side, students with writing problems may have difficulties in one or more aspects of writing skill such as proper use of grammar, conventions, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and some of the basic and initiating aspects of writing. It is also an unpleasant piece of work for both lecturers and learners in ESL or EFL classes. Moreover, writing has always been a difficult task for individuals especially for ELT practitioners. Farooq adds difficulties or problems are created because of a wrong pedagogic approach selected by lecturers, students face difficulties in writing English language, due to a number of factors involved in the act of communication. The English

language itself has a lot of irregularities and idiosyncrasies which create a myriad of difficulties in writing especially for second language learners. An example is English spellings. A word that is incorrectly spelled is not only a deviation from the standard, but adversely affects the intended meaning (Farooq & Uzair-ul-hassan, 2012).

Oshima explains that a paragraph is a group of related statements that a writer develops about subject. The first sentence states the specific point, or idea of the topic. The rest of the sentences in the paragraph support that point. Besides that, he also explains that a good paragraph has some important elements, they are unity and coherence (Oshima, Alice & Houge, 2007).

a. Unity

A paragraph is unity if it discusses one main idea. The main idea is the central thought of the paragraph which is commonly expressed in a topic sentence. The position of the topic sentence may be at the beginning or the end or in the middle of the paragraph. Sometimes, it is implied or it is not directly stated. It could be in the researcher's mind but it is not written down. It can be concluded that in writing a paragraph we should have a single topic and a main idea that holds the sentences together.

b. Coherence

Coherence means that a paragraph is easy to read and understand because the supporting sentences are in logical order and the idea is connected by the use of appropriate transition signals. In order to have coherence in writing, the movement from one sentence to the next (and in longer essay, from one paragraph to the next) must be logical and smoothly. Furthermore, a paragraph

use transition signals to show how one idea is related to the next. The second way to achieve coherence is to arrange the sentences in logical order. In a paragraph, a writer arranges the details in a logical relationship in order that the readers can understand the text easily.

Hypothesis

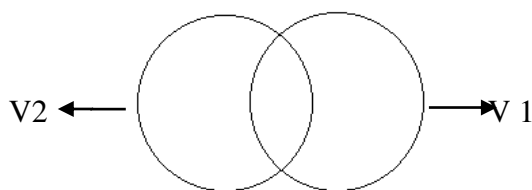
Ha: There is a significance correlation between problem faced in grammar and writing ability of EFL university students.

Ho: There is no significance correlation problem faced in grammar and writing ability of EFL university students.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was correlational research in which the researcher wanted to find out whether there was significant correlational between problem faced in grammar and writing ability of EFL university students. Sukardi (2012: 167) shows how the association or the correlation of two variable of them in a Venn's diagram below:

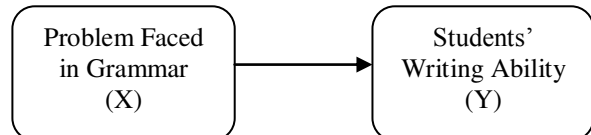
Diagram 1. Association Degree of Two Variables



Here, in this research was not an experimental research because there was no teaching technique used to prove the students' ability in writing or grammar based on the certain teaching approach that was practiced toward a group of students. This was in line with Sugiono who said that "in experimental research has a treatment, whereas a naturalistic

research (correlational studies) has no treatment (Sugiyono, 2010).

There were two variables in this research, the first was problem faced in grammar which was symbolized by X and the second variable was students' writing which was symbolized by Y. The design of the research was pictured by following diagram:



Besides that, the population of this research were students who had finished learning grammar and writing in the English Department students of Putera Batam University.

This research used a writing task to collect the data. The students were asked to write an essay in one hour (60 minutes). To make sure the students understand the instruction of task or not, the researchers tried the task to the group out of the samples. It was done to let us know weather the students understood the instruction or not and weather the time allocation was sufficient or not.

To determine the validity of the test, the researchers used the content validity. A test was valid if it measures what it was supposed to be measured. Arikunto states that one of the types of test is validity (content validity) (Arikunto, 2010: 94). It meant that test was constructed based on the curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials. To minimize subjectivity, the researchers asked two assessors to analyze student's writing test.

Table 1. Students' Writing Ability Classification

| Test Score | Grade |
|------------|--------------|
| 90 - 100 | Very good |
| 80 - 89 | Good |
| 70 - 79 | Satisfactory |
| 60 - 69 | Poor |
| < 60 | Failed |

(Arikunto, 2010: 255)

After gaining and collecting the data, the researchers moved to the next step that was analyzing the data. In this case, analyzing the data, the researchers used product moment correlation coefficients to find out the correlation between problems faced in grammar and students' writing ability, the researcher used following formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where:

N : Number of students

$\sum X$: Total of X

$\sum Y$: Total of Y

$\sum X^2$: Total of X²

$\sum Y^2$: Total of Y²

Afterward, after the result of computation was obtained, researchers tried to determine whether there was a correlation between two variables or not. If there was a correlation, it was significant or not. To determine whether or not the correlation was significant, the researchers compared the value *robs* (correlation coefficient) with *rtable*. The level of significance would be 0.05. If the *robs* was greater than *rtable*, it means that the correlation coefficient was statistically significant and the null hypothesis (Ho) can be rejected, and so alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted.

