EXPLORING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND WRITING PROFICIENCY IN SEVENTH-GRADE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to find out the correlation between motivation and writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2023/2024. There were two variables in the present research. The independent variable was motivation and the dependent variable was writing skill. The population of this study was the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara. The sample of this study was 70 students which were taken with a cluster random sampling method. The design of this study was an ex post facto research correlational study. Furthermore, the matching questionnaire and writing test were used as the research instrument. The research instruments were made in order to collect the required data. The data were then analysed by using SPSS 26 version. There were two steps in analysing the data, namely pre-requisite analysis and hypothesis testing. The hypothesis testing was conducted by applying Pearson Product Moment Correlation and T-test. Based on the finding, it was found the correlation coefficient were 0.931 that means there is a significant correlation between motivation and writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in academic year 2023/2024.

Keywords: correlation, motivation, writing skill

ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui hubungan antara motivasi dan keterampilan menulis siswa kelas tujuh SMPN 1 Kuta Utara pada tahun ajaran 2023/2024. Ada dua variabel dalam penelitian ini. Variabel bebasnya adalah motivasi dan variabel terikatnya adalah keterampilan menulis. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VII SMPN 1 Kuta Utara. Sampel penelitian ini berjumlah 70 siswa yang diambil dengan metode cluster random sampling. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian korelasional ex post facto. Selanjutnya, angket pencocokan dan tes menulis digunakan sebagai instrumen penelitian. Instrumen penelitian dibuat untuk mengumpulkan data yang diperlukan. Data kemudian dianalisis dengan menggunakan SPSS versi 26. Ada dua langkah dalam menganalisis data, yaitu analisis prasyarat dan pengujian hipotesis. Pengujian hipotesis dilakukan dengan menggunakan korelasi Pearson Product Moment dan uji-T. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut ditemukan koefisien korelasi sebesar 0.931 yang berarti terdapat korelasi yang signifikan antara motivasi dan keterampilan menulis siswa kelas tujuh SMPN 1 Kuta Utara tahun ajaran 2023/2024.

Kata kunci: korelasi, motivasi, keterampilan menulis

INTRODUCTION

Motivation plays a vital role in every sphere of life and various phases of activities. Our success and achievement in life depends on motivation. The word motivation derives from the Latin verb movere meaning 'to move' (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). What moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action – such basic questions lie at the heart of motivation theory and research. According to Borah (2021), motivation is the reason why people behave the way they do. Motivated behavior is energized, directed and sustained. Many people incorrectly view

motivation as a personal trait, that is, some have it and others do not. Motivation is the result of the interaction of the individual and the situation. It is a move towards set goals. It is a force that energizes behavior of individuals. In short, motivation can be defined as an inspiration that propels someone into an action.

Motivation is needed in the teaching-learning process because it can make the students understand the learning material quickly. According to Brophy (2004), when students are motivated to learn, their learning usually does it casually to fulfill curiosity rather than achieving the goal of developing their knowledge or their skills. Motivation is to make somebody feel enthusiastic, interest, and committed to something. Moreover, motivation is all internal force that strengthens any individual to do something. Therefore, motivation is important factor in languages learning because will be more effective and efficient if it pushes by motivation.

Motivation is important for learning a language. According to Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013), state that motivation is a crucial feature of successful learning. It affects both the process and outcomes of learning. By having motivation, students can do anything well. If students are motivated, they will be more encouraged and enthusiastic about learning. Motivation can be assumed as inner power or desire that makes students move and force them to do something and achieve their goals. In order to encourage children to learn, teachers play a crucial role. Therefore, motivation is crucial in inspiring students' interest in learning especially in writing skill.

Writing is one of the most important skills that human use to communicate with one another. It is one of the important skills that needs to be learned beside speaking. Writing has become an important part of a student's English learning process at school and college. Writing skill is crucial for students in learning English (Huy, 2015; Nur, 2023). That is because writing can help them think critically and deeply about how to build good writing. Additionally, writing ability is a skill that enables students to explore and express their thoughts in written form, such as paragraphs or text. Students who study writing will learn how to write well, articulate ideas, and communicate their ideas in writing with others. Even though writing is a difficult language skill, writing is a complex skill that must be mastered.

