
Vocabulary and Grammar Mastery On The Writing Ability of College Students

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ABSTRACT

Writing is essential because it is used extensively in higher education and in the workplace. The aim of this study is to know whether there is a positive and significant correlation between vocabulary and grammar mastery in the writing ability of college students. It uses a correlational research design. The study was conducted at the Business Administration Department of the State Polytechnic of Malang, especially the English Study Program. These 53 students became the sample of the research. The writing test allowed the students to write an academic article consisting of 300-500 words. The result was there is a positive and significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing ability, but not for students' vocabulary mastery. The students should increase their vocabulary more to increase their writing ability.

Introduction

Language is important as a tool of communication. It can make communication runs smoothly. Without language, people are impossible to do interaction with each other in daily life. Language is not only used individually and in pairs but also groups, such as in communities and populations.

Many languages are used by different people in the world. Nowadays, there are several national languages which become international languages. It means that those languages are not only used in their country but also other countries. One of them is English. That is why English is important to be taught



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and learned. In Indonesia, English is thought to students from Elementary school up to university.

Then, English as an international or foreign language has four skills that should be mastered by the students. They are namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides, some components should be understood also by them, such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling, phonetics, and pronunciation. Furthermore, if the students can master those components, it will improve the student's English ability.

In learning English, writing skill is needed for students to express their opinion, ideas, and thoughts. Therefore, someone else can know and understand those by reading the composition. Brown (2001) states, "Writing is, in fact, a transaction with words whereby you free yourself from what you presently think, feel and perceive." It means that in writing, people can write words freely to present whatever they think, feel, and perceive.

Furthermore, Brown (2001) states, "writing is primarily for the display of student's knowledge". It means that the student's knowledge will be known firstly from his writing. If his writing is good, it shows that the student has good knowledge but if the writing is not good, the student's knowledge must be improved. Brown (2001) states, "Writing is, in fact, a transaction with words whereby you free yourself from what you presently think, feel and perceive." It means that in writing, people can write words freely to present whatever they think, feel and perceive. Furthermore, Brown (2001) states, "writing is primarily for the display of student's knowledge". It means that the student's knowledge will be known firstly from his writing. If his writing is good, it shows that the student has good knowledge but if the writing is not good, the student's knowledge must be improved. Therefore, the researcher formulated the research problems as follows:

- 1) How is students' vocabulary mastery?
- 2) How is students' grammar mastery?
- 3) How is students' writing ability?
- 4) Is there any positive significant correlation between students' vocabulary and grammar mastery to their writing ability?
- 5) Which skill between grammar and vocabulary has a stronger correlation to the student's writing ability?



Method of Research

This research used a correlational design. A correlational research design measures a relationship between two variables without the researcher controlling either of them. It aims to find out whether there is either a positive correlation or not. Both variables change in the same direction; in negative correlation, the variables change in opposite directions; or in zero correlation, there is no relationship between the variables.

This research was conducted in the Business Administration Department of the State Polytechnic of Malang, East Java. There are two levels of education in this department, namely Diploma 3 and 4.

This research took the third-grade students of Diploma 3 of the business administration department, especially the English Study Program. 53 students were taking the test.

The data were collected by giving writing tests to the third-grade students of the English Study Program of Polinema. The writing test was given at the same time to know the students' scores in those three skills. The writing test allowed students to write a scientific article consisting of 300-500 words based on the topic they have chosen at the first meeting. The topics were climate change, covid-19, education, etc.

Data of the research are in the form of quantitative data including students' scores on writing tests, such as vocabulary, grammar, and writing. The test was given to the students to know the relationship among those three variables.

Pearson r correlation was used to measure the coefficient of correlation. It is the most widely used correlation statistic to measure the degree of the relationship between linearly related variables. Pearson r correlation is used to measure the degree of relationship between the two variables. The point-biserial correlation is conducted with the Pearson correlation formula except that one of the variables is dichotomous.