In addition, to investigate the strength of the correlation, the *r* value

was also consulted to the table of *r* coefficient below:

Table 2. Degree of Coefficient Correlation

| Score | Interpretation |
|---------------|----------------|
| 0.800 – 1.00 | Very High |
| 0.600 – 0.800 | High |
| 0.400 – 0.600 | Moderate |
| 0.200 – 0.400 | Low |
| 0.00 – 0.200 | Very Low |

(Arikunto, 2010: 147)

C. DISCUSSION

Correlation between Problem Faced in Grammar and Writing Ability of EFL University Students.

The analysis of the data contains the categorizations of grammatical errors based on the theory of Krashen (1982) where the grammatical errors are categorized as verb form, preposition, article, plurality, tense, pronoun, question and word order. Analysis on the fundamental reasons why those kinds of grammatical errors occur in the writing while the participants of this research are expected to produce accurate outputs, since they have good proficiency of grammar, it is presented after identifying the most request occurrence to provide a rich understanding of grammatical errors. The categorization shown in Table. 3 is frequencies of grammatical errors made by the participants and Table 4. is students' writing ability can be seen as below.

Table 3. Frequency of Grammatical Error

| Type of Error | Frequency of Students | % |
|---------------|-----------------------|----|
| Tense | 40 | 80 |
| Plurality | 28 | 56 |
| Article | 25 | 50 |
| Verb Form | 20 | 40 |
| Pronoun | 15 | 30 |

| | | |
|-------------|----|----|
| Preposition | 27 | 54 |
| Conjunction | 18 | 36 |
| Word Order | 22 | 44 |

Table 4. Students' Writing Ability

| Students | Writing Score | Grade |
|----------|---------------|--------------|
| 1 | 90 | Very good |
| 2 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 3 | 65 | Poor |
| 4 | 64 | Poor |
| 5 | 80 | Good |
| 6 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 7 | 65 | Poor |
| 8 | 75 | Satisfactory |
| 9 | 90 | Very good |
| 10 | 65 | Poor |
| 11 | 55 | Failed |
| 12 | 85 | Good |
| 13 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 14 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 15 | 50 | Failed |
| 16 | 45 | Failed |
| 17 | 50 | Failed |
| 18 | 45 | Failed |
| 19 | 55 | Failed |
| 20 | 57 | Failed |
| 21 | 60 | Poor |
| 22 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 23 | 75 | Satisfactory |
| 24 | 60 | Poor |
| 25 | 55 | Failed |
| 26 | 80 | Good |
| 27 | 55 | Failed |
| 28 | 45 | Failed |
| 29 | 80 | Good |
| 30 | 76 | Satisfactory |
| 31 | 79 | Satisfactory |
| 32 | 82 | Good |
| 33 | 50 | Failed |
| 34 | 47 | Failed |
| 35 | 75 | Satisfactory |
| 36 | 60 | Poor |

| | | |
|----|----|--------------|
| 37 | 62 | Poor |
| 38 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 39 | 72 | Satisfactory |
| 40 | 87 | Good |
| 41 | 59 | Failed |
| 42 | 48 | Failed |
| 43 | 90 | Very good |
| 44 | 70 | Satisfactory |
| 45 | 77 | Satisfactory |
| 46 | 87 | Good |
| 47 | 56 | Failed |
| 48 | 54 | Failed |
| 49 | 45 | Failed |
| 50 | 81 | Good |

In order to find out a good arrangement, a statistic formula was applied to observe correlation between problem faced in grammar and writing ability. The analyzed of the correlation for both variables as follow:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Table 5. Correlation between Problem Faced in Grammar and Writing Ability of EFL University Students.

