THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE MASTERY AND DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH WRITING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This ex-post facto research aims at figuring out the correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in the academic year 2022/2023. The samples of this research were 80 students from 495 populations of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Gianyar in the academic year 2022/2023, chosen by clustered random sampling technique. The data were collected by administering two research instruments in the form of a sentence writing test and paragraph construction test. Pearson product-moment correlation and t-test by SPSS 25 Version for Windows was used to correlate both simple present tense mastery (variable X) and descriptive paragraph writing ability (variable Y). The data analysis results showed that there was a correlation at (0.630) which is higher than the r-table of significant level at 5% (0.220). To sum up, the present research findings finally confirmed that there was a significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in the academic year 2022/2023.

Keywords: correlation, simple present tense mastery, and descriptive paragraph writing ability.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menggunakan desain ex-post facto yang mencari hubungan antara penguasaan simple present tense dan kemampuan menulis paragraf deskriptif pada siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Gianyar tahun pelajaran 2022/2023. Sampel penelitian ini terdiri dari 80 siswa dari 495 populasi siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Gianyar tahun pelajaran 2022/2023, yang telah dipilih dengan teknik klaster sampel. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan pemberian instrumen penelitian berupa tes menulis kalimat dan tes konstruksi paragraf. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis menggunakan korelasi Pearson product-moment dan uji-t menggunakan SPSS versi 25 yang digunakan untuk mengkorelasikan penguasaan simple present tense (variabel X) dan kemampuan menulis paragraf deskriptif (variabel Y). Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa terdapat korelasi yang signifikan secara statistik (0,630) lebih tinggi dari r-tabel taraf signifikansi 5% (0,220). Kesimpulannya, temuan penelitian ini akhirnya menegaskan bahwa ada korelasi yang signifikan antara penguasaan simple present tense dan kemampuan menulis paragraf deskriptif siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Gianyar tahun pelajaran 2022/2023.

Kata kunci: *hubungan, penguasaan simple present tense, kemampuan menulis paragraf deskriptif.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a skill that pupils must master. They must adhere to a number of writing processes in order to produce quality content. Writing is a continuous creative process; as Oshima and Hogue (2007:15) noted, it is never accomplished in a single step. A writer has already considered what to say and how to convey it before beginning to write. After finishing their writing, students go back and make modifications and revisions to what they've written. They write and modify often until they're confident that what they've written effectively conveys what they want to say. They can communicate their ideas by writing.

Writing English is just not about the activity of making a note on paper or typing. Furthermore, it is about how the students can express their thoughts in a note by using correct grammatical words to express what the students mean. Brown (2000) states that a good writing skill needs to cover good content, organization, vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). These elements are essential for learners in learning how to write a good paragraph.

Writing is considered a complicated skill for students because they need to know several writing components when they want to write. If the students have experience in writing, they have to know the technique of writing. The technique which students use in their writing varies from one student to another and depends upon one's syntax and word choice. It is achieved through word choice (diction), sentence construction and word order (syntax), and the character's viewpoint. Strakey (2004:21) states that the best way to convey ideas accurately in an essay is by choosing the right words. By doing this, students can ensure readers understand what they write. So, by using appropriate words, writers can convince and attract readers' interest to read. They will keep reading when they find words that can give meaning to them and make them always remember those words. Having a brilliant idea is not enough to produce excellent writing because the writer needs to have accurate dictions, comprehensive language structure and precise organization (Sawitri and Pramerta, 2019)

On the other hand, there are several rules and word tenses in writing text that students should know before creating a writing paragraph, such as writing descriptive, procedure, narrative, report, review, spoof, and announcement. Every type is used for a specific purpose with different rules and different word tenses. One type that junior high school learns about is a descriptive paragraph. A descriptive paragraph is defined as a paragraph that describes or discusses a thing, place, or person based on a generic structure such as clear identification, vivid detail descriptions, and a suitable conclusion. The writers cannot just imagine an object based on what they see, read or hear to make a good description. Besides, the use of words in writing a descriptive paragraph must be considered, and it will help the readers get information from the descriptive paragraph. As Zemach and Rumisek (2005:25) have shown, a descriptive paragraph explains how a person, thing, animal, or place looks or feels. In writing a descriptive paragraph, adjectives are needed to describe an object in such vivid detail descriptions.

In writing, knowing the rules or grammar of a sentence is crucial to make

the writing correct grammatically and structurally. To be a good writer or make an acceptable sentence based on the rules, the students have to master grammar since it is the basic rule of language, especially in writing a paragraph. In this case, verb tenses have an essential role because they tell readers when actions are taking place. Careful and accurate uses of tenses are important to produce clear writing. Fulwiler (2002:194) states that punctuation and grammar are conventional and correct in writing, even in the end. Based on that aforementioned statement, grammar is one of the important things in writing.