Writing is the most difficult skill of the other skills. Writing is an effortful activity that humans do (Mertens, 2010). It is because writing requires all aspects in English. The aspect such as; choosing the appropriate vocabulary, applying the suitable cohesive methods and a good structure to develop coherent text. This statement is in line with Richards and Renandya (2002:303), who state that writing is the most difficult skill for second or foreign language learners to master. The difficulties are not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into a readable text. Therefore, writing is not always easy and crucial for students to study.

According to Harmer (2010), the type of writing that students will do depends on their age, level, and interest. In order to get good writing, students must master vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. When they want to start writing, students must be familiar with the content of what they have written. When writing, many problems that students encounter, for instance, a lack of ideas,

grammar, vocabulary, and writing motivation. Since writing assignments require students to develop a concept into a lengthy paragraph or text, some students find it difficult to get inspired to begin writing. As a result, they become passive. Therefore, motivation becomes the major factor to make students optimist at writing.

Furthermore, Toba et al. (2019) state that motivation is an important aspect of academic writing skill. In other words, motivation can be in the form of strength that comes from inside and outside that aims to get positive goals. Motivation is closely related to writing activities. When someone starts doing the writing, automatically they must have the motivation to write first. When someone is motivated, they can quickly come up with ideas and put those into words to create a piece of writing. Moreover, writing ability is interrelated to the level of motivation so that the success of writing is determined by the level of their motivation that can encourage their willingness to write.

According to Graham et al. (2013) most students got bored of writing and were not willing to write and mentioned the difficulty of writing. They stated is was necessary to encourage students to make writing an enjoyable habit. If students are motivated, they will be more encouraged and enthusiastic about learning. In addition, it is easier to comprehend the motivated learner than unmotivated learner (Ur, 1991). In order to investigate students who are motivated to learn, it should be measured by scientific aspects. Then, the characteristics that can be seen from students who have the motivation based on Naiman et al. in Ur (1991) are as follows: positive task orientation, ego-involvement, need for achievement, high aspirations, goal orientation, perseverance and

tolerance of ambiguity.

From the background of the study, the researcher is curious whether students' motivation influence their writing skill and wants to know about the significant correlation between student's motivation and writing skill of the students especially in writing a descriptive paragraph. Therefore, the researcher wants to figure out whether there is significant correlation between student's motivation and writing skill.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a correlational research design of ex-post facto research. The researcher used correlation research because the researcher wants to prove whether there is a correlation between variable X and variable Y. In this study, the research concerned two variables. They were motivation as an independent variable (X) and writing skill as a dependent variable (Y). In the present study, the population of this study is seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in academic year 2023/2024 which consisted of 12 classes, from class A to class L with a total of 350 students. The researcher decides to take 20% of students from the population. Thus, only 70 students were chosen to be the sample of this research. In this present study, the researcher chose the samples by cluster random sampling. In determining the samples, the researcher chose two classes of seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara. The steps in determining the sample are as follows: (1) The researcher prepared seven pieces of paper and write down the name of the class, (2) Then, the researcher folded it and put it in the glass, (3) The researcher asked one of the English teacher of the seventh-grade students to take two of the folded papers in

the glass. The sample were from class VII A and VII D (70 students).

For the present study, the researcher was used two research instrument such as; questionnaires and picture description tests to collect the data. The first instrument that was used in the present study questionnaire. The preparation and construction of valid and reliable research instruments are an important step in any scientific study. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items in *Bahasa Indonesia* and the students was given 30 minutes to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire was analyzed by using Likert rating scale ranging from one to five. It required the students to select one of the five choices: Strongly agree (*Sangat Setuju*), Agree (*Setuju*), Undecided (*Ragu-Ragu*), Disagree (*Tidak Setuju*), Strongly Disagree (*Sangat Tidak Setuju*). The questionnaire was based on the motivation aspects Naiman et al. in Ur (1991). Before the students filled the questionnaires, the researcher was given the explanation and instruction to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire was answered by giving a checkmark to one of the choices (√). The researcher was used Likert Scale to measure students' motivation. The second instrument was picture description test. The students were required to write a short paragraph descriptive. There are 6 pictures of persons that are taken from the internet that students should choose as their topic and also 40 minutes to write it. In the present study, the sample of writing skill were scored by using five aspects of scoring criteria, such as: format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure which adopted by Oshima & Hogue (2007).