| STUDENTS | X | Y | X ² | Y ² | XY |
|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | 75 | 90 | 5625 | 8100 | 6750 |
| 2 | 63 | 70 | 3969 | 4900 | 4410 |
| 3 | 50 | 65 | 2500 | 4225 | 3250 |
| 4 | 50 | 64 | 2500 | 4096 | 3200 |
| 5 | 75 | 80 | 5625 | 6400 | 6000 |
| 6 | 63 | 70 | 3969 | 4900 | 4410 |
| 7 | 25 | 65 | 625 | 4225 | 1625 |
| 8 | 50 | 75 | 2500 | 5625 | 3750 |
| 9 | 88 | 90 | 7744 | 8100 | 7920 |
| 10 | 38 | 65 | 1444 | 4225 | 2470 |
| 11 | 25 | 55 | 625 | 3025 | 1375 |
| 12 | 75 | 85 | 5625 | 7225 | 6375 |
| 13 | 75 | 70 | 5625 | 4900 | 5250 |
| 14 | 63 | 70 | 3969 | 4900 | 4410 |
| 15 | 38 | 50 | 1444 | 2500 | 1900 |
| 16 | 25 | 45 | 625 | 2025 | 1125 |
| 17 | 38 | 50 | 1444 | 2500 | 1900 |
| 18 | 38 | 45 | 1444 | 2025 | 1710 |
| 19 | 38 | 55 | 1444 | 3025 | 2090 |
| 20 | 38 | 57 | 1444 | 3249 | 2166 |
| 21 | 50 | 60 | 2500 | 3600 | 3000 |
| 22 | 63 | 70 | 3969 | 4900 | 4410 |
| 23 | 75 | 75 | 5625 | 5625 | 5625 |
| 24 | 25 | 60 | 625 | 3600 | 1500 |
| 25 | 25 | 55 | 625 | 3025 | 1375 |
| 26 | 75 | 80 | 5625 | 6400 | 6000 |
| 27 | 13 | 55 | 169 | 3025 | 715 |
| 28 | 13 | 45 | 169 | 2025 | 585 |
| 29 | 75 | 80 | 5625 | 6400 | 6000 |
| 30 | 63 | 76 | 3969 | 5776 | 4788 |
| 31 | 75 | 79 | 5625 | 6241 | 5925 |
| 32 | 63 | 82 | 3969 | 6724 | 5166 |
| 33 | 25 | 50 | 625 | 2500 | 1250 |
| 34 | 25 | 47 | 625 | 2209 | 1175 |
| 35 | 50 | 75 | 2500 | 5625 | 3750 |
| 36 | 50 | 60 | 2500 | 3600 | 3000 |
| 37 | 50 | 62 | 2500 | 3844 | 3100 |
| 38 | 63 | 70 | 3969 | 4900 | 4410 |
| 39 | 75 | 72 | 5625 | 5184 | 5400 |
| 40 | 88 | 87 | 7744 | 7569 | 7656 |
| 41 | 38 | 59 | 1444 | 3481 | 2242 |
| 42 | 13 | 48 | 169 | 2304 | 624 |
| 43 | 75 | 90 | 5625 | 8100 | 6750 |
| 44 | 75 | 70 | 5625 | 4900 | 5250 |
| 45 | 50 | 77 | 2500 | 5929 | 3850 |
| 46 | 75 | 87 | 5625 | 7569 | 6525 |
| 47 | 25 | 56 | 625 | 3136 | 1400 |
| 48 | 65 | 54 | 4225 | 2916 | 3510 |
| 49 | 25 | 45 | 625 | 2025 | 1125 |
| 50 | 75 | 81 | 5625 | 6561 | 6075 |
| SUM | X = 2587 | Y = 3323 | X ² = 156861 | Y ² = 229863 | XY = 184267 |

$$\begin{aligned}
 r_{xy} &= \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}} \\
 &= \frac{50(184267) - (2587)(3323)}{\sqrt{\{50(156861) - (2587)^2\}\{50(229863) - (3323)^2\}}} \\
 &= \frac{9213350 - 8596601}{\sqrt{\{7843050 - 6692569\}\{11493150 - 11042329\}}} \\
 &= \frac{616749}{\sqrt{\{1150481\}\{450821\}}} \\
 &= \frac{616749}{518660994901} \\
 &= \frac{616749}{720181,2237} \\
 &= \mathbf{0.856}
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation of correlation for both variables, it can be interpreted that there was a very strong or very high correlation between problem faced in grammar and students' writing ability. To be detail, it can be seen in the table below.

Table 6. Interpretation of Correlation

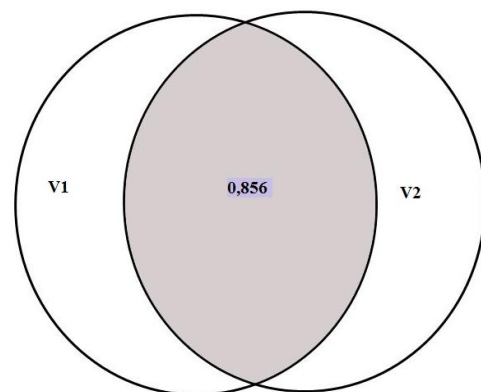
| Score R_{xy} | Interpretation |
|----------------|---|
| 0,800 – 1,00 | There is a very strong or very high correlation between X variable and Y variable |
| 0,600 – 0,800 | There is strong or high correlation between X variable and Y variable |
| 0,400 – 0,600 | There is an enough or moderate correlation between X variable and Y variable |
| 0,200 – 0,400 | There is a weak or low correlation between X variable and Y variable |
| 0,00 – 0,200 | There is correlation between X variable and |

