

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' GRAMMAR MASTERY AND NEWS WRITING ABILITY

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to find out the correlation between students' grammar mastery and News writing ability of the fourth semester students of English Language Education at Faculty of Teachers' and Training Universitas Islam Riau. This research used correlation research design. The research sample was 4C Class which consisted of 26 students which selected by using cluster sampling technique. Technique of data collection was grammar and news writing tests. In analysing the data, the researcher applied Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Significance of Coefficient Correlation formula. The result of calculating correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in News writing was $r = 0.874$. It means that there is a significant correlation between students' mastery of grammar and News writing ability of the fourth semester students of English Language Education at Faculty of Teachers' and Training Universitas Islam Riau.

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui hubungan antara penguasaan tata bahasa dan kemampuan menulis berita siswa semester empat Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Islam Riau. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian korelasi. Sampel penelitian adalah Kelas 4C yang terdiri dari 26 siswa yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik cluster sampling. Teknik pengumpulan data adalah tes tata bahasa dan penulisan berita. Dalam menganalisis data, peneliti menerapkan Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefisien dan Significance of Coefficient Correlation formula. Hasil penghitungan korelasi antara penguasaan tata bahasa siswa dan prestasi mereka dalam menulis berita adalah $r = 0,874$. Artinya ada korelasi yang signifikan antara penguasaan siswa tentang tata bahasa dan kemampuan menulis berita dari mahasiswa semester empat Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Islam Riau.

Key Words: Correlation, Grammar Mastery, News Writing Ability

INTRODUCTION

Language is system of symbols and rules that enable people to communicate (Keane & Eysenck, 2015). The symbols used in language are words, either written or spoken. Based on Halliday in Kumaravadivelu (2006) language communication is the product or the result of the process of interplay between the ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions of language. Through this interplay, the meaning potential of language is realized. Nowadays, English has become an international language where it has been used as a means of communication among speakers of other language (Richards, 2002). It is in line with Wahyuni (2018) who states that Indonesia has published English as one of the subjects that began to be taught since elementary school up to university. That is, English has become one of the many lessons that teachers teach, and are expected to produce or acquire skilled learners in English to face the challenges of the globalization era.

In learning English, we must learn four skills to achieve integrated language skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing as one of communication skills is a means of communication that must consciously learn because no one learns to write automatically (Muhsin, 2015). He states that people cannot write even a single letter of the alphabet without a conscious effort of mind and hand, and to get beyond the single letter we must be shown how to form words, how to put words together into sentences, and how to punctuate those sentences.

Besides the language skills, students also learn about language components. Language components are elements of language consisting of phonology, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Meanwhile, language skills are cognitive skills combining knowledge and understanding with practice in language use. Language skills and language components cannot be separated. Both of them are interrelated each other because we can find language components in language skills (Andini et al., 2018). In this research, grammar mastery is as language component while writing ability is as language skill.

In addition, grammar plays important rules in order to form words into sentences correctly. Grammar is the structure and meaning system of language, because the features of a language, such as sounds, words, formation and arrangement of words. Harmer (2001) stated that grammar is as a way of people to transform words formation. All languages have grammar, and each languages have its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know its grammar system (Shen, 2012). It is illustrated that grammar plays a very important role in language learning.

Students who are the native speakers of English have already known about English grammar and how to use it properly. Contrast with the students in Indonesia, the most students have not yet already known English grammar and how to use it. English grammar sometimes makes the students of Indonesia are confused because it is different from the grammar of their mother tongue. Considering that, the students need to learn about English grammar and also to learn how to transfer their knowledge about grammatical concept from spoken to written language.

As stated by Wati and Wahyuni (2018), in interpreting the idea into a message that means in the form of written language, it takes a larger vocabulary and a better understanding of grammar. Students will not be able to express what is in their minds without knowing the words that will represent their ideas and without knowing what rules are used in constructing sentences. In order to arrange words into sentences, one must better understand grammar.

Moreover Meyers (2005: 2) states that writing is a way to produce language you do naturally when you speak. Writing is much more than the simple mechanics of getting the words down; it also involves being creative, spelling, grammar, punctuation, choice of appropriate word, sentence linking, and text construction and for older children, having idea about content and the ability to be self-critical and to edit their own work. Thus, with writing we can revealed and develop not only the structure of the sentence and vocabulary in use, but also the ideas, thinking, and our feeling about a meaning.