The aim of this present study was to investigate the correlation between motivation and writing skill. Before the researcher investigating the correlation of those variables, it needed to make sure that the data is normal and homogeneous. The first analysis that should be done in the present study was pre-requisite testing which consisted of normality and homogeneity test. The two tests are important to know whether the data are normally and homogeneously distributed.

In order to know whether motivation and writing skill comes from the distributed normal the researcher tested the normality by using IBM SPSS 26 version. The normal 6 distributions were measured by using Kolmogorov-Smirnnov. The homogeneity test was computed by using Levene's testing to assess if the groups have equal variance. After calculating the pre-requisite analysis of normal distribution and homogeneity of variance in which the data are normally and homogeneously distributed, hypothesis testing was conducted then to analyze whether there is a correlation between motivation and writing skill. The hypothesis testing was computed using IBM SPSS 26 version.

Furthermore, hypothesis testing which was carried in is the present study consists of Pearson Product Moment and T-test. For the correlation analysis those variables, researcher used Pearson Product Moment Coefficient. T-test is a type of statistic test that is used to compare the means of two groups. In the present study, the researcher used paired-sample t-test in IBM SPSS 26 version. The hypothesis for testing normality are as follows (Pallant, 2007):

a. If Sig. > 0.05, it means the data distribution is normal;
b. If Sig. < 0.05, it means the data distribution is not normal.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Finding

The present study used an ex-post facto with correlational research design in which the researcher did not have direct control or manipulation of the research variables. The result of the test and questionnaire showed the highest score of writing skill was 92 and the lowest score was 68. Besides, the highest score of motivation was 131 and the lowest score was 98. The normality test was done towards the collected data of motivation and writing skill that were obtained from the samples.

Table 1

Test of Normality with Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov- Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Motivation	.077	70	.20[*]	.986	70	.619
Writing Skill	.101	70	.077	.978	70	.267

Based on the Kolmogorov Smirnov[a] table above, it was known that the significance value of motivation was 0.200 which meant higher than 0.05. Furthermore, the variable of writing skill showed that the significance value was 0.077 which meant that it was also normally distributed because the significance value higher than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that both variables of the present study namely motivation and writing skill were in normal distribution.

Table 2

Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Motivation and Writing Skill	Based on Mean	3.391	1	138	.068
	Based on Median	3.129	1	138	.079
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3.129	1	133.300	.079
	Based on trimmed mean	3.406	1	138	.067

Based on the table above, the result of the groups of data were above the alpha level, 0.05. The significance value of the collected data, motivation and writing skill showed that the score of Levene Statistic was 3.391 and the significant value was 0.068 which was higher than 0.05. Therefore, the data of motivation and writing skill were homogeneous because the significance value was higher than 0.05.

Table 3

Pearson Product-moment Test

Correlations			
		Motivation	Writing Skill
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.931[**]
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000

			70	70
Writing Skill	Pearson Correlation		.931**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	
	N		70	70

Based on the result of the Pearson Product-moment on table, the Pearson correlation of motivation and writing skill were 1, it showed that there was correlation. According to Ary et al. (2010), the data can be categorized as negatively correlated if the correlation between variables approaches -1.00. On the other hand, the data can be categorized as positively correlated if the correlation approaches +1.00. When there is a weak relationship between variables, the correlation will be near 0. Then, the correlation coefficient of those two variables were 0.931, which means that the correlation between two variables were in very strong level. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Moreover, it was clearly defined that there was a positive correlation between motivation and writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara.

Table 4
The Result of Paired-samples T-test

Paired Samples Test									
					Paired Differences				
					95% Concidence Interval of The Difference				
Pair 1	Motivation-Writing Skill	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-taled)
		35.571	2.695	.322	34.929	36.214	110.432	68	.000

Based on the result above, it can be clearly seen that the level of significant of all groups of data that were analyzed by using Paired-sample t-test showed that the significant value was a figure of 0.000, and it was lower than the level of significance 0.05. On the other hand, the $t_{counted}$ was 110.432 and the t_{table} with df 68 was 1.995. Then, it can be concluded that H_0 was rejected and Ha was accepted because the score of $t_{counted}$ > t_{table} (110.432 > 1.995). Thus, it means that there was a correlation between motivation and writing skill.