Y variable, but it is very weak or very low. So, the correlation is rejected. In other words, there is no correlation between X variable and Y variable

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing or Correlation

| Statistic Calculation | | Result |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|
| R_{xy} | $R_{table} (5\%)$ | $r_{xy} > r_{table}$ |
| 0.856 | 0.279 | $H_0 = \text{rejected}$ $H_a = \text{accepted}$ |

The analysis showed that the r-calculation is 0.856. It meant that there was a positive correlation between problem faced in grammar and students' writing ability. Because the correlation between problems faced in grammar and students' writing ability was significance where $r_{xy} > r_{table}$ and it meant that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. To know the significance of variable X to variable Y, the r-calculation should be compared with r-table with the number of sample 50 students and the level of significance 5% (0.05), which is 0.279. It also can be drawn on the Venn's diagram below:



Where:

V1 = Problem faced in grammar

V2 = students' writing ability

Related to those findings above, it can be analyzed that there were many parts where the participants produced grammatical errors in their written production. They seemed having difficulties in considering their written. It was assumed that when the participants were required to write a paragraph without any preparations, they lost their monitoring system and control in the grammatical accuracy. The analysis of the data contains the categorizations of grammatical errors based on the theory of Krashen (1982) where the grammatical errors are categorized as verb form, preposition, article, plurality, tense, pronoun, question and word order. Analysis on the fundamental reasons why those kinds of grammatical errors occurred in the writing while the participants of this research were expected to produce accurate outputs, since they had good proficiency of grammar, it was presented after identifying the most frequent occurrence to provide a rich understanding of grammatical errors.

Moreover, the problems above might occur in language learners' productions while their process of acquiring a new language or second/foreign language the errors were mostly influenced by their mother tongue/ L1. From the error categories, it could be said that those errors were affected by the Indonesian grammar which all the participants had already acquired since they started to learn Bahasa. In Indonesian grammar, there were no different tenses in different ranges of time. In order to express idea in different time frame, Indonesian needs to add time signals, such as "*yesterday*", "*tomorrow*", "*this morning*". These time signals were very common for Indonesian learners. That kind of difference could be a serious problem for Indonesians who learn

English as foreign language. That was why, most of the participants, even when they already had a very good proficiency of English grammar, they still had difficulties when they had to construct and combine any kinds of English outputs with combination of correct tenses into written production.

Based on the analysis, another influence of Indonesian grammar appeared in the plurality form. In Indonesian language, the term of plurality was formed by repeating the word twice if to emphasize that the word was in plural. Unlike Indonesian, in English, there is a big difference relating to variable nouns. English have both a plural and a singular form which differ from each other. The different term between Indonesian and English to indicate plurality might lead to problem in students' understanding. The last one is article category. Putting *a*, *an*, or *the* in front of a noun can be very problematic for the participants since they have to think about the condition of the noun whether it is a definite or indefinite noun.

Related to the explanation above, it could be said that students with high proficiency of English grammar still have problems and difficulties in some categories of grammatical errors. A description and examination of the participants' written production indicated that even though the participants were considered as University students who already known and studied about grammar, they still had problems with grammar when they produced written productions. Although they had been taught about it before, they still made errors when making grammatical correct sentences. It could be because, in Bahasa Indonesia, it does not have the verb conjunctions. Furthermore, there is no time signals in expressing ideas in different time frame.

They were unfamiliar to those and because English is still foreign for them. Those are the possible causes of their errors.

Moreover, the basic reason of the participants produced errors in tenses and plurality categories was also revealed in participant's written production. It seemed like participants had difficulties in controlling the tenses during the writing. The totally different structure of the language between Indonesian language and English became a constraint in their tense accuracy. Therefore, it can be concluded that mastering English grammar influenced students' writing ability.

D. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis of this research that was the correlation between problem faced in grammar and students' writing ability, the researcher had found some conclusion. Firstly, more than 50% students had problem in grammar. Secondly, there were 10 or 20% students who got grades above 80, where it was classified into good and very good score. Thirdly, the data calculation result using Pearson Product Moment coefficient correlation shows that there was a very high correlation between them. It is proven by the coefficient correlation is 0.856, r_{xy} was greater than r_{table} ($0.856 > 0.279$) and the correlation was interpreted as very high correlation. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. Therefore, the conclusion shows that students' problem in grammar give influence or correlate to students' writing ability.

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