On the other word, writing is considered the most difficult to learn than others, because in writing involves many components that must be understood. When students write something they should pay attention to grammar, word or phrase that is in use. Writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements (Heaton, 1988).

In short, it can be concluded that writing is a process of creativity of thoughts, ideas, and feelings expressed in writing language with the goal of certain. Because writing as one of the four skills formed as part of the syllabus in the teaching of English in Faculty of Teachers and Training Universitas Islam Riau, the writer tried to connect both of them, especially in terms of writing news. The writer also wanted to determine the level of students' grammar mastery and writing news ability.

According to Gower (1995), writing involves many different aspects, they are:

1. Handwriting

Handwriting may seem strange to worry about handwriting when so much communication takes place electronically, in emails or by using words

processing software. Yet there are still many occasions, even for the most computer– literate, when we have to write by hand. Many language exams are still taken by candidates using pens and pencils, and we generally write notes, postcard, memos, journals, etc. in handwriting (Harmer, 2007).

2. Spelling

One of reasons that spelling is difficult for students of English is that correspondence between the sound of a word and the way it is spelt is not always obvious. A single sound may have many different spellings and the same spelling may have many different sounds (Harmer, 2007).

3. Punctuation

The conventions of English capital letters and punctuation are not universal and might have to be taught.

4. Sentence Constructions

The construction of sentences are grammatically correct using the correct word order.

5. Organizing a text and Paragraphing

It is dividing the information into paragraphs when starting a new paragraph. It is also ordering the paragraphs to present a logical argument, tell a story, etc.

6. Text Cohesion.

Text cohesion is the appropriate use of linking words and phrases. It makes the organization of the text clear for the reader.

7. Register/Style

Using language (structures and vocabulary) is appropriate with the formality and style. You are going to notice that with many of the skills emphasize accuracy controlled. It guides practice activities that is able to help improving the accuracy. However, it is also important to see writing and speaking. It happens as the meaning of communication is a way of getting ideas across, encouraging fluency and being communicative impact.

Furthermore Harmer (2004) mention some stages in writing, the steps are:

1. Planning

In the planning phrase, there are some things that should be considered by writers. They are purpose of writing, audience and content structure or sequence the facts, ideas, or arguments included of their writing.

2. Drafting

It is able to refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. The first go at a text is often done on the assumption that it is going to be amended later. As the writing process proceeds into editing, a number of drafts is able to be produced on the way to the final version.

3. Editing (reflecting and revising)

Reflecting and revising are often helped by other readers (or editors) who comment and make suggestions. Another reader's reaction to a piece of writing is going to help the author making an appropriate revision.

4. Final Draft

The final draft is the last product. This result is able to be very different from the first draft that was made. It happens because it has undergone many changes. But this paper is now ready to be served on the desired audience.

Writing is never a one-step action. It is an ongoing creative act. When beginning to write something, it has already been thinking about what to say and how to say it. Then after finishing the writing, it should be read over what the writer has written. Then, he makes changes for some corrections. You write and revise and write and revise again until you are satisfied that your writing express exactly what you want to say (Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

In principle, the purpose of writing is to make expression of ideas and to convey the message to the reader. So, the ideas themselves should arguably be seen as the most important aspect of the writing. On the other hand, the writer also needs paying some attention in formal aspects. There are neat handwriting and correcting spelling and punctuation.

Oshima and Hogue (2007: 16) claim that the process of writing has roughly four steps. There are:

1. Prewriting

Prewriting is a way to get some ideas. In this step, you choose a topic and collect ideas to explain the topic.

2. Organizing

It means organizing the ideas into a simple outline. The writer writes a sentence that named the topic and tell the main idea. Below the first sentence, he lists the two main ideas and any other words and phrases from the list that give more information about the main ideas.

3. Draft

This step is writing a rough draft. The writer should use the outline as guidance. Then, he writes rough draft as quickly as he can without stopping to think about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Just getting the more ideas down on the paper. It is probably going to see many errors in the rough draft. This is perfectly usual and acceptable- after all. This is just a rough draft. It is able to fix the errors later.