Richards and Schmidt (2002:230) mentioned that grammar is a description of the structure of a language and how linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. English grammar is reflected in its tense, consisting of how to make a good sentence with the right meaning and function. Students should learn about many kinds of English grammar. Grammar is essential as the rules of the wording to make meaningful utterances. Tenses are English grammar that has a major effect on building good sentences. Tenses are imperative to identify the times in writing a good sentence so that it will be easier to understand.

According to Hewings (2001:2), people use simple present tense to describe things that are always true, or situation that exist now and, as far the people know, will go on indefinitely. The people use the present simple tense to talk about habits or things that happen on a regular basic. It means that if people want to express situation that exist, always, usually, habitually the people should using the simple present tense. The simple present tense is one of tenses which is people should master if

people want to make a descriptive paragraph. The simple present tense expresses what is often referred to as general statements of fact. Thus, the researcher is curious about the significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability.

Additionally, in the previous research, Yunica (2017) found that there was a correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. Students who had high scores in simple present tense tend to get high scores in writing descriptive paragraphs. Otherwise, the students who had low scores in simple present tense mastery also got low scores in writing a descriptive paragraph. It means that to write a good descriptive paragraph, every student should master the grammar, especially simple present tense. Simple present tense can improve each aspect of students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs. Those statements made the researcher want to know more about the correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability.

Therefore, according to the explanation above, and the previous research about simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability the researcher was curious and highly motivated to measure the significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. Therefore, the researcher is really interested in conducting a research entitled "The Correlation between Simple Present Tense Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability of the Eighth grade Students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in Academic Year 2022/2023."

RESEARCH METHOD

Defining the type of research design is very important. Before doing any research, the researcher should define the type of research design which is used. It makes the readers clearly understand how the research will be conducted later. The present study dealt with the correlation between present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. This study used an ex post facto research design because the present research analyzed the fact that has already taken place before the research. This research investigating the correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability used ex-post facto research with correlation design.

In conducting research, participants are the most significant element for the research project. To collect the data in ex-post facto research, the researcher needed a way to choose the research participants. In the present study, the population of the study is the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. SMPN 3 Gianyar which had eleven classes of the eighth-grade. Besides, each class has a minimum of 40 students and a maximum of 45 students. The whole eighth-grade students consist of 495 students. Furthermore, 495 students are considered as the population. The samples cannot be predicted because all population members had the same opportunity to be selected as the samples in this study. The specified samples cannot be chosen by seeing their ability. Therefore, it is highly unlikely to bring all students as samples of this study regarding a large number of students. The researcher chose the samples by selecting from the entire population, the eighth-grade students. Moreover, as the whole eighth-grade student is a big population, the researcher then decides to use 20 % of the population which was 80 students as the samples who will be chosen by using a cluster sampling technique. In the cluster sampling technique, the researcher took the samples randomly and can be used because all the classes were homogeny class. Therefore, the use of the cluster sampling technique suggested that all populations have the same opportunity to be selected and included as the samples of the study. In addition, Ary et al (2010:154) states in cluster sampling the unit chosen is not an individual but, rather, a group of individuals who are naturally together. This type of sampling will appropriate for the present ex-post facto research with a correlation design.

The researcher used the instrument that was considered appropriate to support the analysis to achieve the research objective of collecting the data. Furthermore, research instruments were tools developed by researchers to achieve the stated objectives when carrying out the study. There were several types of research instruments. The instruments of the present study were in the form of a test. The tests used are the sentence writing test and paragraph construction tests. The sentence writing test was mainly used to measure simple present tense mastery of the samples under study. Meanwhile, the paragraph construction test is used to gather the data concerning their ability to write a descriptive paragraph.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Finding

This study used an ex-post facto research design in which the present

research findings were obtained by administering the research instruments. The researcher analyzed the facts that have taken place before to make a critical evaluation of the research variables. It was intended to determine the significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and the descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. To support the present study and to obtain valid data, it requires several research instruments. The researcher then collected the required data from the samples by constructing two research instruments. To get the data, the researcher distributed a sentence writing test to measure the samples' simple present tense mastery, and there were 30 items of the sentence writing test. To measure the descriptive paragraph writing ability of the samples, the researcher used a paragraph construction test. The topics were about their favorite actor or favorite actress in Indonesia, favorite classmate, and favorite teacher, and they could choose one of the topics and write a descriptive paragraph based on the chosen topic. The descriptive paragraph that they wrote should fulfill the necessary characteristics of a good descriptive paragraph. There were two instruments used to obtain the research data, sentence writing test and paragraph construction test. Both of the tests were administered at the same time to get the same amount of samples in the classroom by the researcher. After the tests were completed, the samples' works were scored by using a scoring rubric. The sentence writing test was scored by a scoring rubric adapted from Brown (2004:228), and the samples' descriptive paragraph writing ability was scored a scoring rubric adapted from Oshima and

Hogue (2007:196). After the required data were collected, the researcher then analyzed the data through two steps of statistical analyses, pre-requisite analysis by and hypothesis testing.

