

Students' Knowledge on Past Tense and Their Ability to Write Narrative Text

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ABSTRACT

This researched was aimed at investigating the correlation between students' mastery on grammar especially past tense and their ability to write narrative text. This researched used correlational research design with two instruments to take the data, that is, writing test and grammar test of past tense. The result of the data analysis showed that it was found that the coefficient of the correlation was .594. Therefore, the correlation can be interpreted as a positive medium correlation. It means the students who has higher knowledge on past tense, they can write better in writing narrative text. In the other hand, the hypothesis that the higher knowledge on past tense that the students have the better they can write narrative text was verified. It means the null hypothesis (Ho) rejected and alternative hypothesis (Ha) accepted. It can be concluded that there was a positive medium correlation between the students' knowledge on past tense and their ability in writing narrative text at Second Grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung.

Keywords: past tense, narrative text, correlation

INTRODUCTION

As one of the language skills, writing has important role for its significance in life. People tends to express their idea, thought and views of something not only in speaking but also in writing. "Writing is an extremely versatile tool that can be used to accomplish a variety of goals" (Graham, Gillespie, & McKeown, 2013). In school context, writing skill will help learners to express their ideas in answering the essay and accomplishing their assignment from their teacher.

Talking about writing, it could relate to its genre, such as descriptive, narrative, and recount text. The ability to write narrative text is one of standard competence to be accomplished by the students at tenth grade of Vocational High School based on the national curriculum in Indonesia. So, it is a must for the students to be able to write a narrative text.

Narrative text is a piece of text which tells a story and, in doing so, entertains or informs the reader or listener such as fairy story, mystery, science stories, horror stories, romance, adventure story, fables, and legends (Anderson and Anderson, 1997:8). A narrative text is a text that tells a story, especially in a novel, fables, or legend etc. Narrative can be presented as written or spoken texts. Written narratives often take the form of novels. The story

is usually told by narrator. However, narrative text can also be found in diaries, journals, newspapers, biographies, and autobiographies. It is also used to write past events and use tense that has the function to tell story in the past time.

To make a good narrative text, the writer or the students have to choose the correct tenses and they also should know many vocabularies because text is an arrangement of words, sentences, and paragraphs. In writing narrative text, the common tense that often used is past tense. The past tense is a tense that indicates an event happened in the past. According to Frank (1972:83) in (Hidayah, 2007) “the past tense indicates time terminating in the past, whether a time word is given or not”. While Cook and Sutter in (Hidayah, 2007) define past tense as actions or states that usually occurred or completed in the past.

Therefore, to write a good narrative text the students should understand well about past tense because past tense is certainly used in writing narrative. “Simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past” (Azar, 1996). It is clear that past is used when someone wants to express action or activity which happen in the past.

From the explanation above, the researcher wants to conduct an investigation on the correlation between students’ mastery of past tense and their ability in writing narrative text. This is due to the fact that narrative uses past tense (Anderson, 1997:55). The researcher assumes that there is a positive correlation between students’ mastery of past tense and their ability in writing narrative text.

Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher determines the problem of research as follow “Do the Tenth Grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung with better knowledge in past tense also have better accuracy in writing narrative text?”

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research the researcher uses correlational designs. “the purpose of the correlational study may be to establish relationship (or lack of it) or to use relationship in making prediction” (Gay, 1996) . The correlational research design used by the researcher to find out the relationship between two variables. students’ knowledge on past tense and their accuracy in writing narrative text. “correlation research is investigators use the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association between two or more variables or sets of scores” (Cresswell, 2003).

In this research the population will be tenth grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung in the academic year of 2018/2019. There are 26 students from TKR class that will be investigated in this research which the students of this class are boy. The sample of this study is all students of tenth grade of TKR class of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung which contain of 26 students.

Further, according to Arikunto (2002: 136) Research instrument is a device used by the researcher while collecting data to make her work become easier and get a better result, complete and systematic in order to make the data easy to be processed. There are many types of instrument can be used, such as: test, observation sheet, practice, etc. In this research, the researcher will uses a test method as the instrument. “Test is geared to the teaching that has taken place, whereas in the latter case the teaching is often geared largely to the test” (Heaton,

1989: 5). The test that researcher uses is divided into two: grammar test (past tense) and writing test.

Further, the data from the grammar and writing test were statistically analysed to find out the relationships between grammar mastery and the writing ability. The correlation between the two variables will analysed using Kendal Tau statistical analysis using SPSS 21.0. It is caused the participant of this research was under 30 participants. Therefore, it is assumed that the statistical analysis used is non-parametric test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

This section presents the research finding and verification of the hypothesis of the research. The data taken from the past tense test and writing narrative text test was correlated using statistical analysis.

The Result of the Past Tense Test

The writer used multiple choice test to measure students’ understanding of past tense. There were 30 questions and 4 alternative answers for each question. The summary of the result of the students’ grammar in past tense test can be seen in the table 4.1. While the complete score can be seen in appendix 4.

Table 1. Score Summary of Past Tense Test

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
26	64.31	64.50	60	46	76

From the table above, it is known that the maximum score of the students’ grammar test in past tense was 76 and the minimum score was 46. While, the mean score or the average score from 26 students was 64.31.