4. Revising and Editing

a. Revision: revising the own written piece is easy to understand and fun to read. It is able to cut words, sentences, or even paragraphs. It is also

able to add others. Sometimes, it needs to rearrange sentences and paragraphs. Sometimes, it needs to rewrite sentences and paragraphs.

- b. Polishing: Polishing puts the final gloss on the work. When polishing, the writer should check the style, spelling, and punctuation. It is able to change any little thing that feels smooth out the writing.

METHOD

This research was conducted at English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University Islam Riau. It was done on March 2018 to June 2018. Furthermore, this researcher employed correlation research design. (Best & Khan, 2006) state Correlation is the relationship between two or more paired variables or two or more sets of data. The research was analyzed by using product moment correlation. It is usually used to correlate two variables based on its correlation coefficient value.

It is useful to describe and find out the significance of the correlation between those two variables, variable X and variable Y, independent and dependent variable. The independent variable is a variable which causes or influences the other variables. The dependent variable is a variable that influenced by the independent variable

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Grammar Mastery X | News Writing Ability Y |
|----------------------|---------------------------|

This research applies a Quantitative approach. Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that are able to be expressed in terms of quantity (Kothari, 2004). It means that the writer analyzed the data which has been collected statistically to gain the findings.

Ary (2010) defines population is all members of any well-defined class of people, events, or objects. Other statement, Kothari (2004) claims that the definition of population of the research is all items in any field of a research study. Based on definition, the writer concluded that population is a number of groups interest to the researcher, a number of groups which she would like to make the results of the study to be reported. In this study, the researcher selected the fourth semester students of English Language Education of Universitas Islam Riau in the academic year 2017/2018. A sample is the selected participants that taken from the population for the research study. Arikunto (2014) states that a sample is a set of some, not all of the observation or other things.

Sample is a part of population that represents the whole population. If the member of the subjects is less than 100 persons, the writer is able to take entire subjects. However, if the number of the subject in research is more than 100 persons, the researcher takes 10-15% or 20-25% of the population (Arikunto, 2002: 134). Based on this statement, the researcher took fourth semester students which consisted of six classes. Considering the large number of the students, the researcher needed to select a sample. This could make easy to conduct the research. In selecting the sample, the researcher used cluster sampling technique.

There were some steps in selecting the sample. First of all, the researcher prepared five pieces of paper and wrote the name of each class. Then, they were fold and put into a bottle, and then the researcher shook the bottle thoroughly. After that, the researcher dropped out one of them from the bottle. The first paper which fallen from the glass was the sample of this research. It was class 4C.

In conducting this research, the researcher used a test as instrument for grammar and writing. According to Ary (2010: 201), “Test is a set of stimuli presented to an individual in order to elicit responses on the basis of which a numerical score can be assigned”. In this case, the researcher gave two kinds of tests namely grammar test and writing test to get the data or information. The form grammar test is objective test and the writing test is subjective test. The grammar test consist of 25 multiple choice. The allocation of time is for about 35 minutes. To give the score for the answer, every numbers have same score i.e. 4 points. So every correct answer gets four points to each number and gets zero for incorrect answer. For writing test, the researcher got them from News written by the students. Both scores were analyzed by using correlation test by Pearson.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After the researcher got the data which cover of grammar mastery score and writing news score, the researcher then presents them. The presentation of the data as the following results:

a. The Data of Students’ Grammar Mastery

The following scores were obtained from 26 students which had been decided to take a part as the samples and to represent the population. The grammar test consists of 25 items.