Pre-requisite Analysis

Pre-requisite analysis is a prior analysis that should be done before analyzing the hypothesis. In this session, the researcher would like to explain the data requirements so that the statistical analyses can be further continued to the next analyses. The pre-requisite analysis which consisted of normality and homogeneity test should be carefully computed since it was important in the present analysis and this could determine the next step in data analysis. These two statistical analyses were important to know whether the data were normally and homogenously distributed before hypothesis testing could be conducted.

Normality Test

A normality test is a test conducted to assess the distribution of data in a group of data or variables, whether the distribution of the data is normally distributed or not. To know whether the collected data were normally distributed, the researcher measured the normal distribution by doing the normality test of the data using the SPSS 25 version for windows. Based on the SPSS interpretation, a low significant value (less than 0.05) indicated that the data distribution differed significantly from a normal distribution. The data could be categorized as having normal distribution if the significant value was higher than 0.05. In other words, the present research data would be in a normal distribution if the significance value is higher than 0.05. In the present study, the

significance value of simple present tense mastery was a figure of 0.200, and it was higher than 0.05; besides, for descriptive paragraph writing ability, it can be seen on the significance value was 0.200 which was higher than 0.05. It can be clearly seen that the level of significance of all groups of data that were analyzed by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed that the figures were above 0.05. It means the data of simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability already had a degree of normality. In conclusion, the data of the two research variables have already fulfilled the pre-requisite analysis in terms of the normality test.

Homogeneity Test

A homogeneity test is a test that assesses whether there are differences in variance between the two groups or more. This test was conducted to determine whether the sample chosen come from a population with a relatively similar variant. In finding out the homogeneity test results, the researcher used SPSS 25 version for Windows using Levene's testing with the level of significance of 0.05. If the significant value was higher than 0.05 means that the data is homogeneous. In the present study the significance value of the data was found 0.120 based on the mean. This meant the data of simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability had already had a degree of homogeneity. Moreover, these figures also signified that the data of the present ex-post facto research were homogeneously distributed. In addition, the homogenous distribution of the collected data was important in this research.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was the next step of data analysis that should be done after calculating the pre-requisite analysis, and the data were normally and homogeneously distributed. Hypothesis testing is a test that tests the research hypothesis. Within this hypothesis, there is a possibility of whether it is accepted or not. In the present study, the researcher constructed a directional hypothesis that clearly stated there was a significant correlation between the students' simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. The researcher used SPSS 25 version for windows in doing the hypothesis testing. It consisted of two statistical analyses; they were Pearson product-moment correlation and t-test.

Pearson product-moment correlation

The first hypothesis testing was administered to determine the correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. In this section, Pearson's product-moment correlation was employed to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Based on SPSS interpretation, the correlation coefficient could be categorized as significant if the significant value is lower than 0.05. However, if the significant value is higher, there is no correlation between the research variables. In the present study, it was found that the significant values of the research variables were 0.000 lower than 0.05. Moreover, the significant value of the Pearson product-moment correlation was 0.630. Therefore, according to the Interpretation of correlation, if the score is

0.600 – 0.800 the correlation can be concluded as sufficient. It can be concluded that there is a high correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. In addition, these two research variables were correlated with each other. In conclusion, the data have already proven that there was a correlation between the two research variables, and the hypothesis testing can be continued to t-test to figure out the significant correlation of the research variables.

T-test

The researcher tested the hypothesis by applying a t-test in order to figure out whether the correlation of the research variables was significant or not. The researcher used a Paired- Samples T-test to get the final result of this research. This technique was used to test whether certain values differ significantly or not from the average of a sample. Here, the researcher looks for values from the probability value. Based on SPSS interpretation, the directional hypothesis could be categorized as significant if the significant value is lower than 0.05. However, if the significant value is higher, it means there is no significant correlation between research variables. In the present study, the result found at the value of Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000. The result of the T-test was very significantly accepted because 0.000 < 0.05 (Hinton et al 2014:133). Therefore, after calculating the paired sample test, the data should be tested for hypothesis testing. Based on the table of paired sample tests above, the T-test counted was 6.259. According to T-table with df (degree of freedom) 79 was 1.664 while T-counted was 6.259, concluding that 6.259 > 1.664. Based on the results of this study,

it can be stated that there was a significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023 was finally accepted.

