A CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS’ SIMPLE PAST TENSE MASTERY AND THEIR LEARNING MOTIVATION TOWARD THEIR ABILITY TO WRITE NARRATIVE ESSAY AT THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This research was aimed to find out the correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay at the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University. The hypothesis of this research was that if there was a significant correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay at the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University. The number of population was 46 students. They were distributed into two classes. The researcher took two classes as sample by using total sampling technique. The classes selected as sample were classes A and B. To analyze the data the researcher used the Person Product Moment Formula and Multiple Correlation Formula. After analyzing the data, the researcher found that the students’ simple past tense mastery was bad (45.16%), their learning motivation was very good (58.06%), and their ability to write narrative essay was bad (41.93%). The researcher found the coefficient correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their ability to write narrative essay was .45 and value of r table was .355. It means that the r counted was bigger than r table (.45 > .355) and the correlation was significant. Next, the researcher found the coefficient correlation between students’ learning motivation and their ability to write narrative essay was .18 and value of r table was .355. It means that the r counted was smaller than r table (.18 > .355) and the correlation was not significant. Then, the researcher found the coefficient correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation was .41 and value of r table was .355. It means that the r counted was bigger than r table (.41 > .355) and the correlation was significant. Finally, the researcher found the value of coefficient of three variables was .44 and f- counted was 0.36 value of f- table was 3.34 in (α 0.05) (df) n-k-1 (28) (see Appendix 23). It means that f- counted (0.36) was bigger than f- table (0.34). It means that the alternative hypothesis stating “there is a significant correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay was accepted.

Key words: Correlation, Simple Past Tense, Learning Motivation, Writing Ability

Introduction

Nowadays, English is one of the international languages that is widely used in the world. English has been used by many people from different countries. Most of non-native speakers use English
to establish relationship with other people coming from different countries. Harmer (2001: 1) states that: “Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or ‘first’ language speakers, it has become a lingua franca. A lingua franca is defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each others and where one or both speakers are using it as a ‘second’ language.”

In Indonesia, English has a very important role in technological and scientific advances; instruments such as computer and internet use English. Meanwhile, a lot of textbooks, newspapers and magazines are printed in English.

Grammar is one of the language components that are regarded as an important thing to learn. Swan (2005:116) defines grammar as the rules that show how words are combined, arranged, or changed to show certain kinds of meaning. There are 16 grammars in English, they are: present continuous tense, present perfect tense, present perfect continuous tense, simple past tense, past continuous tense, past perfect tense, past perfect continuous tense, simple future tense, future continuous tense, future perfect tense, future perfect continuous tense, past future tense, past future perfect tense, and past future perfect continuous tense.

Simple past tense is a tense that use for describe events in the past. According to Caroline and Pearson (2010:7-8), we use the simple past tense to talk about action and situation which we see as complete in the past. It means that simple past tense refers to complete action that occurred in the past.

Among four language skills, Writing is the most difficult skills. They are some problems the students found in writing, especially in writing an essay. In this research, the researcher focuses on narrative essay. In writing narrative essay, the students are required to develop their ideas in order to describe something specifically. Since essay has more than one paragraphs which consists of introductory paragraph, body paragraphs and concluding paragraph, students need to have more knowledge about what was they describe. Not only knowledge, students also need to have many vocabularies to produce a good essay. They also need to know about use of grammar and mechanic. They are required to pay attention to the use of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

Motivation is a complex part of human psychology and behavior that influences how individuals choose to
invest their time, how much energy they exert in any given task, how they think and feel about the task, and how long they persist in the task. It reflects in students’ choices of learning tasks, in the time and effort they devote to them, in their persistence on learning tasks, in their coping with the obstacles they encounter in the learning process.

According to Rebecca (2003), a narrative essay is a text, which relates a series of logically, and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by factors. She, furthermore, states that a key to comprehending a narrative is a sense of plot, of theme, of characters, and of events, and of how they relate. In addition, Anderson and Anderson (2003) explain that a narrative is a text that tells a story and, in doing so, entertains the audience. It has character, setting, and action. The characters, the setting, and the problem of the narrative are usually introduced in the beginning. The problem reaches its high point in the middle. The ending resolves the problem.

The purposes of this research were formulated as follows:

1. To describe correlation between the third year students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation in English Department of Bung Hatta University.

2. To describe correlation between the third year students’ learning motivation and their ability to write narrative essay in English Department of Bung Hatta University.

3. To describe correlation between the third year students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

This research has some significances for English lecturer, and students. For English lecturer, they know students simple past tense mastery, their learning motivation, their writing ability and correlation among them. For students, this research can improve their motivation in developing their simple past tense mastery and their writing ability in narrative essay. For the researcher, she can get more knowledge and more understanding in conducting a research.

Research Method

This research used correlational design. According to Creswell (2012: 338), correlation research involves the research for relationships between variable through the use of various measures of statistical association. The researcher use this design because she wants to found out the
correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward the ability to write narrative essay of the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

There was three kinds of variable in this research. The first variable was students’ simple past tense mastery, and it was considered as the first independent variable (variable \( x_1 \)). The second variable is their learning motivation, and it is considered as the second independent variable (variable \( x_2 \)). The third variable are students’ ability to write narrative essay, and it is considered as dependent variable (variable \( y \)).