Discussion

The result of the research showed that in terms of criteria of the descriptive paragraph, most of the samples could write the descriptive paragraph using the appropriate criteria. They could write the descriptive paragraph which have fulfilled the criteria: format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure. For students who has high motivation could construct a descriptive paragraph well and fulfilled all of the appropriate criteria. In contrast, for students who has a low motivation, could not construct a descriptive paragraph well and could not

fulfill the appropriate criteria. Moreover, in education these findings also serve as a road map for designing more interesting and effective teaching methods that foster motivation while honing writing skills. By recognizing the impact of motivation on writing skills, English language instructors can adapt their approach, incorporating motivational strategies to inspire students and improve their writing proficiency simultaneously.

As what have been found and explained above, it can be concluded that motivation and writing skill had a significant correlation. It also had a significant correlation of those two research variables. It showed that students' motivation correlated with their writing skill. It could be seen from the result of the hypothesis testing which was used Pearson Product-moment correlation and T-test. The present research was in line with the present study. According to the research findings, it can be concluded that the hypothesis which has been previously determined was finally confirmed that there is a significant correlation between motivation and writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2023/2024.

CONCLUSION

In the present study, the researcher used ex-post facto with correlational research design. The present study was mainly intended to figure out whether there is significant correlation between motivation and writing skill. The research was conducted at the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in academic year 2023/2024. The data was obtained by administering the research instruments, namely questionnaire and text construction test to the 70 samples of this present study. Where the sample of this research were chosen by using cluster random sampling with lottery system from 350 population.

The writing skill was scored by using scoring rubric which was adopted from Oshima and Hogue (2007) which were focused on the criteria: format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure. However, the questionnaire was scored based on Likert scale. After getting the score of those two instruments, the data were analyzed by using SPSS 26 version. The result of the Pearson product-moment correlation and paired-sample t-test were accepted. The directional hypothesis was accepted which stated that there was a significant correlation between motivation and writing skill. Thus, it answers the research question which was formulated in chapter 1 that motivation and writing ability of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in academic year 2023/2024 have a significant correlation.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that motivation and writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in academic year 2023/2024. It can be seen from the score of questionnaire and picture description test. The score from both variables showed that the students who got higher score of motivation also got higher score in writing. On the other hand, the students who got lower score of motivation also got lower score in writing. Thus, ex-post facto in correlational research has widely known to figure out the correlation between two or more variables and the data cannot be generalized in correlational research design.

SUGGESSTION

The researcher intends to give some

suggestions which are according to the findings of the present study. Based on the findings of the present study, it showed that there was significant correlation writing skill. Therefore, the researcher would like to suggest the English teachers who are concerned on teaching and learning process especially in teaching writing, the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara and the other researchers. Those practical suggestions can be briefly and concisely elaborated in the following discussion.

For the English teachers of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara, they are suggested to start caring about students' motivation during the learning process. The teacher should be more active, creative, and innovative to choose a good technique that can make students motivated in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, when students have already had enough motivation to learn, the learning goals that the teacher hopes could be achieve by the students. The teacher should find the appropriate technique to know and improve the students' motivation. In short, the teachers also must create a good situation so that the students enjoy during the learning process.

For the seventh-grade students in SMPN 1 Kuta Utara, they are suggested to maintain their inner motivation during the teaching learning process especially writing. It is important because when they are motivated, they tended to do well during the teaching learning process. They are required to be diligent in preparing the next lesson so that when the lesson is started, they are ready to learn. Furthermore, they are expected to do not need to be afraid of making mistakes. They should be more active and enthusiastic about learning English.

For the other researchers, this study showed the correlation between motivation and writing skill. This thesis can be used as a reference and guidance for the other researchers to conduct similar research. Besides, it can be more creative to examine and investigate whether motivation is really related to students' learning outcomes, especially in writing descriptive paragraphs. This research is also expected to provide guidance in analyzing or processing research data for correlation research. In addition, this thesis provides some information about the theory of motivation and writing skill, and information about how to make a valid and reliable research instrument to collect the required data. These can be used by the other researchers to enrich their researches in the future.

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