The Result of The Writing Narrative Test

To Know the students’ skill in writing Narrative text the researcher used writing test. To test writing, the researcher asked the students to make a narrative text. the researcher used story legend and provided some title for the students to choose one of them and compose it to be narrative text. The titles were; Malin Kundang, Roro Jonggrang, Danau Toba, and Cinderella. It was assumed that the result of the writing test showed the students’ ability in writing. The summary of the result of the writing test can be seen in table 4.2. Further, the complete score of the writing test can be seen in Appendix 5.

Table 2. Score summary of writing Test in Narrative Text

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
26	62.88	65.00	65	50	80

The score of the writing test was obtained from the sum up of the each criterion including content, organization, language use, grammar and mechanic. On the table 4.2, it is

shown that the minimal score was 50. While for the maximal score, the score shown was 80. Further, the average score or the mean score of the writing test was 62.88

Correlation Analysis

After getting the scores of the students' understanding of past tense and their ability in writing narrative text, the data were statistically computed to find the correlation between two variables. In this research non parametric test of Kendal Tau correlation was applied. It was caused the participant of this research was under 30 participants. Therefore, it was assumed that the statistical analysis used was non parametric test. To know the result of the computation of Kendal Tau correlation statistical analysis, it can be seen in table 4.3

Table 3. The Correlation between Students' Knowledge on Past Tense and Accuracy in Writing Narrative Text.

			Correlations	
			Grammar (Past Tense)	Writing
Kendall's tau_b	Grammar	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.594
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	Writing	N	26	26
		Correlation Coefficient	.594	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	26	26

From the data presented in the table, it was found that the coefficient of the correlation was .594. Therefore, the correlation can be interpreted as a positive medium correlation. It means the students who has higher knowledge on past tense, they can write better in writing narrative text. In the other hand, the hypothesis that the higher knowledge on past tense that the students have the better they can write narrative text was verified. It means the null hypothesis (Ho) rejected and alternative hypothesis (Ha) accepted. It can be concluded that there was a positive medium correlation between the students' knowledge on past tense and their ability in writing narrative text at Second Grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung.

Discussions

Based on the result of the data analysis above it is known that the correlation between students' knowledge on past tense (X) and accuracy in writing narrative text (Y) at tenth grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung obtained correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) was .594. The correlation between two variables in this research was in positive medium correlation. It means the student who got better score in past tense test generally they had better accuracy in writing narrative text. In other words, the student who got lower score in past tense generally they had difficulty in writing narrative text. So, there was a significant positive medium correlation between students' knowledge on past tense and accuracy in writing narrative text.

As it is stated by Charol in Krashen (1982) in , the students with different levels of grammatical sensitivity might have differences in understanding grammatical rules and how to apply them in new sentences. Past tense is one of the language features of writing narrative text. Then, it's mostly used when the students write the narrative text. Therefore, when the students with low score of grammar in writing, they might produce a writing that difficult to

read and sometimes impossible to understand. To make easier the readers in understanding the writing it's a must to apply the grammatical used in writing. Base on this explanation, to write a good narrative text is important to apply past tense as one of the language features in writing of narrative text.

This result of this research supports the previous research entitled "A Correlation between Students' Mastery of Past Tense and Achievement in Writing Narrative Text" written by Fatmaningrum (2017). the result of this research shows that the coefficient of correlation (r_{xy}) is 0.68. Because of the coefficient r_{xy} is not equal with 0, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is confirmed. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between the past tense mastery and writing ability of narrative text of the twelfth graders of MAN 01 Pati in 2016/2017 academic year.

CONCLUSION

Based on the statements of the problem, the researcher conclude that there is significance correlation between knowledge on past tense and accuracy in writing narrative text at tenth grade of SMK PGRI 3 Tulungagung in academic year 2018/2019. In this research, the researcher gives two kinds of conclusions. They are theoretical conclusions and empirical conclusion.

1. Theoretical Conclusions

Mastering the grammar is one of the most important aspects to be a good writer. The use of correct grammar makes language understandable. Mastering the grammar will help students to be able written well. Knowing grammar means understanding what the structure of the sentence correctly. The constructing of the sentence was built up by the tenses. Both tenses and grammar is closely related one to another. There are several tenses that must be mastered by the students.

Past tense is a tense that expressing the situation or event that happened in past time. The tenses are related with the competence in producing some paragraph types, such as narrative text. Narrative text is kind of text which tell past story to entertain or to amuse the readers or listeners. In grammatical features past tense is used to build up the narrative text. Therefore, understanding the past tense will help the students to write narrative text easier. From the result of the computation of the correlation analysis found that the students' knowledge on past tense and accuracy in writing narrative text have a medium positive correlation.

2. Empirical Conclusions

Based on the result of the test, shows that the correlation coefficient was .594. the correlation can be interpreted as a positive medium correlation. It means the students who has higher knowledge on past tense, they can write better in writing narrative text.

The result of this study shows that the students who got better score in past tense test tend to have better score in writing narrative text. In the other hand, they who got lower score in past tense test also tend to have lower score in writing narrative text. In other words, the hypothesis of this research was verified. Therefore, it can be assumed that knowledge on past tense influences the accuracy in writing narrative text.

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