Discussion

The researcher did some step to collect the data. The first step was conducting simple present tense mastery test by giving the samples printable worksheet. After conducting the simple present tense mastery test, the next step was giving writing test about descriptive text. The aim of this step was to find out the correlation between the students' simple present tense mastery and their writing ability. Based on the result, the normality test with the significance (sig.) of the simple present tense mastery was found 0.200 and the significance (sig.) of the descriptive paragraph writing ability was found 0.200. It means that the result of those n of the data were higher than 0.05. Thus, the result of the simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability test was normally distributed. Furthermore, for homogeneity test was good because the data was homogeneous accepted. It got the result 0.120 which is greater than 0.05. It means that the variances can be assumed to be homogenous. Next, the result of the correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar from Pearson Product Moment correlation between simple present tense mastery (variable X) and descriptive paragraph writing ability (variable Y) was 0.630 and level of significance (sig.(1-tailed)) was 0.000. Furthermore, to know how significance

those variable, if the score p<0.05, there is significance correlation. In contrary, if the score p> 0.05, there is no significance correlation. The level of significance (sig.(1-tailed)) was 0.000, it became the benchmark to see the data correlated or not. It means that, the data had a positive significance correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eight-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar, because of the sig. (1-tailed) was lower than 0.05 or 0.000 <0.05 and the score of coefficient correlation (r) was 0.630. The result can be considered as high correlation because those scores were between 0.600-0.800 which was interpreted as high correlation according to Arikunto (2010:39).

Furthermore, from the result above the researcher found that Hypothesis (Ha) was accepted because r-value was higher than r-table. In addition, the t-test showed p was 0.000, the data which were analyzed by using paired Samples t-test showed that the figure p<0.05. It means that, there was significance correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. In addition, when the had known about simple present tense knowledge, the students are easier to write a paragraph, especially descriptive paragraph.

Moreover, the findings of the present ex-post facto research were supported by Yunica (2017) and Putri (2020). They convincingly found that there was a correlation between students' simple present tense mastery and their descriptive paragraph writing ability. When students master simple present tense, they could try to put their best efforts into writing a descriptive paragraph using the simple present tense. It was in line with the present study results that simple present

tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability were correlated. It means both of the previous studies supported the research findings of the present study. In the present study, the researcher has found that there was a significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. These results were also supported by Cowan (2008), who states that simple present tense appears in particular contexts or genres of writing. It means that simple present tense is one of the grammatical that should be learned by the students because to write a good descriptive paragraph, every student should master different kinds of tenses, especially simple present tense. Therefore, the students who had good mastery in simple present tense were easy to construct their ideas, especially in writing a descriptive paragraph. The theory above stated is indeed correct that there is a significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability.

CONCLUSION

In the present study was conducted to know about there is a positive and significant correlation between simple present tense mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar in academic year 2022/2023. In this present study, the researcher used two test items, they were simple present tense mastery test (sentence writing test) and a descriptive paragraph writing ability test (paragraph constructions test). The research was conducted to the 80 of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Gianyar. The tests were well-done by the samples in

order to collect the data needed. Furthermore, the test of this research study had been conducted on 12th November 2022, and then the data were analyzed by using SPSS 25 version for Windows for finding out the normality test, homogeneity test and hypothesis test that used Pearson Product Moment correlation.

Based on the discussion, the result showed the score of the prerequisite test (normality test, homogeneity test) and hypothesis testing (Pearson Product Moment correlation). The result of normality test was a normal distribution of both variables; 0.200 for the simple present tense mastery and 0.200 for the descriptive paragraph writing ability, the scores were more than 0.05. Furthermore, the result of the homogeneity test was homogeneous and the homogeneity test was good because the data was homogeneously accepted because it got the result of 0.120 which was greater than 0.05. Then, for the Pearson Product Moment correlation with sig. (1-tailed) was 0.000, the result of the Pearson correlation was 0.630 and the result of r-table was the number of sample was 80; significance coefficient $\alpha = 0.05$ (5%) was found 0,220 (r-counted > r-table). It means the correlation between Simple Present Tense Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability was significant and the hypothesis was accepted. The last was the t-test by using paired sample t-test with sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000, the result of the t-test was 6.259 and the result of counted > table: It means that the hypothesis was accepted with a positive significant correlation with the coefficient correlation was a sufficient correlation.

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