Creswell (2012:142) states that population is a group of individuals who had the same characteristics. The population of this research is are the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University because they had been learning about simple past tense, and writing ability in narrative essay. The are numbers of population members of this study 46 students and they are distributed into two classes

The number of sample for tryout was 15 sample, and then the sample for the real test was 31 sample. Grammar test was used to measure students’ simple past tense mastery, questionnaire was used to measure students’ learning motivation and writing test was used to measure students’ ability to write narrative essay.

The researcher used the content validity For reliability the researcher used split half method for grammar test and reading test and . It means that there were two scorers. To see the correlation between two scorers, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula. In gathering the data, the researcher used the following procedures.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the following procedure. The first is the researcher counted the average of the students’ scores from both assessor. The second the researcher calculated percentage of the data, the researcher used the formula by Gay. The third is the researcher classified the students’ ability based on their group: high ability, moderate ability and low ability. And the last, the researcher calculated the percentage of the students who had high, moderate and low ability.

Findings and Discussions

The researcher presents the result of data analysis on the correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay.

Students’ Simple Past Tense Mastery

Based of the criteria of giving grade at English Department of Bung Hatta
University, the ability divided into four categories; who had score from 81 to 100 was very good ability, and who had score from 65 to 80 was good ability, who had score from 55 to 64 was moderate ability, and who had score lower 54 was bad ability (see Appendix 13). The result of data proved 9 students (29.03%) got very good ability, 7 students (22.58%) got good ability, 1 student (3.22%) got moderate ability and 14 students (45.16%) got bad ability.

**Students’ Learning Motivation**

Based on the criteria of giving grade at English Department of Bung Hatta University, the ability divided into four categories; who had score from 81 to 100 was very good ability, and who had score from 65 to 80 was good ability, who had score from 55 to 64 was moderate ability, and who had score lower 54 was bad ability (see Appendix 13). The result of data proved 18 students (58.06%) got very good ability, 11 students (35.48%) got good ability, 2 students (6.45%) got moderate ability and 0 students (0%) got bad ability.

**Students’ Ability to Write Narrative Essay**

Based on the criteria of giving grade at English Department of Bung Hatta University, the ability divided into four categories; who had score from 81 to 100 was very good ability, and who had score from 65 to 80 was good ability, who had score from 55 to 64 was moderate ability, and who had score lower 54 was bad ability (see Appendix 13). The result of data proved 2 students (6.45%) got very good ability, 10 students (32.25%) got good ability, 6 students (19.35%) got moderate ability and 13 students (41.93%) got bad ability.

**Correlation between Students’ Simple Past Tense Mastery and Their Ability to Write Narrative Essay**

Based on the result of data analysis of students’ simple past tense mastery and the ability to write narrative essay, the researcher found that the value coefficient correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their ability to write narrative essay was 0.45. It was classified as moderate correlation (see Appendix 19). It means there was positive correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their ability to write narrative essay at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

**Discussions**

**Students’ Simple Past Tense Mastery**

As already discussed before, the Third year students’ simple past tense mastery at English Department of Bung Hatta University was bad. As the fact, 14 students from 31 students are still confused to answer the question that belongs to
negative sentence in verbal form. It happens because of the disability of students to analyze and comprehending the verb agreement of simple past tense in negative form. Based on the result of data analysis of students’ learning motivation and the ability to write narrative essay, the researcher found that the value of the coefficient correlation between students’ learning motivation and their ability to narrative essay was 0.18. It was classified as bad correlation (see Appendix 20). It means there was negative correlation between students’ learning motivation and their ability to write narrative essay at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

**Students’ Learning Motivation**

Based on the data from the learning motivation questionnaire, the data analysis showed that almost half students had very good learning motivation. There were 18 students (58.06%) from 31 students. There were 0 students (0%) from 31 students who had bad motivation in learning. The finding shows the fact that many of students were not strongly agree or agree with this statement:

Item Number 30: “Ketika saya belajar untuk menghadapi ujian, saya mencoba mengingat kembali pelajaran semampu saya” (When I left for the test, I try to remember what I have learned as possible as I can).

The item above comes from test anxiety category. It means most of students have no anxiety to learn before the examination and have no motivation to learn before the examination.

**Students’ Ability to Write Narrative Essay**

Based on data from writing test, students’ writing ability at the Third year students was moderate. There were 13 students (41.93 %) from 31 students had bad ability. As the fact, some of students were wrong in wrote the text.

For example there is a students that wrote narrative text while she is asked to write narrative essay.

**Conclusions and Suggestions**

Based on finding as already discussed in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that:

1. The researcher found that the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University was moderate.
2. The researcher found that the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University was moderate.
3. The researcher found that the Third year students’ ability to write narrative essay at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

4. There was a significant correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their ability to write narrative essay at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

5. There was no a significant correlation between students’ learning motivation and their ability to write narrative essay at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

6. There was a significant correlation between students’ simple past tense mastery and their learning motivation at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

7. There was a significant correlation between students’ simple past tense and learning motivation toward their ability to write narrative essay at the Third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

**Suggestion**

After analyzing the data, the researcher has known that students’ simple past tense, and their learning motivation correlate with their ability to write narrative essay, it is suggested to the lecturer:

1. To gives more exercises to improve the students’ grammar mastery especially in simple past tense.

2. To gives a variety of interested method and activity during teaching learning strategy in order to improve students’ learning motivation.

3. To gives more exercises to improve students’ ability to writing narrative essay.

The students are suggested to study more about grammar especially simple past tense and improve their learning motivation, and, they should read more and more over to increase their ability to write narrative essay.

Further researchers are suggested to conduct a study related to the problems of students dealing with other aspect of grammar and factors making students have low motivation to read.
References

Definition of Narrative Essay.