Table 1. Percentage Frequency Students' Grammar Mastery Test

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 44 | 1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| 50 | 1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 7.7 |
| 56 | 5 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 26.9 |
| 60 | 6 | 23.1 | 23.1 | 50.0 |
| 64 | 1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 53.8 |
| 66 | 2 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 61.5 |
| 72 | 3 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 73.1 |
| 76 | 3 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 84.6 |
| 80 | 2 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 92.3 |
| 82 | 1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 96.2 |
| 84 | 1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 26 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 1 shows the percentage frequency of students' grammar mastery. From 26 students, it can be seen that there was only a student (3.8) who got the highest score 84 and a student (3.8) got the lowest score 44. Then, 60 as the most frequently score got by 6 students (23.1). Followed by 56 which were got by 5 students (19,2). To know the mean score of the data students' grammar mastery. The researcher used SPSS 22.0 and the results were presented in the descriptive of administering test below:

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Administering Grammar Mastery

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|-----|-----|-------|----------------|
| | NN | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Grammar Mastery | 26 | 44 | 84 | 65.38 | 10.640 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 26 | | | | |

The table above showed that from 26 students following the administering test about students' grammar mastery is obtained the minimum score was 44, the maximum score was 84, the mean score was 65.38 and the standard deviation

was 10.642. Standard deviation is to measure how much the variance of the sample.

b. The Data of Students' Writing News

This part discussed the result of the calculation of writing News score.

Table 3. Percentage Frequency of Administering Writing News Test

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 50 | 4 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 15.4 |
| 60 | 7 | 26.9 | 26.9 | 42.3 |
| 70 | 9 | 34.6 | 34.6 | 76.9 |
| 80 | 4 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 92.3 |
| 90 | 2 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 26 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The table above, showed there was 4 student (15.4) got score 50, 7 students (26.9) got score 60, 9 students (34.6) got score 70, 4 students (15.4) got score 80, 2 students (7.7) got score 90.

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis of Administering Writing News

Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|----|-----|-----|-------|----------------|
| Writing News | 26 | 50 | 90 | 67.31 | 11.509 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 26 | | | | |

The table above showed that from 26 students following administering test about students' achievement in writing News is obtained the minimum score was 50, the maximum score was 90, the mean score was 67.31 and the standard deviation was 11.509. Standard deviation is to measure how much the variance of the sample.

c. Correlational Testing

As the researcher said before, all analysis of this research mainly employed the computation process using SPSS 22.0 program. One of the roles of SPSS 22.0 was finding out the correlational significance using *Pearson Product Moment* analysis.

Table 5. The Correlation – Calculation by Pearson Product Moment

| | | Grammar Mastery | Writing News Ability |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Grammar Mastery | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .874** |
| | Sig. (2- tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 26 | 26 |
| Writing News Ability | Pearson Correlation | .874** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2- tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 26 | 26 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table above showed the correlation coefficient equalled $r = 0.874$, which indicated that there was positive correlation between two variables. This research was positive correlation because the variables had same moderate score, if the subjects had low score in grammar, they also had low score in writing a news. On the contrary, if they had high score in grammar, they also had high score in writing News. The number of 0.874 indicates that the correlation between two variables is very strong. Whereas, for the number significance (Sig) is = 0.000.

Concerning the null hypothesis, this research reveals that the null hypothesis is rejected because the SPSS calculation shows that the Sig is 0.000. As already known, the null hypothesis is rejected if the significance is less than 0.05. The hypothesis testing concluded that $N. Sig < 0.05$, where H_0 can be rejected. It means that both students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing news are correlated.

Thus, it can be concluded that "There is correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing news", was accepted while H_0 was automatically rejected. It can be stated on the basis of data taken from the samples of students' grammar mastery and their achievement in News writing in the fourth semester students of English Language Education Universitas Islam Riau.

CONCLUSION

There were obviously some main points related to the finding covered the students' grammar mastery as well as their achievement in writing news and the correlation coefficient obtained from the conducted research. There is positive and significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing news. Based on the data analysed by using *Bivariate* Correlation (SPSS), the researcher found that the coefficient correlation was 0.874. Therefore the correlation of students' grammar mastery and their achievement in news writing is considered significant and very high correlation as the coefficient correlation by interpretation correlation table.

The finding of this research indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected, automatically alternative hypothesis is accepted and thus the investigation confirms that there is significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in news writing. This research reveals that the students' grammar mastery can help them increase their achievement in writing news. Students who are good in grammar they also be good in news writing also as it can be seen from their grammar and news writing score. It showed it was easier for some students who understood grammar well to write news better rather than those students who were lack of grammar knowledge, they will trouble to write descriptive text correctly.

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