After conducting the research, the data were analyzed using SPSS to reveal the students' vocabulary and grammar mastery, writing ability, and the correlation between students' vocabulary and grammar mastery to their writing ability. The first result is as follows:



	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
WRITING	75,85	8,549	53
VOCAB	79,06	4,281	53
GRAMMAR	77,17	9,880	53

Figure 1. Descriptive Statistic of Students' Vocabulary, Grammar Mastery, and Writing Ability

Result

The result of students' vocabulary, grammar mastery, and writing ability is stated in table 1. It can be seen that the average score of the student's writing skills is 75.85. The vocabulary and grammar mastery has an average score of 79.06 and 77.17. Compared to the scoring table, it can be concluded that the student's score in writing, vocabulary, and grammar mastery belongs to the "Good" category.

Table 1. Range of Score

Range of Score	Category
0-20	Very Bad
21-40	Bad
41-60	Fair
61-80	Good
81-100	Very Good

The result of the correlation among those three variables is stated in Figure 2. From the table in the figure, it can be seen that there is no significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. The coefficient of correlation is 0.252 and the significance level is 0.069 ($p > 0.05$). The classification belongs to low correlation. It means that the student's writing skill is not influenced significantly by their vocabulary mastery.



Correlations

		VOCAB	GRAMMAR	WRITING
VOCAB	Pearson Correlation	1	,118	,252
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,402	,089
	N	53	53	53
GRAMMAR	Pearson Correlation	,118	1	,666**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,402		,000
	N	53	53	53
WRITING	Pearson Correlation	,252	,666**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,089	,000	
	N	53	53	53

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

Figure 2. Correlation Table

The result is different from the next variable. The second variable called grammar mastery has a significant correlation with writing ability. The coefficient is 0.663 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The value of correlation belongs to a very high correlation based on the classification table.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	4,945	16,965		,292	,772						
	VOCAB	,351	,208	,178	1,705	,094	,252	,234	,175	,986	1,014	
	GRAMMAR	,559	,089	,646	6,256	,000	,666	,663	,641	,986	1,014	

a. Dependent Variable: WRITING

Figure 3. Regression Coefficient

The result is also supported by the table of regression served in Figure 3. The table shows the coefficient of regression. The dependent variable is "Writing Ability". The predictors are vocabulary and grammar mastery. The constant value is 4.945. It means if there is no increasing point of predictors at all, the value of reading comprehension is 4.945. If the predictors increase, the value of reading comprehension will also increase by 0.351 and 0.559 points from each predictor. It can be seen that vocabulary mastery has a lower value



than grammar, therefore, vocabulary has to be increased more to get a higher writing ability. Grammar mastery, in this case, has the biggest influence on the student's writing ability. It is proven by the value of the Beta coefficient that is higher than vocabulary ($0.559 > 0.351$).

Discussion

The result of this research is supported by the result of Hastuti (2015). The research entitles "The Influence of Vocabulary and Grammar Mastery on The Students' Writing Skill at Yogyakarta State University". The previous study showed that (1) vocabulary mastery positively influenced the students' writing skills, (2) grammar mastery positively influenced the students' writing skills, and (3) vocabulary and grammar mastery positively influenced the students' writing skills. The previous study supports this research in the variables taken. Besides that, the result of a positive significant correlation between grammar and writing is also similar to the result of this research. It means the theory of the previous research can also be implemented in this research. The different result is on the correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. In the previous research, it was revealed that the student's vocabulary had a significant correlation with the student's writing ability, but the result is different in this research. It is because the characteristics of students and also the topic of writing are different.

Conclusion

The researcher concludes some points as the answers to the statements of the problem stated in the background. The student's vocabulary mastery belongs to the good category. The good category is also shown in grammar and writing ability. Furthermore, there is no significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and writing ability. The coefficient correlation is low. In the case of students' grammar mastery and writing ability, there is a correlation since the coefficient correlation is high. The research recommends that vocabulary mastery should be optimized more to increase the student's writing ability.



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